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By the Same Author

THE SON OF MAN

THE REDEEMER

THE CHURCH — THE INVISIBLE

ABRAHAM — JOHN — THOMAS

HEAVENWARD

HIM — HIS

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FOREWORD

Be established in the present truth—II Peter 1:12

DAYS OF OMINOUS, increasing forces are upon us. They portend both a warning and a lesson. The warning: let us not be carelessly taken up with visible things at the expense or neglect of the Invisible. The lesson: these evil forces, subtle and working in the human soul (psyche), cannot be resisted nor subdued except by a superior power. This force, eternal, benevolent, and unconquerable, is *Spirit*.

God is Spirit. He works in man by His Spirit, leading him to accept His Son, Heir of all things and in Whom all things consist (cf. Colossians 1:17). Jesus Christ the Lord is the only salvation that exists.

Though the Truth is one and eternal, the Apostle exhorts that we must be established in *the present truth*, without which we cannot understand *the Truth*.

It often happens that a great machine operates sluggishly or stops altogether, even though all its parts are intact. The trouble, many times, lies in the

neglect of something which seemed secondary or insignificant: a loose screw, insufficient lubrication, an accumulation of dust all tend to impair the efficiency of operation.

Attention is due to small things (cf. Luke 16:10 and Zechariah 4:10). Alas, tragedies have happened and happen due to the neglect of things which seemed small, but were discovered to be important after the event.

Much of the turmoil in Christendom is the result of neglecting *the present truth*. Learned theologians have dealt with vast themes, yet ponderous volumes lie unread, covered by dust. People, today, are either too preoccupied or not concerned; very few are interested.

Christianity needs a revival. To awaken this spiritually, slumbering age, she needs *prophets*—God's prophets—who will, dynamically and incisively, proclaim *the present truth*, arousing the torpor of the spirits in people. But prophets have never been, are not well-liked; yet, hatred is better than indifference.

This, then, is *the present truth*: A RETURN TO GOD. Not, however, through the mind, but by the Holy Spirit, for He alone can create and inspire us with the vision of the Christ, whereby we, too, may say: *we have not been disobedient to the heavenly vision*.

CHAPTER I

THE LAW OF THE SPIRIT

THE FUNDAMENTAL BASIS of one's relationship with the Lord is that he, the Christian, is under a law superior to that of Moses. "For," we read in Hebrews 7:12, "the priesthood being changed, there is made of necessity a change also of the law." Note the words: *of necessity*.

The Law of the Spirit begins by speaking to the spirit of man: man consisting of spirit, soul and body (cf. I Thessalonians 5:23)—the spirit rendering him fit to hear from above. Such a Law is more exacting and more delicate than the old, for, as the writer to the Hebrews continues (7:16), Jesus "is made, not after the law of a carnal commandment, but after the power of an endless life."

The words "a carnal commandment" refer to means which are visible and tangible, good in themselves but limited in time and effects, whereas the Law of the Spirit is based on a power which can never grow old or be annulled, since it is eternal.

There is, for a time, in every Christian, even in the most sincere, a conflict between the two laws, between the two covenants: a conflict known and tolerated by the Lord, for, notwithstanding that in Him all has been accomplished, the fulfillment in us does not come in a moment. Only as the old in us disintegrates will the new be established. In fact, for the Christian to remain void would be disastrous, as is clearly evident by what is written in Matthew 12:43-45; to wit: "When the unclean spirit is gone out of a man, he walketh through dry places, seeking rest, and findeth none. Then he saith, I will return into my house from whence I came out; and when he is come findeth it empty, swept, and garnished. Then goeth he, and taketh with himself seven other spirits more wicked than himself, and they enter in and dwell there: and the last state of that man is worse than the first. Even so shall it be also unto this wicked generation."

It is clear, then, that to be liberated from what is not good, without desiring and receiving what is good, is to leave the door open for the Enemy to invade us with evils more subtle and more harmful. The negative not replaced by the positive leads to disaster.

If we, proclaimers of the Gospel, would realize this, we would imitate Him—that unique Teacher of teachers—Who never ran but knew and knows how to wait patiently, insisting always that we must be occupied with the realities of heaven if we expect to be liberated from what is earthly.

The negative, the void in us must be immediately occupied by receiving Jesus and turning the reins of

our lives over to Him, for He, alone, Who came from heaven, knows how and can expel every sinister power that has influenced or may still be dominating us. The adversaries of Jesus were full of embellished negatives, but the void not occupied by heaven had made them vulnerable to the snares of elegant and subtle demons of religious pride, as well as the other sins in spirit.

But only they? then?

Lord, invade, possess us!

CHAPTER II

THE LIMITS OF THE SUBJECT

OUR SCOPE IN THESE PAGES, ever trusting in the Lord's guidance and benediction, is to encourage those who, being both simple and sincere, aspire to the sovereign will of God.

The Law of the Spirit is absolute and relative at the same time: absolute in what concerns everyone; relative in that which involves one's personal relation in particular circumstances. A Christian, for instance, knows that he must not do evil to anyone, for the law of universal love is absolute. Yet, as we grow in the knowledge of the Lord the absolute lines become ever luminous.

As in the laws of man no crime is committed without there being a criminal disposition, so there is no sin without law. The clearer the law, the graver the sin. Consequently, being under the Law of the Spirit, the more we yield to the work of Grace, the more enlightened and sensitive to sin we become. This is the reason why the saints of every age have been, are

great penitents. This is also clearly seen by the words of Jesus to the Pharisee, who in secret was censuring the weeping penitent at His feet; to wit, "Wherefore I say unto thee (Simon), Her sins, which are many, are forgiven; for she loved much: but to whom little is forgiven, the same loveth little" (Luke 7:47).

