

CHAPTER II

BETTER TO OBEY GOD THAN MAN

It rained hard that first night on the mountain, the rain turning to wet snow by morning. The fire was slow to start, but the full shed of dry wood would last three weeks. Mountain raspberry tea in mugs we had turned and baked at home took away the chill of morning. After fifteen minutes of staring into the fire and getting comfortable, I slowly began again.

Tyranny begins when a population is trained to believe that a collective conscience and consciousness takes a legalistic precedence over that of the individual man bound in conscience before the infallible wise God who created men and rules them all equally. This collectivism ushers in the idea that a man is actually *ruled by* the majority thinking of his fellow men, instead of the majority of men subscribing to a law and government made in the image of their One Divine Lawgiver. Collectivism or communism then is the crowning of servile human respect. It is the reign of man cut off from God's rule. It is the rule of Satan, in fact.

There is a subtle line here that when crossed delivers a society into tyranny, which is built on the idea that rule, the measure of things, is based on the current, popular idea of things. And current thinking can be ruled by events, force, emotions, tyranny, all those intimidations which traditional thought has escaped with the passage of time and place and circumstance. Godly rule, of whatever form, for example, monarchy or republic, assumes that man's laws should express and conform to an intrinsically Authoritative, Divine, unchangeable standard or measure. This is stable government. Is that clear, Phillip?

"Perfectly, Father."

The freemen of any nation and the American Patriot believed that God ruled them through a personal relationship in which God is master and man obeys in conscience. He believes that justice is established by obedience to this Creator or by punishment for disobedience, and that in common, voluntary alliances do men cooperate in regulating their communities under the *commonly understood laws of God*. The state serves man.

Collectivism's western version is a corrupt Democracy, its eastern version, communist or socialist Totalitarianism. Collectivism nominates "the State" as representative of a voted consensus in a democracy, and of an assumed consensus in dictatorships, which may or may not pretend to represent the real interests or expressed will of the people. The individual is *less* than the state in collectivism; for the State claims to be the true or at least current representative of *all* the people, and more people is greater than less people. By leaving God out of the picture, man's nature, purpose and created destiny is not represented. He is essentially a number. His governance is, therefore, not based on what is right or wrong for man as created, but on the means of controlling him, which is, *power*. Might makes right.

The end result of collectivism or socialism, regardless of the superficial form of the particular government it takes, is that *the individual serves the State*. He is a pawn, a piece of state property to be moved and sacrificed for more powerful players. He does not owe his first allegiance and service to God, but to the collective conscience or its representative, the State. Therefore, human respect, that is, a subservient respect for the

supposed opinion of others, especially of the majority of others, is the blood of collectivism.

And Evolution serves this form of tyranny well, because it *seems* to prove that man *did not come from God as a direct creation*, and if not, why be ruled by a nonexistent God through an individual conscience which is no more than one man's opinion. It can't be as valid as the collective conscience, which is a multitude of (manipulated) consciences. The fact that tyranny never forgets, of course, is that it is impossible to control millions of individuals ruled by individual consciences informed by God, *if you do not wish to rule them by Godly principles*. Tyranny finds it necessary to "convince" its "citizens," one way or the other, that the authority or standard of rule is *outside* the individual and unknown to the individual until some central opinion collecting agency established a consensus by taking an "opinion poll."

Phillip, Evolution asserts that Adam was not the first man. He was just the product of animal evolution. Matter either always was, or we can't know how it came to be. Life must have first "evolved" from complex matter. Man is the product of a process of evolving lifeforms, the whole process governed mysteriously or by chance.

This "product" called man cannot be governed by a strict internal moral law which he is bound to obey, by reason or by charity, or by his own free will, at the expense of eternal damnation if he doesn't. No, evolution proposes that man is determined by his inherited traits and his particular experiences. He acts, as animals do, according to instincts such as necessity, survival, procreation and various needs. *Therefore*, if man is to better his race, it must be by men's cooperative efforts to build a better world, where all are forced to forego individual desires, ideas or destinies and serve a common, supposedly humanitarian plan to better the collective well being of the existing world and so the future world.

"It reminds me of the way I would imagine those men thought who gathered to build the Tower of Babel, Father."

We shall see later that you are right, Phillip. This futurism or utopianism means that international laws supervene national ones and Federal laws supervene state laws, and state laws, local laws. Collectivist futurism also decrees that the amalgamation of all creeds and authorities and opinions and powers ensures peace, because the self-interest of individuals or nations naturally conflict and produce war. Notice that this view of man assumes he does not have a common good nature that being true to *naturally* leads to harmony and peace, but rather assumes that he is alienated from others and is selfish and intrinsically flawed as Calvin thought. War, therefore, is natural, while peace must be artificially imposed; that is, by man's forceful artifice or politics.

"But we believe, Father, that God created us intrinsically good, and that our sin is unnatural and leads to conflict and war."

Yes, Son. But the collectivists said total slavery by law and its Police State was the only alternative to ubiquitous conflicts of self-interest causing a world war that would destroy the race of man. They held up the nuclear threat -- which they had manufactured for the world to see at Hiroshima -- as evidence of this doomsday destiny.

"I can see how convincing and appealing this view and its solution could be, even to a

good person, Father."

"Yes, but only if the enemy's terms and their staging of the problem is accepted as true. In the 20th century huge wars erupted, surrounded by scores of smaller wars, social

upheavals, famines. But the careful student of history saw that these wars and turmoils were manufactured by the militant collectivists (Communists) in cooperation with their money powers who collected or monopolized the power of all human labor by pretending to represent everyone's earnings as bankers, even to the point of presuming to manipulate the value of currencies for the common good. Through their agents in our governments these two partners in crime and treason instigated trouble and then proposed their explanations and solutions for it. If they wanted to topple a God-oriented national authority, they fomented a rebellion. But ultimately, they did not want mere chaos, they wanted *their* solutions mandated by laws.

"Surely this patient intrigue was the work of the Evil One, Father."

It has always been so, my Son. He tempts man first to sensuality by suggesting he indulge his passions, then to ignorance by proposing he ignore truth and accept a deceitful solution to that problem his sensuality created. Finally, he proposes malice by an unrepentant, wrongful act, as the means to achieve the solution that will end the evil that began with man's sensuality. And so it is that they try in vain to justify these official crimes, saying *the end justifies the means*.

By the accumulated voluntary acts of submission to Satan's will by men of free will, he rules the world with useful idiots, loyal followers, robot-like agents, zealous missionaries and at the top, evil conspirators, possessed masters of murder and deceit, even by demons inhabiting human bodies whose souls are in Hell.

"What was it really like, Father. I mean ... what did it feel like? Wasn't everyone terrified of this evil you describe?"

"Of course not! How could the enemy have succeeded if men saw their works as evil. Man's will naturally chooses only what at least *appears* to be good, hating what is evil. The job of the evil one, therefore, is *always* to make evil appear good and our real good appear evil.

"That seems impossible, Father."

"I know it does to you in this time, Phillip, because it is a special time. It is the time of great peace brought about by the profound repentance of evil by the whole population of the world that survived. This made possible the peace of Christ's kingdom on earth. I will have to show you this evil, son, I will have to create a picture of it for you. You will use your imagination to help me."

I felt like Abraham bringing his son Isaac up the mountain of sacrifice for slaughter at God's command. But I trusted the Lord to protect the innocence and confidence and spiritual

integrity of Phillip, while preparing him for his mission in the times to come.

We who fought in the Second Revolutionary War or helped in any way, Phillip, were branded traitors, rebels, unenlightened anarchists and facists. We were finally hunted down and killed like dangerous criminals. It came about just as Alexander Solzhenitsyn described the reign of terror coming about in Stalinist Russia -- the searches, seizures, and abductions, the twisted charges of treason, the tortured confessions and "voluntary" cooperation with the "authorities." All this coercion was justified on the basis of interpretations of ambiguous civil laws that were secretly designed to provide room for such interpretations at the time of their eventual misuse.

It was all ostensibly legal, every last unconstitutional, and therefore illegal, criminal act the enemy in our local, state and federal governments used. And this fact of

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legality was the greatest lever they had in controlling and using 95% of the so-called law abiding citizens.

"Didn't Jesus object to this same use of legality as an oppressive weapon by the lawyers, scribes and Pharisees of His day, Father?"

Yes. In fact, if it hadn't been for the American Machabees imitating Jesus in turning over the tables of the frauds among us, the United States would have fallen without any resistance at all, like a ripe apple falling from the tree.

"The Machabees, Father?"

You remember in the last book of the Old Testament, the Father slew the prominent Jew who went up to give homage on the pagan altar, as all had been ordered by law to do, under threat of death. He then fled to the hills with his four sons and formed the little army of Israel that finally defeated the Syrian giant. Well, there rose up machabees throughout the United States and other nations. They were ordinary, law abiding citizens, with grit and principle, lacking in human respect. They loved God first. They heeded the Word of God as written in the Epistle of St. Peter: "Better to obey God than men."

Human respect, Phillip, during the war and in the many critical years before was the greatest enemy of the people. And our enemies knew that. So they used it. Men are enslaved when they respect the laws and opinions and tastes of their neighbors, or what is reputed by the news managers to be a majority of the people. Because, when men pay more respect to this than to God's Word, disorder and then enslavement ensues; for God's Word is the Truth in a man's own conscience which forms the moral principles that govern all good and godly men peaceably and freely, without coercion. Through their control of the medias the enemy manipulated human respect in order to keep citizens silent when voices should have been raised against the immorality being condoned and finally enshrined in law within our society.

The Machabees were men in the true sense. They stood before God and braved all to obey Him first. Always, Phillip, my beloved Son, *always* remember the words of God spoken

in Holy Scripture through St. Peter, the "rock" of Faith upon which our dear Lord built *His* Church: "Better to obey God than men." Whenever the way of man, whether they be in the few or the many, comes into the slightest conflict with the way of God, he who wishes to save his soul and lead his fellow man by good example must stand forth against that way and correct it, saving the good but rejecting the evil.

"Why are you standing, Father."

Why? ... I don't know, Son. A man is driven by what arises in his heart. My heart is lifted up to the Lord, my Commander, Phillip. Let us read from Scripture and see what word God will give us.

As Phillip searched for the Holy Book, I stepped to the back door to draw in fresh air and drink of the well water. Tears formed easily in my eyes as I gazed towards the heavens, longing for the vision of my Lord and His Glory to appear. I longed for Heaven. But to fight now, even as then, for the Lord was my portion of Heaven on Earth. I asked for God's help to go on. And He gave it to me, as in so many times past. Then I was able to go back with more resolve to relive what we had all thought we could never live through at the time.

For inspiration I "cut" the Good Book ... to 2 Peter chapter 3 and read in a steady voice.