The "much forgiven" refers to a light which kept growing in the penitent's soul, hence the former transgressions assumed a greater weight. A word, an act, which in the past may have seemed insignificant, assumes, in the light of heaven, vast proportions, that we, at times, although being justified, wonder how we have so erred. True, being already pardoned we have peace but now—blessed are those who have reached such a state—we see the mercy of God, in the light of our behavior, immense; and invaded with gratitude we love Him more and more, ever conscious of the great price of pardon.

It is not necessary to sin—woe to him who does caress sin—in order to realize that we are sinners. A thought, an act of egoism, the least idolatry weigh heavy on our soul, and, as the publicans and sinners of God, we long to draw ever closer to the Great Physician to hear a word from that mouth, for His words, when pronounced by those blessed lips, are, aside from comfort, life-engendering. Woe to him, to those who no longer possess the sense of sin, who are no longer penitent, and who approach Jesus only out of selfish motives.

But it is time to consider the Law of the Spirit more closely.

CHAPTER III

PROPHETICALLY

WHEN SPEAKING OF THE Old Testament we must distinguish between the books, teachings, exhortations, and especially the prophecies contained therein: for much in those ancient books are not part of the old covenant but are prophetic of the new. The Law of the Spirit preceded the laws of carnal commandments; and, whereas the latter was only for a time, the former is eternal. Man's guidance, and from which every command results, lies in obeying the *voice* of God. This is perfection.

Man begins with the simple; but, then, along the way of disobedience and weakness, he comes to the complex, reaching, in the end, the simple again. From the simple in creation, passing through the complex of texts and commands, we must return to the simple by redemption. Redemption offers more than creation. Jesus in His messages insisted that man must be taken back to where he first was; to wit, to a personal relation with God: a relation which grows

in intimacy, invigorated by Grace and imbibed with personal gratitude for having been much forgiven.

The prophets, in a special manner, were, more than others, under the Law of the Spirit, otherwise it would have been impossible for them to obey commands, which, to the human mind, seemed, if not entirely foolish, unreasonable or extreme.

Opening to Psalm 73 we have a graphic portrait of a man of God who is perplexed in seeing the prosperity of the wicked, whereas he, the psalmist, was covered with sackcloth; to wit, he lived in fear and trembling, often in sorrow and tears. Neither the visible nor the numerous carnal commands succeeded to liberate him, until, thrust by his spirit, he entered—transported of course by the Lord Himself—into the Sanctuary of God and saw what he had not before realized: the *end* of the wicked, whose path is smooth and easy, whereas the just passes through many tests and conflicts, which, however, terminate in light. By *wicked* is meant, in the language of the Scripture, those who take the Name of God in vain (cf. Psalm 50:15, 16).

Illuminated by this light, which in the beginning he did not possess but for which he had asked with insistent love, remaining silent concerning his own conflicts, not to scandalize others, he, the psalmist, finally comes to a decision. We read: "Whom have I in heaven but Thee? There is none upon earth that I desire beside Thee" (v. 25).

The psalmist was not ignoring the various commands and ordinances already prescribed; in fact, for a time, he may have even felt secure in them, until—

and such was according to the design of Providence—he longed to see more, that he might remain firm and faithful. He *saw*, hence the decision to abandon himself completely to the Lord, for what he needed was not partial commands, but God Himself, Who alone can guide and give the strength necessary to persevere throughout the earthly pilgrimage.

“Since I cannot help myself nor be helped by any creature, help coming only from the hand of the Creator, I,” thus reasons the psalmist, “I will consider myself as being already dead, and place myself completely, in everything and for everything, in the hand of God.”

This is much more than being enlightened and led: it is being taken, carried entirely. The Christian pilgrimage comprises three stages: *revelation*, *guidance*, and *translation*.

The finality, then, of the Law of the Spirit, is to bring man to the *nothing* of himself and to the *all* of God.

CHAPTER IV

REJOICING IN THE GOOD OF OTHERS

THE SERMON ON THE MOUNT, as all the commands of God, even if clear to the mind, cannot be obeyed if Grace, the life of Him Who has commanded, does not enter in us. Receiving Jesus—and receiving Him is a personal decision—and trusting in Him, moment by moment, we will obtain light and grace to obey. Obeying every step as indicated and unfolded to us, we will receive the light to go on. Grace, faith, which is the hand that takes hold of grace, and obedience lead us through the journey, until, in order to know God and the Son more fully, we are translated into the realm of full light.

The walk the Lord has set before us is difficult, hence we cannot proceed in the stride of fatalistic determinism or indifference, but must collect and constrain all our energies if we hope to reach what to man is impossible. Having tried our best, we realize that we must be transported. Weak though we be,

we must place ourselves in the Lord's hand, as the lad who gave Jesus the few loaves and fishes and the widow who used up the last drops of oil and the remaining handful of flour. We may not have neglected any duty, but we will not succeed, unless we abandon ourselves completely to the Lord: this is translation. But to our subject.

The psalmist is tempted, seeing the defects and shortcomings, rather than the good qualities, in others, even in the Elect. It is not difficult to see evil, or to suspect it from appearances; and even if one does see good, he may not be happy over it, because, without a special grace, the good of others may seem to belittle us. And even if we are happy, it is difficult to rejoice and glory with the people of God, many of whom have little or no social importance and who attract, at times, if not scorn, ridicule. Alas, we are surrounded by egoism and vanity.

The psalmist saw all this; consequently, he longs for what he still does not possess. Entering the Sanctuary he implores: "Remember me, O Lord, with the favour that Thou bearest unto Thy people: O visit me with Thy salvation; that I may see the good of Thy chosen, that I may rejoice in the gladness of Thy nation, that I may glory with Thy inheritance" (Psalm 106:4, 5).

The psalmist calls on the Lord that he might be remembered, acknowledging in humility that he does not deserve anything, but appeals to "the favor Thou bearest unto Thy people." The divine light received not only enlightened but also made him humble, so much so that he, the psalmist, has not the courage to consider himself among God's people.