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"BEHOLD this second epistle I write to you, my dearly beloved, in which I stir up by way of admonition your sincere mind: That you may be mindful of those words which I told you before from the holy prophets, and of your apostles, of the precepts of the Lord and Saviour. Knowing this first, that in the last days there shall come deceitful scoffers, walking after their own lusts, Saying: Where is his promise or his coming? for since the time that the fathers slept, all things continue as they were from the beginning of the creation. For this they are willfully ignorant of, that the heavens were before, and the earth out of water, and through water, consisting by the word of God, Whereby the world that then was, being overflowed with water, perished. But the heavens and the earth which are now, by the same word are kept in store, reserved unto fire against the day of judgment and perdition of the ungodly men. But of this one thing be not ignorant, my beloved, that one day with the Lord is as a thousand years, and a thousand years as one day. The Lord delayeth not his promise ..."

"I remember, Father, when the heavens turned white and rolled up like a scroll." And, at that moment sounded the Warning, which every man, woman and child on earth heard within them.

"Yes, Father."

But we are safe for now in the justice that reigns after the Second Coming of Christ. Look, is this not a renewed heaven and earth?

"I know everything is different now, Father, but ..."

It is. You cannot know as well as I. It is the difference between a desert and a garden,

and in the heavens, between a murky veil and the purest, sparkling glass.

"Why do we go back now, Father ... in this story?"

There is humility and foresight in passing before the sin and evils of the past, Phillip. Too many will forget, but you have a right to know what they will forget. Remind them, Son, when you *first see* the way of man casting its shadow on the way of God, *stand forth!* Fear not what wagging tongues will say.

"And what *will* they be saying, Father?"

Every heresy begins with a claim to authority from Holy Scripture, because a power must be overcome by an equal or greater power. Now that the whole world is converted to the true Church, the protesters to come will appear to be loyal, while interpreting God's Word on their own authority. It has always been so.

"How will I know who speaks the true word of God, Father? How did the Faithful know in every age? How did the patriots see through the lies of the enemy? And why did all the others, in every age, believe in the lies? I do not feel capable of knowing more than any other man."

Every man is incapable of knowing the truth of God -- *without help!* So, first we always pray for discernment. Then we use our reason. It *alone* is not enough, but we are given the Word of God which cannot contradict the right use of the faculty of reason *which He Himself has made* by His Word and by which He requires each man to act truly, even at the price of his eternal life! Trust in your power of reason, not in all your reasons, but in the power or faculty God has given you.

"And what else is needed to discern the truth, Father?"

Purity of heart, Son. Righteousness. A clean conscience. Honesty, integrity, true repentance for all sin. Here is the *tabla rosa*, the white tablet upon which the Word of God can be written.

"And ... how else can I know?"

There is the Doctrine and Tradition of the Church Jesus established for all time and guaranteed to be true for all time because the Holy Spirit of God is in it. How can anything novel be true which contradicts the past teaching of Christ through His Church? How can anything contradict the Scripture, rightly interpreted, and be true? The Church is a sure guide against error. The Church has interpreted Scripture. It compiled the Scriptures to begin with.

"But the Church was made of only men, too, Father?"

Not only of men, Phillip. That is the mystery of the Church. The Church is Divine, because it is the Mystical Body of Christ who is, Himself, its Head. The true Church is God and Man joined, the Mystical Body of Christ, one congregation of appointed and adopted sons of God, led by the only begotten Son of God, through His appointed and empowered ministers.

I'm afraid I can't directly reveal this Light by which you will know the truth, Son. It is *The Indivisible Light* of God. It is God more than the rays of the sun are, in their effect, the sun. Pure Divine Light, I cannot explain in itself. It *is* the Holy Spirit. The essence of affection is the Spirit of Love. Spirit is mysterious in itself, known only by the effects of its characteristic actions on those things affected by it. For example, the human spirit or soul is known by its characteristic action upon the body, which is suited to be subject to its particular action, which we summarize as *life*. To see the *Indivisible* Light of God then, we must look for its signs, its effects upon Mankind, which is suited to be subject to Its effects. The true Church is the exemplary Sign, the effect of God's Light on Mankind Redeemed. This Church, the Bride of Christ, is seen in its Holiness, its Saints. It is seen in its Oneness, its unity of Doctrine throughout time. And only those apostles of Jesus who have been given the Divine Love of the Father and the Son for each Other can receive the effect of the Holy Spirit; for only Divine Love can recognize Divine Love. And that is why Jesus said, 'not all those who say "Yea, Lord" will enter into the kingdom of Heaven, but only those who do the will of My Father.' And the will of the Father is that we love God, ourselves and each other with the Divine Love which God has first given us.

Light reveals, and it casts shadows. So we will look at the good and the bad in man. The bad or evil is where the Light does not have its full effect, that is, the absence of good. But that very darkness, in negating the light, silhouettes the light -- which is God and what He does.

Time itself, and what it reveals, the natural, mortal world, casts us in shadow, Son. In this shadow of time we live. We can only see spiritual realities by the help of grace, that is, by the Light of God. But the relative darkness delineates all the better the purer things that more readily receive the Light of God. This is why you must go back with me now, into the darkness of history.

"I know that I am safe with you, Father. But these shadows -- it feels like it will be frightening."

It is. For all those who were ever saved, it was only *trust* in the Heavenly Father that allowed Him to lead them through their times and overcome that fear of darkness. *We* were in darkness. But we have *seen* a Great Light. Fear is what all children of God must overcome, fear of the darkness, where the light of God does not shine. We fear to go into the darkness of sin because it offends God and we fear His wrath. But we do not

fear darkness in itself; for darkness has no power over that which is illumined. Rather, it is the opposite, light vanquishes darkness. Darkness is overcome by light. Light is never overcome by darkness, for darkness or evil is only the absence of light or good -- a pure negative, a kind of nothingness.