“Visit me,” he continues, “with Thy salvation,” for he recognized the need in him of a continuous salvation and of an ever-present Saviour. The greater we realize our needs the more we will be drawn to the Saviour for salvation.

Now he implores: “I desire to see the good, not the errors or shortcomings, of Thy Elect.”

The Accuser, ever active to poison our soul, points out and exaggerates the evil, never the good in others. And since people, in general, are more concerned in appearances, his deception, shrouded with the pious insinuation that we must love the justice of God and not compromise with evil, succeeds to ensnare us. *We*, forgiven and tolerated by the Lord in much, now find ourselves hating others, defending our behavior by saying that it is not man whom *we* hate, but the evil in them—and of a perfect hatred. *We* are, so we imagine, defending God’s cause, for *we* are jealous of His glory. *We!*

Oh, the subtle snares of the Enemy.

But blessed is he, who, illuminated and heart-smitten by the Holy Spirit asks for Grace to be investigated and discovered to himself, praying as the psalmist: “Search me, O God, and know my heart: try me, and know my thoughts” (Psalm 139:22).

For it is not easy to see, much less to rejoice in the good of others, or to glory with the inheritance of the Lord. Yet what is impossible to man is possible to God, if we are willing to place ourselves and live under, in the Law of the Spirit.

CHAPTER V

WEEPING, REJOICING WITH OTHERS

AWAY WITH ILLUSIONS! For without Jesus Christ in him, man is, regardless of every pretension and religious veneer, wicked. Speaking not to strangers but to the disciples, the Lord said: "If ye, *being evil*, know how to give good gifts unto your children . . ." (Matthew 7:11). Seen apart from Him we are all evil, wicked; but we are saints if in Him we live and abide.

We invite the reader to meditate, without mental or doctrinal prejudices, chapters seven and eight of the Epistle to the Romans. Victory, in chapter eight, is to be had by being *in Christ* and under the Law of the Holy Spirit: which means that Christ enters in us and dominates us completely.

Again, in the same Epistle, the Apostle enjoins to "rejoice with them that rejoice, and weep with them that weep" (Romans 12:15).

But is it really true that we weep with those who weep and rejoice with those who are happy?—we

mean, is it possible without being under the Law of the Spirit. True, many times we have wept and have rejoiced, according to the occasions, but only with those of our liking, whereas with others we have feigned to weep and to be happy.

Oh, miserable human heart, how thou succeedest to deceive those who want to be deceived!

To weep or to rejoice, as the Apostle writes, there must be in us the One Who wept over the ruins of Jerusalem, ever hostile to Him, and Who rejoiced only when the Father was glorified.

The Law of the Spirit reveals that God desires to incarnate Himself. For as Jesus was the incarnation of God, we must be the incarnation of Jesus. And as he who sees Jesus sees God, so, too, he who sees a real Christian will see Jesus. God, manifested in flesh, has never been without witnesses.

CHAPTER VI

TO SEE — TO PRAY

THE EXPRESSION *to see* implies, especially in the writings of St. John, a close examination, scrutiny of minute particulars.

There are, then, various types of seeing: that of Satan and all who imitate him; that of the psychic or soulical man, which, though not absolutely evil, is superficial and erroneous, for it is a seeing based merely on appearances (cf. John 7:24); and, finally, that of God. "Seest thou this woman?" Jesus asked the Pharisee who saw and judged the penitent, weeping at Jesus' feet, a sinner.

The sacred script admonishes to take heed of the *eye*, that we might see without scales or veils.

In I John 5:16 we read: "If any man see his brother sin a sin which is not unto death, he shall ask, and God shall give him life for them that sin not unto death. There is a sin unto death: I do not say that he shall pray for it."

The *seeing* referred to in the above verse is of God.

For only the Holy Spirit can convict of sin. We may see the facts, but how God evaluates them is not known to man, unless revealed to him. That men, in general, are sinners, we know; but it is not for us to so classify them, for by so doing we would be imitating the Pharisees of old.

Balak, the King of Moab, and Balaam, the mercenary seer, saw the evil, quite evident, in the children of Israel; but God, Whose knowledge is omniscient, did not, on that occasion and to such individuals, expose the sins of His people. In fact, we read: "He (God) hath not beheld iniquity in Jacob, neither hath He seen perverseness in Israel" (Numbers 23:21).

I John 5:16 implies that it is the Lord Who reveals whether or not a brother has committed sin. It is not our scope in this meditation to consider how many are prone to use the petty excuse, that the unfortunate one may have committed sin unto death. Suffice it here to say that he who is dead, having committed the unpardonable sin, no longer desires to hear the Name of Jesus and evades any encounter with Christians. We should be very cautious in denouncing evil in others or in saying that they have sinned unto death, unless absolutely sure. Yet, if one is in doubt, and, in order not to be mistaken, has prayed, his prayer, though ineffectual, will not have offended God, for at least a good intention was evinced. We ought to be very careful in qualifying as *dead* those who still, regardless of their condition or state, are drawn to Him Who does not spurn anyone who goes to Him: His Love makes no exceptions or reservations (cf. John 6:37).

If the Lord should make us see—of *His seeing*—that our brother has sinned, it is a special Grace for a special scope: to wit, that the command be obeyed. The command—Law of the Spirit—is a relative law for him who sees; hence it does not apply to those who do not see.

The law, command is: *Pray!* And God will give life to him who is in need.

The command is incisive to him who sees. Consequently, since the transgression of the law is sin, he who disobeys the commands of the Holy Spirit, even if such commands may be personal—and “if anyone sees” is a personal command—he who does not obey commits sin. For thus it is written: “Sin is the transgression of the law” (I John 3:4).

Let us, then, examine ourselves in the presence of God and in the light of this verse. If we do, it will be impossible to still think or imagine that we only are *saints* and all others are *sinners*.