While these times before the Second Coming were the darkest days the world had ever

known, Phillip, there will be still darker days ahead. Do you want to overcome your fear of the dark?

"Yes, Father."

Then come, let us go on. Already the Light of God is within you, Phillip. I am only going to try and help you recognize it, that is, cogitate upon it, by showing contrasts, divisions between its effects and the absence of its effects, between the light and the darkness. Seeing such darkness will frighten us, so that we will run back to God's Light where we are safe.

In the beginning, in the arms of Divine Love, we passed into time where shadows exist. And if we pass the test of this time, we will pass into eternity, where shadows do not exist, for there is nothing there but Love. When time and what exists in time is flooded, finally, with the Light of Eternity, which is the Light of God, time will pass away. Then all shadows, the distinctions, delineations, definitions and finite limits will cease to isolate things from one another. They will cease to be known by what they are not, in order to be known as God knows them -- only for what they are, emanations of His creative love. For we can know nothing except as it is in and of God, its Creator. The essence of creatures will not change in Heaven, but the means, the viewpoint by which we recognize them will change. For we will see by the brilliance of this Light, which Reveals the inner being of and reason for and cause of all -- the Light of God's Love. You were made out of Love, Son. You were made in Love and through Love and with Love and of Love a subject fully predicated by Love. When the shadow of Time passes away, there will only be Love and the objects which reflect It. And all that does not reflect the Light is in the darkness outside the Light, and there it groans in eternal misery for what it was meant to be became not of its own free will.

"What reflects the Light, Father?"

Those who recognize and give thanks for God's Love are capable of reflecting that Love by loving others in return, thus reflecting the Light of God's Creative Love.

After these words I rose and dressed for the weather. Leaving the cabin, I kept company with the moonlit snow, ice, rock and pine ... until the sun melted into the orange glow of sunset. Phillip was snoring peacefully when I returned. The flickering embers revealed a strong, ruddy youth, with fine light brown hair, squared chin, fine brows and long, handsome features. I would train him to bring up the rear, whipping and driving those of good will who had fallen into laziness or foolishness, gathering and sustaining the weak who had lost the will to go on. What is our life but to emulate, in some degree, in some way, the Divine Shepherd.

The morning sun left us warm and dry above a solid sea of rain clouds 400 feet below. We continued the story on the front porch, our sleeping robes draped over the sapling armchairs our herders had made last spring.

To understand in more than a superficial way what happened to the World in the year 2000 AD, Phillip, I feel it necessary to roughly sketch the conflict between the forces of good and evil as it traveled through the preceding seven thousand years of man's

history. This will be primarily a philosophical discussion, which we will use to try and illuminate the most profound events of history.

Adam was actually the first human being. His soul was created directly by God, as is each and every soul. The elements of the earth were used to create his body. Although God could have created Adam's body out of nothing, He chose to incorporate in him all the elements of the earth, so that in his body man is related to all bodily creatures as their highest expression. Eve was made likewise, except that the material for her body was taken directly from Adam, just as the Bible says. The material for the creation of each person's body is provided by its parents. But the parents do not create, much less does an anonymous force, but God only is Creator.

Many moderns assumed that the story of Adam and Eve was just a useful myth and that other humans or human-like animals preceded them. These conjectures came about largely through the enemy's fabrication of various fossil hoaxes, such as Piltdown and Peking Man and the Leakey "discoveries," along with the theories of their other agent, Charles Darwin. Their aim was to generate evidence for the Evolution Hoax in regard to man.

When God created the nonmaterial soul of man, the body that soul actualized was created at the same time; for no body can exist without a soul, either human, animal, plant or mineral; because soul is the principle *activity* of that body which causes it to have a certain character, structure, consistency, etc. So God creates each body along with its soul. Nor does any soul come about without a body. Man is a composite being. Only the angels have no body; they are pure spirits. No soul can create itself or its own offspring, as Evolution would implicitly require. Every creature must be made by God, bringing it from nonexistence to existence at the moment of conception.

"Why at conception, Father?"

Because before conception it did not exist as a determinate species. God may choose to use other creatures, human, animal, or mineral, which He has before created, in this act of conception, though He is not dependent on them. He chooses freely to use parents, for example, by their cooperative act of generation, but this makes Him no less the creator of the child, which comes from non-child to child, from not being to being at the moment of conception. Only God has existence to give because only God is existence. His very essence is existence. And so Moses was told that God's name is, "I AM WHO AM."

The evolution of man, by leaving God out of the story, necessitates the elevation of generation through the sexual act to an act of God-like creation. This was an ancient pagan error that spawned various fertility rites. But no parent-creature ever had existence to give, and existence is essential to the act of creation, whereby some new individual specifically unique comes into existence from non-existence.

"But Father, the parents have existence; could they not give it to the child?"

No parent is self-creating; therefore, existence does not subsist in them as it does in God. They are totally dependent on God for their existence *each moment they exist*. The error that all things exist independently leads to the heresy of Pantheism (God is all) and the universal soul (all are one) which doctrines, I believe, the enemy inserted into the earliest Semitic religions of the Far East. Note, Phillip, that the modern error of evolution appears to be a concrete, inductive proof of these gravely misleading errors of pantheism and oversouls, from which reincarnation and the reduction of individuality to the idea of

conformity springs. The eastern idea that individuality is subject to the totality of the universal soul is very conformable to the idea of the individual's subjection to the socialist state. The idea of the individual, especially created by God, responsible to God, loved by God, as a person is loved by a person, is a truth sown by the Revelation of Jesus Christ, the Light that will conquer the darkness of these Errors.