To pray—really pray—requires Grace to love. Jesus bore our sin; in fact, He *became* sin for us (cf. II Corinthians 5:21). He who *sees* and *prays*, according to I John 5:16, is an extension of Jesus, presenting himself as the one in need. This is prayer (cf. Zechariah 12:10). And from this, the precious promise: “God will give him life”—meaning, the sinner is restored.

A great responsibility, but a glorious privilege to those who understand and live under the Law of the Spirit.

CHAPTER VII

CONCERNING THE RELATIVE LAW OF THE SPIRIT

PART I

PERHAPS MORE THAN ONE has been, at times, tempted to think that the Lord uses an excessive severity towards him, making him feel, if not complete remorse, a certain discomfiture towards acts innocent in themselves but prohibited to him. Words, tolerated in others, have, when merely mentioned by him, afflicted his soul sorely. The writer knows of a Christian who lamented with the Lord—for it is only with Him that one can litigate—saying: “Why is it, Oh Lord, that I cannot even say a word out of place without feeling some sharp prick of remorse, whereas others, more blessed than I, speak with great frivolity and remain tranquil? How is it, Oh God, that I cannot even relate some event in which Thou hast used me, and yet others can serenely narrate all particulars of an incident without ever growing tired and without ever being the least bit agitated lest by so speaking of themselves they might become vain?”

The comparison is between two honest Christians: one can speak about himself; the other cannot: one may have freedom in certain things; the other has not. The answer—let no one expect an exhaustive explanation, for ours are only suggestions which the Holy Spirit will confirm and unfold more fully—the answer lies in the fact that, whereas the plan of salvation is the same for everyone, the method used is not identical for all. The Shepherd knows and calls each sheep by name. (*Name stands also for character.*) He has a general relation with everyone, and a particular relation with each individual. Consequently, that which is tolerated in one may be sin in another. Of course, it goes without saying, that there are acts, thoughts, and words which are always sinful for everyone. But we are dealing with exceptions, and of the delicate work of the Holy Spirit in people as individuals.

The reply received by the Christian, whose case we have cited above, was: "Thou, My son, art—and it is a great Grace—scrupulous of the motives of thy thoughts, trembling lest even a word may have indirectly attracted others to thyself. Another is not. Yet the other individual, though less careful and perturbed than thou in the line which has been developed in thee, trembles and applies himself in other lines, which have not been imposed upon thee or in which thou art not developed. Both of you are tempted to misjudge, each seeing the other lacking in that in which he has been victorious, and excusing himself in what has not as yet been commanded him or clearly delineated. I, Who am God and not man, am working you both towards perfection, not touch-

ing, for a time, some lines, yet intent to establish you both in other, more essential points.”

God, Who is our Father, works in all His children. He is patient with everyone. Oh, that we might imitate Him! For only thus will we, although we may not be able to approve certain acts in people who indubitably have been and are blessed, understand them, not judging them to have fallen from the Grace of God, nor considering the Lord as being partial, for He is not. What we see is, for a time, tolerated by heaven, while a great work of Grace unfolds in other parts of the spirit and soul. Later, there will be a visitation even on the visible shortcomings.

In faith, holiness is complete; practically, it is a progressive work.

Let no one be scandalized by such an affirmation, for, apart from the theories pronounced, everyone that has the testimony in his spirit can attest to its truth from the memory of his long and sad past, and acknowledge how the Lord, not only has forgiven him, but has not imputed such a past to sin; in fact, notwithstanding the many shortcomings and faults he has discovered within himself, the Lord has made him a son, the assurance of which he has never doubted.

There is, then, a relative law for every Christian. Consequently, the Holy Spirit admonishes us to obey, without judging others.

CHAPTER VIII

CONCERNING THE RELATIVE LAW

PART II

IT IS NOT AT RANDOM that the Holy Spirit qualifies David as *the man after God's own heart*, who fulfilled all of His will (cf. Acts 13:22). Much was tolerated and pardoned in him; yet much was also suffered by David from many. There are many who are sullied with the sins of David without possessing his rare, noble qualities, nor his spirit of penitence. The sense of sin and his gratitude to God resemble a torrent rushing into the Infinite Ocean of God.

An incident in this grand life, at a time of persecutions without and conflicts of the soul within, is before us. We read: "And he came to the sheepcotes by the way, where was a cave; and Saul went in to cover his feet: and David and his men remained in the sides of the cave. And the men of David said unto him, Behold the day of which the Lord said unto thee, Behold, I will deliver thine enemy into thine hand, that thou mayest do to him as it shall seem

good unto thee. Then David arose, and cut off the skirt of Saul's robe privily. And it came to pass afterward, that David's heart smote him, because he had cut off Saul's skirt" (I Samuel 24:3-5).

The advice of David's faithful companions seemed almost a command from above. For, apart from that instinct to protect himself from future attacks by such an enemy and the fact that he, David, was the anointed of God, that occasion seemed providentially designed for his liberation. Had not God Himself promised such a day?

True, the occasion was ordained by Providence, but to a divine purpose. Although a man not of an easy temperament, David must have felt a pang of intense hatred as he beheld the man God had abandoned, alone in a cave. But it was only a flash, and then the peace which flooded his soul turned that occasion into a great act of charity. David proved to Saul that, had he wanted to, he could have killed him, but he chose, instead, to spare the king's life. Much passes through our heart and mind in an instant.

"Then David arose, and cut off the skirt of Saul's robe privily." He could have, after this, felt satisfied to hold in his hand such a token; but no! For some, even the most noble acts are attenuated by heaven in order that they may never become puffed-up and by which a sense of humiliation does not permit them the least boasting; in fact, every possible means of becoming important or proud, even to one's own eyes, is deprived them.

"And it came to pass afterward, that David's heart smote him, because he had cut off Saul's skirt." David

trembled, fearing lest he had cut a piece of Saul's flesh. Although fallen, he, Saul, was also David's father-in-law, and, at one time, even the anointed of God. We are led to think of the behavior of a great angel, Michael, who did not dare to accuse not even the devil, remembering that he was a former cherub.