Many, if not all, pagan religions, which, of course, had the devil as their creator or spiritual advisor, revolved around the worship of sexual powers. Worship often included sexual acts. For a sexual act that actually produced a being would be the act the act of a god or goddess. *All error is built upon the basic evolutionary lie that beings come from beings*, and that the magic formula for producing something new and valid is to take two or more existing things, conjoin them and, presto, a third thing is supposedly conjured into being. But this is like saying, if you put an apple and a banana in a blender you produce a new species of fruit. No! *Mixing is not creating*.

Consensus was a buzz word of 21st century's collectivist propaganda which involved a blending of opinions to produce a new opinion which was assumed to have the authenticity of a new intellectual being, that is, a novel truth. True knowledge is real intellectual being, *it comes from God through His creation of the thing known and of the knowing faculty that perceives it*. But an opinion which pretends to have the attributes of knowledge and a right to the prerogatives of knowing because it was formed by a consensus is a creation of the devil; it is a lie.

"Father, I am beginning to see how evolution tempts man to reduce all being, all species, all distinctions to oneness or nothingness. What I am wondering is whether Adam somehow fell into some error like this in his original sin."

An intriguing question, Phillip. Let me begin exploring it by laying out what I know. Before Adam sinned, they lived in a state of perfection and integrity, or wholeness, for integer means whole. After sinning in direct disobedience to God out of a secret pride suggested by the only source of temptation, Satan, human integrity (the right order or wholeness of man) was lost; so that the five bodily senses and the imagination based on them rose up in rebellion against the intellect. Phillip, the intellect has two powers: intellectual appetite or will, the passive intellect that is moved to desire by the goodness of God's creation, and the apprehending or active intellect, reason, which analyses or identifies things by their universal or essential characteristics, thus arriving at a particular truth. Truth is that-which-is (reality) in the understanding. This is based on an adequate impression of reality itself. Our intellect is made in the image of God's intellect, and that is why we can truly understand what He made. There is a likeness in us to all we can know, because we are like minded with the Creator of all things.

To know something is to be able to name it; thus Adam named all creatures. He knew

all things that it was proper for him to know as man, namely the good, which is all that God created. He did not "know evil" until he disobeyed God's command. In disobeying God's command he implicitly refused to acknowledge God's authority, that is, His authorship of all. (We saw this error in Evolution, didn't we?) Adam rejected, by his willful act, God's Word, His Truth. Adam thereby rejected the intellect God gave him. Thus Adam rejected the core and essence of his own being. Therefore he lost his spiritual life which resided in the integrity or wholeness of his intellectual being or soul. Here is the essence of Adam's error, Son. Adam rejected his own nature and, therefore,

the law of that nature. In this Adam freed himself from God's law to acquire what the serpent offered Eve -- "you shall be as gods, knowing good and evil."

Evolution also deceives its adherents into believing that man is not of a definite created nature but a present moment in the random evolution of being. It teaches what the Greek philosopher, Heraclitus, said, "all is in flux." Once a man or a society loses the sense of its created nature and of the limits or laws of his nature, he feels free to violate his right judgement by his free will, which is then taken out of the context of reason, which gives it (the will) direction. In this sinning man *actually* steps outside of his created nature into uncreated darkness.

God told Adam not to eat of the tree of good and evil, because evil is the absence of good. And it is evil to disobey the known will and command of God. Nor is it proper or even possible for man to know what is not good, that is, evil in itself: For God did not create anything that was not good, and what He did not create is not knowable because it does not even exist, except as a negative concept. In sinning Adam came "to know" disorder, which is confusion. To voluntarily assent to, or desire or act in accordance with that which is neither true nor good, is a personal act of evil, a sin. Adam did this by eating from the tree of good *and evil*. This act represented his willful desire in contradiction to God's Holy Will. In spirit then, Adam exited God's creation and entered his own creation, which is nothingness or Hell.

Evil is the lack of good, and Adam created that lack from nothing but his will. This is, perversely, a God-like, falsely creative act, and from that springs the special "pleasure" of sin, which is pride -- the imagination or false apparition of one's own excellence in regard to that which he is, that which he does or that which he has. Sin does not humbly *follow* nature, but *leads* the way into the unnatural, the unknowable. Sin, therefore, makes its own terribly exciting "reality" or "world," which mortals may believe in as real, but which is no less than a disguised extension of Hell, the home or abode of all evil.

"But Adam took back his sin, Father. He repented."

Fortunately, for us he did, Son. But it is more true to say that for his part he withdrew his will from the sinful act, and by doing so he *asked* God to forgive him his offense and restore to him the spiritual life of the soul.

"There must have been a certain mysterious attraction in evil for Adam in his perfect innocence to fall for it, Father."

Yes, there is also the pleasurable excitement of *mystery* in evil; for nothingness is truly unknowable. It is not just *beyond* our finite human understanding. The pleasure of sin depends not only on the false appearance of an uncreated *novel* "good", but on the admixture of good with the mystery of evil. Illicit sexual pleasure proceeds from a created good, for example, but from the wrong use of that good. Thus it is from the tree of good and evil. To the sinner, his sin appears to be good in some aspect. If it did not, the will, which can only desire good by its Created nature, could not choose to sin. But while all sin has certain appearances of good, that is, the accidental features of good, our intellect *knows* that what makes it sinful is not good. In sinning we choose the fruit of the tree of good *and* evil, rather than from the fruit of the Tree of Life, which is only good.

Adam's will, in sinning, Phillip, chose the lesser good over the greater good, the apple over the loving obedience to our Creator's infallible Will. For another example,

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sexual pleasure alone is a lesser good than the right use of sexual pleasure, namely, to promote procreation and/or unity between married persons.

So the will or intellectual appetite is free to choose various goods, including a lesser good, at the expense of a greater good. But, in so doing, the will rebels against reason, the apprehensive intellect, thus dividing the complementary powers of the one intellect. This is the spiritual death of the soul, just as the separation of the soul and the body brings about physical death. Thus sin leads to mental, emotional and physical problems, sometimes to the point of producing split personalities -- because sin *is* one source of insanity.

The intellectual appetite or will is also subject to the lack of integrity and subsequent rebelliousness caused by the Original Sin of Adam and by ones personal sins. We call this weakness or tendency to evil-doing, concupiscence, which means "with (con) the sensual love of (cupidity) the knowable (science). This carnal or sensual knowledge is opposed of the *rational* love of the knowable when it claims equal status with it. Concupiscence is traditionally described as threefold: the pride of life, the pride of the eyes, and the pride of the flesh. Pride here refers to a false knowing.

Error, which is essential to all sin, comes in two ways: The reason knows or should know what is right or wrong, but the free will errs in choosing to have a disoriented appetite for another lesser good. This produces a sin of passion or inordinate desire. Ignorance or weakness (lust) underlie this error of the *incontinent* and covetous sinner. The second kind of error deliberately or culpably disorders reasoning which fails to establish the true or proper order of things, thus ruining the priorities of those goods identified. This involves malice; for the error of reason proceeds from a bad will to acknowledge the truth to begin with.

"The second would be a more serious sin, Father?"

Much more serious, Son. An inordinate appetite or will is sensual, because the principle of its choice is the body and its senses, and the imagination which projects the sensual image for the deliberation of the intellect. But in malice the will itself lets its desire for the lesser good be a cause for stifling the reason in acquiring or assenting to true knowledge. This latter sin against the known truth is a sin against God's Love, that is, the sin against the Holy Spirit.

By nature the will is subject to the reason, which it depends on to identify the nature of the real things, or goods from which it must choose the proper means to our created end, eternal happiness.

Humility is real self-knowledge. Pride is the exact opposite. One of the themes throughout history is Satan's attempts to convince man to follow him in his own great error, namely, the pride behind the notion that *God* is to be credited as the author of evil, rather than evil being due to the free will of His Creatures, Lucifer first of all. This false accusation against God is why there is a multiplicity of gods in pagan religions accounting for both good *and* evil events. The false reasoning would be, if God is the creator of evil, no one but Him can be held accountable for evil acts. Therefore, it is God-like to do evil acts. And since evil gods like evil acts, then acts of evil by human worshippers placate these gods, so that they will not do evil to the worshippers. These abominable and blasphemous errors are found in the darkest of satanic cults. But these same incredible errors underlie much sin, especially all manner of deliberate, malicious sin.

Phillip, the distinction is that God *permits* evil. This shows His forbearance and mercy. For if He did not permit sin, who would be alive to repent of their sins and be saved.

"Father, please let me interrupt with a question."

Yes, Son, please do so as often as you wish. I know it is hard to interrupt me.

"Why do we, the children of Adam and Eve, inherit Adam's sin and its consequences, when we did not actually commit the Sin? Shouldn't Adam have been punished, not us. How do we see God's mercy in our inheritance of Adam's evil?"

First, Adam *was* punished, severely. He did penance for 900 years. He lost all his perfections and Paradise. God commanded him to toil for his sustenance, and now he would have to suffer death. If he had not fallen, Adam would have simply entered Heaven without death. Suffering is measured by loss. Adam lost much and so suffered much.

Secondly, we inherited Original Sin because Adam's sin brought disorder into man's *nature*, nature which Adam alone contained fully and entirely within himself in the beginning. And disorder brings disintegration, sickness, deformity and eventually death. All earth's creatures, being subject to Adam as their representative before God also suffered the disintegration that his nature suffered. The nobility and dignity of all creatures suffered. In nature, we are all Adam in a sense. He acted in our behalf, because he was the entirety of our nature at that seminal time. This common nature is why man is a family. Angels are not like

this. Each one is a separate genus and species of being, for there is no common body shared among them.

"So your point is that we naturally and necessarily inherited the consequences of Adam's sin."

Yes. And thirdly, would any man have bettered Adam? No. By our sins all men have *ratified* Adam's sin. Thus we share in his guilt. Mankind is like one being; we affect each other in the past and in the future. If God is not unmerciful in creating man as one race and allowing him the free will to love Him or to sin against His love, then He is not unmerciful in allowing us to inherit the concupiscence due to Adam's sin which causes a disintegration of our nature.

Furthermore, Phillip, God used the familial nature of man to save us; for that is why *one* Man, Jesus Christ, could save *all* men by His merits alone. This was so because in His Divinity and His perfect human integrity or wholeness, Christ contained the whole nature of Man as Adam did before the Fall.

And, only God could save man, because man's offense against God was infinite; because God, the offended One, is infinite. Man is finite, thus his reparation for sin, his ability to repair is finite. *Only* the God-Man, then, could save man, first, as *God* repairing the infinite offense that only God could repair and, secondly, as *Man* who assumed the nature and who took the punishment of all men in order to expiate for the guilt that all men incurred.

"Jesus re-established Justice then, Father. That was His mercy."