Oh, that we might imitate Michael and David! And it is possible only if the Law of the Spirit, developing us line after line, degree to degree, leads us, ever abiding in Jesus, not to blaspheme, accuse, nor to cut anyone to pieces, not even in the hem of their garments, for the time comes that we identify garments with people.

CHAPTER IX

THE LAW AND THE PROPHETS

WE READ: "All things whatsoever ye would that men should do to you, do ye even so to them: for this is the law and the prophets" (Matthew 7:12).

The above words, prophetic to the Church in every age, were uttered by Jesus on the Mount, to those who had followed Him in that ascent, after various separations. Detached from everything and everyone, they had with undivided attention listened to the program of the Kingdom, unfolded line after line, and which supposes the need of continuous Grace.

Victory over self is only on the Mount. Let the reader meditate prayerfully Isaiah 11:1-10, especially verse nine. Only thus can we hear, comprehend, and not abuse the meaning of Matthew 7:12. For to not understand, or not to understand as the Holy Spirit intends we should, the words "the things ye would from others" would result in abusing the Grace of God. But let us not anticipate.

The text contains several delicate hues of meaning which we will try to convey. "All therefore, as much so ever you may desire that men should do to you, even so also do you to them." And, as if anticipating the many possible objections to such a command—*do you*—Jesus concluded by placing specific emphasis on the word *this*. Man, in general, seeks much, evading or neglecting the *this* which is precise, incisive.

"For THIS," Jesus continued, "is the law and [also] the prophets."

The Law, understood not only in external commands and by means of things visible (cf. Hebrews 7:16), was clearly perceived by the prophets of old, who saw the future, reading in the visible the plan of the invisible. The prophets, being the mouthpiece of the Lord in every age, understand the plan and heart of God, and know how to unite the *voice* behind the word. In the light of what is written in Revelation 19:10, they present Jesus vividly, in every aspect, before our eyes.

Moreover, he who lives in the atmosphere of the Mount, face to face with Jesus, cannot have strange desires or a will alien to the spirit of Christ. Waves of temptations will come but not remain, for they have not been desires conceived or willed in us. It is the Holy Spirit Who moves in us desires and the will to do His will. There is much which the disciple on the Mount may desire and want; yet this desiring and expecting from others, even if not fulfilled by anyone, obligates him who has reached the measure of the Law understood by the prophets to do to others as he desired and expected for himself.

Let us recall the warning to the people of old—a people set apart—that the command is within us. The saint carries in himself the Tribunal, where the Judge, Legislator, and King-Saviour dwells (cf. Isaiah 33:22).

CHAPTER X
O B E D I E N C E

PART I

A MEMORY. Having been invited to speak at many funerals, the writer, by looking intently into the countenance of the deceased, has often received guidance on what to preach. On some faces he has seen an aura of peace diffused; on others, something strange, at times even repugnant.

It was on one such occasion, when, not receiving any inspiration from the one lying in the bier, nor from the survivors, much less from the presiding elder, he, afflicted over the meaningless ceremonies and hymns being sung, asked the Lord to give him the right message in order not to be a victim of religious formalities, which, having no life, only tend to deceive. The inspiration from above came; and the text was: *The books were opened!*

Everyone is a book, wherein his entire history, including one's characteristics and personality, is written. A secret scribe, in a style that penetrates, keeps

writing in us. Everything we have said or done must come to judgment, be it in this life or in the next. What has been pardoned in this life, according to the degree of contrition and penitence, is cancelled and distanced forever, for the Lord not only forgives but forgets. The rest, however, remains written, clearly delineated in the particulars of deeds, motives, and intentions of the heart (cf. I Corinthians 4:5), and must come to light and be judged.

Blessed is he who presents himself before the bar of divine judgment *now*, in the time of visitation, during the time ordained and indicated by the Law of the Spirit. There is a time of visitation. Nothing is hidden which will not, sooner or later, come to light. Blessed is he who presents himself as he is to Him Who can mould and make him as He wants, and learns to discover himself in order to repent in deep contrition of spirit. Oh, to possess the gift of penitence and tears!

The Law of the Spirit, if always obeyed faithfully, will lead us to live a divine, transparent life, in the Light and Realm of the Son of God's Love.

Let us, then, desiring to love and know the Lord better, obey with readiness of mind, thoroughness of heart.

Often we select scriptural passages after the Holy Spirit has presented and enlightened them. Let us be more explicit. The things of the Spirit are first intuited by our spirit, and then confirmed by the letter of the Scripture. It is not the Scripture which leads to the Spirit, but the Spirit Who leads to the Scripture, using it as a witness in the courtroom.

Two passages are in point: Acts 5:32 and John 2:5. Both, although pronounced on different occasions, exhort obedience for light. We read: "And we are witnesses of these things; and also the Holy Ghost, whom God hath given to them that obey Him."

Peter, on the above occasion, based the affirmation concerning the resurrection of Jesus on two witnesses: to wit, those who had seen it and the Holy Spirit, the Supreme Expositor of the Truth, for He, the Holy Spirit, has been given to work in them who, obeying the little they see and know, are enlightened and instructed to see, know more.

Blessed obedience—key that introduces us to penetrate and live in the mysteries of the Kingdom of God.

CHAPTER XI
O B E D I E N C E

PART II

IT IS ONLY BY THE Holy Spirit that one is introduced to Reality, passing from theories to Substance, from what is finite to the Infinite.

When we read that the Spirit is Truth, we ought not to forget that Jesus is Truth; yet, it is not possible to see, hear, or obey Jesus Christ without the Holy Spirit.