Yes, Son. You are exactly right. And His Eternal Life as the God-Man immediately overcame Eternal Death, because the positive principle of life comes before the negative principle of death, which is just the lack of life. Therefore, Jesus' victory over death on the Cross paid the eternal debt of man's sin against the infinite God.

"But how can God die, Father?"

As God, Jesus did not die, Phillip. That is why He overcame eternal death. But as Man, Jesus' soul was separated from His body and He died as a man. But since He was both God and Man, His humanity was raised to life again. This is how the elect are saved from eternal death in being united to the Christ by the means of Faith and Baptism.

"So Jesus was the second Adam? He took Adam's place."

Yes.

"And Adam had within him in the beginning the whole of humanity. And Jesus, with the recreative power of God, became New Man."

Yes, He assumed the entire nature of Man.

"Was Man recreated, then? And if so, wouldn't all men be saved?"

Man was recreated in Christ. But that helps us personally only if we unite ourselves with Christ in His Church, the Ark of Salvation. That is our choice. Only in this Holy Union

are our good works become salvific acts of Faith, Hope and Charity. If we do not unite ourselves to Christ, we have crucified Him in vain by our sins. He *offers* us redemption through adoption, as sons of the Father and brothers of the Son. But, by refusing the same gift, we earn damnation since we do not participate in this Life that overcame our death in sin. Since adoption is offered, it is in mankind's power to possess it. That is, all men have it *potentially*; but it is ours *actually* by our acts of Faith in Christ, which means believing in the Word of God.

"What is Faith in the Word of God, Father?"

I can *say* it in a few words, but it will be understood only at length and partially in the telling of this story and in considering all that is said.

Satan told Eve to disobey God, and said that instead of dying the result would be that "your eyes will be opened: and you shall be as gods, ...", that is, that you will be like adopted sons of God and win immortality by disobedience to God's Law or Word. In person, this Word or Law, is Christ. So, Satan is playing the Saviour's role deceitfully, saying, to be saved, follow me in sin, "Do evil and adopt yourself to this God who is not all powerful or noble but jealous of his powers, purposely misleading those who wish to be like Him and to share His power. At the same time he is maligning and misidentifying God. Sin is also spiritual blasphemy and idolatry inasmuch as God is portrayed falsely.

Jesus told us, on the other hand, you will become like God by *obeying* God, by being true to your created, unfallen nature. By *way of* his obedience to God's Law, the just man will be freely given divine Faith, by which he will be saved. God is not forced to do this by justice. Sin calls for evil. Faith is given by God's mercy. Faith is the *divinely assisted act of hearing the Word of God, and of having an absolutely certain belief in and assent to the truth of that Word*. But this *certainty* could not come from human evidence. Therefore, we know that this Faith is *divine*.

"What is belief and assent, Father?"

Belief is passive acceptance of a proposition; assent is the active acceptance of that proposition. These are the respective acts of the passive intellect (will) and the active intellect (reason) which indicates full intellectual acceptance.

"Can unjust men, unrepentant sinners have Faith?"

How could they? To be unjust is to refuse to *obey* the Word of God, which means, first of all, that you do not *accept* or *believe* in the Word of God, as we are commanded by God. But there is no Faith without this belief.

"But how then can one be just who does not already believe in what he is commanded by the Word of God?"

Without Faith one cannot be justified, Son. But it is every man's choice to first believe in and then obey The Natural Law written in his own heart by God. The knowledge of God's

Law written in the heart and his ability to believe in it as God's Law is a grace given to *every* man who lives to the age of reason. Obedience to the Law of God then allows a man to hear the Divine Word of God, the Christ, and believe Him to be God's Word. But if a man *chooses* not to believe what he knows in his own nature, by the natural law, he has already rejected God and His Divine Law with which natural law agrees. And every man is given the natural law, to know right from wrong, which means he is also given the basic truth behind these laws.

"So, can every man be saved?"

Yes, every man who ever lived or ever will live can be saved. If God is Just, how could it be otherwise? In the Churches' doctrine of the Baptism of Desire, the just man of any time or any place in history who obeys God's Word written in his human nature as a law will be given the choice, exteriorly or interiorly, to have Faith in and obey that Law or Word for the right motive -- because *God* commanded it -- not because it is natural or rewarding or pleasant or politically correct. And the obedience to that command is the assent of Faith. It is the personal response of a man to the personal command of God. It is an agreement and a covenant that results in an adoption. Salvation by Baptism of Desire is the reward of those who have not heard Christ's doctrine preached but who submit to God's authority. Such a one would have believed if the actual words of the Saviour had been preached to him. And some whom these words of Jesus were preached will say, "Yeah, Lord," but will not be saved, because they chose to superficially believe and pretend to obey for motives of self-interest. This is not true Faith. It is a human spirit, not a divine spirit that generated it. Therefore, there is no Justification in it; for it is by *Divine* Faith that we are saved. The very *ability* to first know then obey God's Word because God commanded it is a gift from God *offered to every* man.

"Father, I understand Faith now, but I need, for some reason to go back again to the question of why we must suffer the punishment and degradation of our fallen nature that Adam earned by his *sin*. Why should we inherit concupiscence, this tendency to evil. Can you explain more?"

This punishment of concupiscence is a means of correction for our fallen nature. Our reason tells us what is right, but our rebellious, concupiscent powers, the "flesh" lead us to do the opposite. And the ensuing war within us is painful. This pain resulting from concupiscence corrects the pride of the life, which *is* concupiscence, by humbling us. We all fell with Adam. Concupiscence is a natural effect of the Fall. If we learn the lesson this suffering shouts out to us, we will use that suffering as a material means of salvation, and this curse will become a blessing. Man's sin brought upon us a great curse, but because this sinful condition was the material cause of Christ's saving us, the curse was erased and a blessing came in its place. God's goodness overcomes and replaces our evil. That is the only reason we have any good left upon the earth. But nothing is credited as a man's spiritual possession, whether good or evil, unless he makes it so by his freely choosing it for what it is. This is why although God's blessings and especially divine Faith are gifts from God, we actually receive them with merit and justification only with

our active acceptance, which includes our proper use of them and our thanksgiving for them. We must and will cooperate in our own damnation or salvation.

"Is God's mercy greater than His Justice, Father? Is His Love for us greater than His Righteousness?"

Justice was not set aside for the sake of Love and Mercy. Justice or Righteousness was actually *reestablished* by the Loving Sacrifice of God's Son, and because that repayment of God was far greater than any debt man accrued, there is actually a great surplus of merit Christ earned. This He placed in the keeping of or treasury of His Holy Church, and we can obtain this merit by asking for it by way of certain token works that have "indulgences" as a reward. These indulgences earned by Christ for us relieve us of some or all of the punishment due to our sins which remains even after their guilt is removed. So, Righteousness suffered nothing, but was, rather, restored and renewed by God's generosity.

"But Jesus suffered Unjustly, Father. Why wouldn't a greater Injustice exist than before?"

Christ *willingly* suffered. No injustice was imposed on Him because of this free choice. It was an act of love. He took our place. Could I not willingly accept and hide your insults to me in order to refrain from punishing you so you had time to see your evil and repent? So too God suffered *willingly* for our injustice to Him, both in sinning and in crucifying Him by way of our sins. By His Love, the *willingness* to endure evil for our sake, He destroyed our injustice. Love is stronger than hate, just as God is stronger than our common enemy, the Devil.

"Was this the cause of your courage and hope in the gruesome days ..."

"Yes! You have said it well, Son. So to answer your question, Christ's Love was sacrificial. His love is greater than simple justice. Love is greater than justice, but without Justice suffering any loss of integrity. Remember the employer who answered the man he had hired in the morning who was complaining he was paid the same amount as one hired late in the day? He said that no injustice was done according to their agreement and that his choosing to be generous was not a fault.

Love suffers wounds willingly with the objective of doing good. The sacrifice of animals was the sign given to the children of Abraham and Jacob that mysteriously signified the Christ promised them, who would also be sacrificed. The sign of sacrifice is blood being shed. They were told to stretch out the lamb during the Passover in the same way Jesus would be stretched out -- in the form of a cross, a sign of contradiction between two opposing force or movements, which we can see as the horizontal, balancing force of justice demanding the eternal death of the sinner and the vertical ascending and descending force of God's Love desiring his salvation unto eternal life.

"But many have not been saved, Father. Didn't Jesus die for them too?"

Yes, He did. But they did not let their sinning die for His sake. They did not imitate His Sacrifice of Love by obeying God before man, that is, before their own desires as fallen humans. We have to let the old man in us, the fallen nature that tends to sin, die, if the seed of Divine Life is to germinate into new life. Nature follows this pattern always. Sin was worth more to the reprobate than God or their own eternal happiness. They allowed themselves to

become stuck in time and therefore lost sight of eternity. They rejected their own salvation, Son. They *chose* to refuse God's goodness,

by refusing to simply repent of their sins; for this alone is needed to gain the grace of Christ's saving action.

"How could they reject life, Father!"

In loving the image they had made of themselves more than the God who made *them* they ended up hating their beginning and their end, and therefore, their life. But to hate life is to love death.

"Why!!"

They saw and still see this undying Love of God's Son given to others and *Envy takes hold of their heart*, and they hate the goodness of the giver and the good gained by the receiver, *because they don't have it*. They loved the false image of themselves more than they loved their real, immortal selves, their souls. They did not have eternal life because they did not admit and repent of the evil they had done; this would have been an application for the return of the good in themselves that their sin had rejected. They loved themselves, in pride, more than they loved God, in humility. They adored themselves as if *they* were a god. In the end, God gave them what they wanted.

We are not to be sad for them, Phillip. The evil has come upon *them*, and it is they who will be eternally sad. But we have chosen the eternal life of God, and we are glad. God is the efficient and final cause of your having that life. You only cooperated with God in acquiring it, just as your mother and I only cooperated with God in bringing about your human life. Do not be proud of this great fortune of divine life, but always be *thankful!* Petition, repentance, thanksgiving and praise -- these are the four ways of praying. But self-love and self-admiration is the *face of the enemy!* And sadness is the backside of the enemy, the trail of tears which we must avoid traveling. St. Thomas Aquinas said that sadness, which depresses the heart, is the most unhealthy of all the emotions. This can be true in a spiritual sense, too. We are sad that we have sinned, but sadness, the awareness of *present* evil, is not the normal state of a Christian, who is repentant and has Faith that the presence, the Love of God is with him and who has a firm hope that this seed will blossom forth into love eternal when he sees God in His fullness and rests in the pure joy of knowing that happiness is secure for eternity.

Let us break off now for three days, son, to go down and gather the sheep, for the shearers will be done with them. Then we will lead them up here to these higher pastures for the summer.

I knew this labor would lighten the heart of my son, who had suffered much because his love for God had been cruelly wounded by the knowledge that many had turned away and lost their souls, two thirds of the human race according to one tradition. The Cross had been laid on Phillip's shoulders now, for his suffering love was the same suffering love of Christ on

Calvary. Now he could hear the rest of the story. Now it could make sense and be endured, for sacrificial love can endure all trials.

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