Acts 5:32 in the text reads thus: "And we are in Him of these things witnesses, and the Spirit also the Holy which God gave to those submitting to Him"—to those who to Him are submitting themselves by a continuous yielding. Note the words, "witnesses of things"; and the word used for *things* means also *word*: word having substance. The expressions of the Holy Spirit, as those which proceed from the mouth of Jesus, have reality and permanency.

The Law of the Spirit, delving through the various layers, goes to the root of one's being. It is truth, leading to *the* Truth.

A graphic example of obedience is to be found at the marriage in Cana. Mary, in an accent both reserved and prudent, turned to Jesus, saying: "They have no wine." The answer, to be read and understood without prejudice, was—we quote from the text—"What to Me and to thee, O woman? Not yet has come the hour of Me."

The saintly woman immediately understood that something was expected of her, and, calling the servants, in a manner that not even the governor of the feast became aware of it, she said to them: "Whatsoever He saith unto you, do"—to wit, obey without objections. Such a preparation was necessary that everything might be done in order. The servants obeyed, and to the surprise of all present, including the host, the best wine had been reserved for last.

That miracle is qualified as the *beginning*, not so much in reference to time but to indicate that the basis of every relation between us and heaven is in obeying without disputing what Jesus says. For only he who is disposed to obey His will will know the doctrine—*Jesus' Doctrine*—which is of the Father and not of man.

CHAPTER XII

THE TRANSITORY AND THE PERMANENT

WE MARVEL, at times even horrified, that the prophets were persecuted, not considering that while we revere the martyrs of old, we, in our days, are making others. The prophets were persecuted because they by divine inspiration, while observing the letter of the Word, launched out into the Law of the Spirit, enlightened, although limited, at the finality of the letter, of the commands through things. Today, they would not even be tolerated; in fact, those who insist on the Law of the Spirit are not.

Not to mention other passages, we wish to consider what is written in Jeremiah 7:22, 23. We read: "For I," thus the Lord, "For I spake not unto your fathers, nor commanded them in the day that I brought them out of the land of Egypt, concerning burnt offerings or sacrifices: but this thing commanded I them, saying, *Obey My Voice*, and I will be your God, and ye shall be My people: and walk

ye in all the ways that I have commanded you, that it may be well unto you.”

What? No burnt offerings and sacrifices! And yet there were burnt offerings and sacrifices even before Moses. What the Lord wanted to say was that His will was, and always is, to lead us *to hear His voice* and to see everything else as a means to an end, never the end in itself. The danger was, is that we, in stopping at the means, are not concerned with the final scope and intention of the visible.

The brazen serpent, used as a symbol, had so become an idol to the children of Israel that the faithful Hezekiah had to destroy it. The temple of Jerusalem, type of the House of God, had usurped the place of God within the people's hearts. The same is true of the Levitical sacrifices and ceremonies, to the point that the prophets had to cry out against the uselessness of sacrifices, especially for those who remained in their sinful condition (cf. Isaiah 1:10-18). In fact, even the forms used to express sorrow and grief were, to many, a hypocritical formality. The energetic words of the prophet Joel (2:13) are in point: “Rend your heart, and not your garments, and turn unto the Lord your God: for He is gracious and merciful, slow to anger, and of great kindness, and repenteth Him of the evil.”

Returning to the Law of the Spirit, which is both absolute and relative, we learn that there are precepts, the obedience of which is required from everyone who follows the Lord: such laws are absolute. Yet there are commands—dictated by the Holy Spirit—according to the times and occasions, hence are relative to each Christian. This explains why the Lord

shakes also the heavens in us, taking us from what He Himself, for a time, has commanded to more elevated lines. The Holy Spirit renders the Christian so pliable that He does with him as He wants. Those who are in this glorious Realm of the Spirit have no programs, save one: to wit, to not desire anything, save that which the Lord wants, and not to have any programs, save that of wanting to be always directed from above.

This, however, is difficult to those who are vain, restless, and unredeemed, for such ones are ever prone to mingle something of their own in the things of God. Not only do they not understand Pure Grace, Pure Faith, and Pure Love, but neither are they disposed to accept.

It was not easy for the prophets to always obey, for they had to face many prejudices; and the most prejudiced are those who have received a smattering of religion, mixed or venerated by something man, imagining to do good, has added. Those who want to improve the Gospel often fall into worse evils than the ones they have tried to correct.

The work of the Holy Spirit is delicate and patient, and requires that we yield to it; and, then, if honored by Him for something else, to be used as He wants. The eye, heart, and mind of the Christian must be fixed on Him.

Let us recall that the Lord, at times, had to force the prophets with a strong hand, in order that they would rebuke religious people, as we read in the book of Isaiah (8:11): "For the Lord spake thus to me with a strong hand." Jeremiah, also, was admonished not to be intimidated by the hostile miens. Ezekiel, on the other hand, was inactivated and made

dumb for a time, that he might not be a reprover or take it upon himself to correct others.

The Law of the Spirit will, in time, make us absolute slaves to lead us, in turn, to absolute freedom.

Do we marvel that they persecuted and then slew Jesus? And yet who knows how many times we have, in many respects, imitated the religious people of old. They did not understand Him because they chose not to, even though they had seen many signs to prepare and enable them to believe, trust Him.

Speaking on one occasion to a large audience who, till then, professed to be disciples, Jesus, knowing within Himself that they were murmuring, said: "Doth this offend you? What and if ye shall see the Son of Man ascend up where He was before? It is the spirit that quickeneth; the flesh profiteth nothing: the words that I speak unto you are spirit and life" (John 6:61-63).

Note the words: "Doth THIS"—referring to the message just given—"offend you? What then"—greater scandal—"when and if ye shall see the Son of Man ascend up where He was before?"

The above affirmations go beyond the Person of Christ and His Resurrection, and include all who in the Son of Man are quickened, risen, and led definitely to the Father. Yet, in the meanwhile, there is a preparation, not only in the Body as a whole, but also for each one personally, who is being edified into the Body of Christ.

In Acts 3:19-21 we read: "Repent ye therefore, and be converted, that your sins may be blotted out, that so there may come seasons of refreshing from the

presence of the Lord; and that He shall send the Christ, Who hath been appointed for you, even Jesus: Whom the heaven must receive until the times of restoration of all things, whereof God spake by the mouth of all His holy prophets that have been since the world began."

Seasons of refreshing are promised, preparing us for the Person of Christ. Refreshing and Rest draw the Lord ever closer to us, until, finally, He makes His abode in us. He Who was from eternity appointed for us and has now been proclaimed to us through the Holy Spirit must come to dwell in us.

Only the Holy Spirit can portray and enable us to see Jesus. In the meanwhile, heaven has received Him. Tender language is this, as if heaven, having grown tired to see Jesus persecuted and misunderstood, has opened her arms to receive Him. Alas, the Lord, at times, hides even His saints from slanderous tongues and cares.

Heaven has received Jesus, till the time of restoration of all things—which things, affirms St. Peter, *all* the prophets have spoken. All? Yes, all: for the prophets, being the mouthpiece of the Lord, proclaim, depict the Name—JESUS. They all, in one way or another, have spoken of Him.

Blessed work of the Holy Spirit. Thou Who beginneth by moving over the ruins, guideth and commandeth us until we have been brought face to face, or better, identified with Jesus—Son of Man—Son of God.

CHAPTER XIII

THE END OF THE LAW

A WARNING. It is always dangerous *for us* to use the Scriptures on our own initiative or discretion. Often, we err, like the Sadducees of old, who, though versed in the letter, did not understand the Scriptures, thereby ignoring the power of God. For us to use them would be worse than error—since it is only the Holy Spirit Who knows how and when to use them. The Book, precious though it be, is a closed book, unless taken and opened to us by its Author. From the great wealth to be found therein, only the Holy Spirit can apportion them according to the real need, and at the proper time.

From what we have already written, it is implicit that the Holy Spirit takes care of us from the moment we have discovered our inner ruins till we will have been taken to the New Jerusalem, where Jesus Christ the Lamb is Light and Temple. And, after the Son will have placed all things under the Father (cf. I Corinthians 15:28), then the Holy Spirit will have

completed His great mission, for we will have been, definitely and completely, identified with Jesus Christ.

In Romans 10:4 we read: "For Christ is the end of the law for righteousness to every one that believeth." The text has: "An end (scope) therefore of law, Christ for righteousness to every one believing"—the meaning is: to everyone who is always believing, always in the faith. The text does not say "of the law" but simply *of law*. There is a reason.

It is true that the Apostle, when speaking to the Jews, was often obliged to refer to the Mosaic Law; but it is also true that he wrote concerning the Law of the Spirit (cf. Romans 8). The Mosaic Law was a pedagogic conductor to Christ. The Law of the Spirit is also a guide, but leads to Christ in a more conclusive manner, enabling us to become one with Him.

As all rivers terminate and disappear into the sea, so all the commands, acts, efforts terminate and are, so to say, absorbed by the Great Sea, Jesus Christ: the Man-God, God-Man, Who is the Centre and Sustainer of the Universe, for after the Resurrection all power in heaven and on earth was given to Him.

Moreover, as the wise traveler never loses sight of the purpose and scope of the trip he is undertaking, so, too, the Christian. Led to Jesus for forgiveness and justification by the Holy Spirit, without Whom he would never have gone to Christ, he, the Christian, is then invited and commanded to receive within that which has been of guidance without; to wit, in order to be fully immersed in the Body of Christ, to become the Bride of the Lamb, and to be taken to the New

Jerusalem, the baptism of, in, with the Holy Spirit is indispensable (cf. John 14:16, 17).

Though long and multifarious, the work of the Holy Spirit is constant. Blessed is he who yields to it, not by fits and starts, but continually, ever realizing the need of divine breath as the body is always in need of air for respiration. The Holy Spirit is not blood, but keeps us in the condition so that the blood may flow unimpeded.

Of ourselves we can do nothing. Sooner or later, we must acknowledge and accept this truth absolutely. Yet, since we are creatures, possessing a free will, our task is to be willing to be led and guided, hearing and obeying, not once only, but always, the invitation of Jesus: "Come unto Me."

Having accepted the invitation, let us place ourselves at His school to contemplate Him. There we are invited to take His yoke, whatsoever it may be, and abide in Him always, never becoming independent, but as we have begun with Him to so continue with, in Him.

The Holy Spirit, intent as He is in lifting-up Jesus and to immerse us completely in Him by a process of continuous sanctification, separation, and purification, the Holy Spirit, tender and efficacious Paraclete, will never fail or leave us, if we elect Him as our Guide and continuous Strength.

The commands of the Lord are never given in a lump sum, but one at a time. Jesus, during the days of His humiliation, commanded by the Holy Spirit. He still commands by the Holy Spirit, every command being always preceded by Grace, without which to

obey and accept His yoke would be impossible.

Just to gaze upon that Face is enough to assure us that what He says, He does, for in Him words are deeds, deeds are words (rema); consequently, His yoke is sweet, pleasing, and light.

Great God! One in Three and Three in One.

God the Father: Eternal Love.

God the Holy Spirit: Comforter, Leader, and Glorifier.

God the Son: Jesus Christ, Hope of Glory, Bridegroom, and Lamb.

CHAPTER XIV

BETWEEN THE TWO COVENANTS

HE WHO PERUSES the Acts of the Apostles attentively cannot help but notice that there is, as it were, a territory between the ultimate height of the Spirit and the condition of places and time, necessitating a divine condescension of tolerating what, strictly speaking, was not commanded by the Law of the Spirit.

In the third chapter, for instance, we read that Peter and John went up to the temple at the ninth hour—the hour of prayer. In the Realm of the Spirit there is no specific time or place to pray, for the Holy Spirit, like the wind, moves in a manner unforeseen by man. Nevertheless we cannot censure men like Peter and John, who, for a time, kept attending the temple, the usual place of worship, and at the usual hour. Not that they did not pray elsewhere or at other times during the day, but they still pursued the old judaic custom of place and times.

In the same book of Acts we read of feasts, whereas in the Realm of the Spirit there are no feasts, save that of the day of Grace, the Sabbath, Rest in Christ: a day without end. Not even an Easter exists, for our Passover (Easter) is Christ.

We also read that Paul heeded the advice of the brethren, as recorded in Acts 21:23-26. A strange injunction and a strange obedience, someone might say; and we, too, for a time, have so thought, but it is not so strange as we imagine if we consider the times and circumstances. There are certain acts and deeds, in every age, which, though not commanded, call for prudence and patience, since God Himself allows them, at least for a time.

Certain rules, which do not strictly conform to the Law of the Spirit, are also to be found in several Epistles. For example, the command or exhortation of Paul to the church of Corinth, concerning the offering that should be taken to Jerusalem—namely, that each one had to put aside some money on the first day of the week—was a command for that time, to that church, and on that particular occasion; but we cannot copy or enforce it as a regulation, calling it the permanent Law of the Spirit. For if we really desire to be under the Law of the Spirit, there are no established rules for days, of the amount or the time to give, since *everything* belongs to the Lord. A slave—and slaves of Jesus Christ we must consider ourselves—a slave cannot permit himself to give something to the Master, since nothing is his; but as an administrator of what the Master has entrusted to him, he, the slave, must ask the Lord, time after

time, how much he can use for himself, acknowledging in all truthfulness that nothing belongs to him.

We could cite other examples, but enough has been said to illustrate our point—to wit, that, although we are under the Law of the Spirit as the terminal goal, there is a time of transition between the old and new.

Insofar as forgiveness is concerned, it takes place as soon as one has accepted the Saviour: the same is true of justification by faith. Likewise, we are in Jesus sanctified, for He is our righteousness, sanctification, wisdom, and redemption. But there is a progressive work which must take place in every Christian, if he is really under the Law of the Spirit.

From what has been said above, two considerations emerge: to wit, that in the wisdom and providence of God there is an intermediate stage between one covenant and the other, between the old and the new; and that there are things which, though they must fall, the Lord leaves untouched for a time. And secondly, that His Church, under the guidance of special ministries, is allowed a certain freedom of movements and acts, which eventually will lead to the ultimate height of the Holy Spirit.

Before proceeding, permit us to observe that in the laws of man there are certain regulations, dictated by the prudence of the legislator, called transitory dispositions, serving only until the new law can take effect. We must, at times, learn even from the things of the earth, for the visible is a prophecy of the invisible. Alas, the children of this world are in their affairs wiser than the children of light.

Understanding what is transitory, we can better understand the glorious scene, known as the Transfiguration, which was but a preparation of the Kingdom of God. Moses and Elijah, two representatives of the old dispensation, appeared with Jesus and discussed with Him His *exodus* from Jerusalem. When Peter realized that the two were about to leave, he hastened to ask the Lord permission to build three tabernacles: one for each of the old prophets and one for Jesus. The Scripture, or better, the Holy Spirit adds that Peter did not know what he was saying. In the letter he did know what he was saying, but the lesson on the Mount, in its real import, was neither by him nor the other two companions, James and John, then understood; later it was. The lesson was, is great, and reveals that for a time, even in the most pious, a certain influence of Moses and Elijah lingers. In fact, the Lord Himself permits it; but the day comes when the little flock must enter into the Kingdom of God and remain with Jesus alone: namely, she must pass from rules and regulations to the King, from the complex to the simple, having only one message and contemplating one Face.

The Church is destined to the Kingdom. The Kingdom of God is served by means of the Kingdom of heaven. God is One, true; but the means and agents used to lead us to Him are many. In fact, and we have mentioned it more than once, the time will come when the Son will put everything into the hands of the Father: then there will be no need for Him to reign any longer, for everyone will be so

immersed and identified with the King that he will not need any commands. Blessed height of the Spirit.

That to the Church, to the servants—servants that follow Jesus expecting approval only from Him—that to the Church a certain latitude of action is allowed and granted cannot be denied. There are pious examples even among men. A gentle and trustful master entrusts his faithful servant with his goods: he, the servant, though given general rules, is permitted a certain liberty of action, as circumstances warrant. Two examples taken from the sacred script will suffice.

Abraham entrusted his servant with a delicate commission, giving him absolute commands as to where he should go to seek out a wife for Isaac; but the patriarch did not tell him who the bride should be, nor how he was to go about the task. The servant obeyed, asking for guidance, at every step, from above, without fearing that his master would have been annoyed. The master had indicated the general line; the particulars would have been unfolded, step by step, according to the circumstances; so it was.

Again, in the fourth chapter of the book of Daniel is recorded the dream of the king of Babylon and the interpretation Daniel gave. The message of the Lord was precise, absolute; yet the prophet ventured a suggestion to the king in order that the sentence of heaven might be attenuated or entirely absolved. We read: "Wherefore, O king, let my counsel be acceptable unto thee, and break off thy sins by righteousness, and thine iniquities by showing mercy to

the poor: if there may be a lengthening of thy tranquility" (Daniel 4:27).

Great, generous God, Who, while precise and intent on the final plan placed before His Church, is patient in the method. He Who is God and Lord desires that we servants be firm in the goal, patient, gentle, and somewhat flexible in the method. What would be if the Lord were inflexible, rigid, not only in the final plan, but also in the methods used to execute that plan? Has He not in the creation and government of the world given a lesson, that He in nature follows the line of least resistance, yet ever advancing, as though He were now letting up His pace, now proceeding securely ahead? If one observes the trees, the clouds, and the seacoast, he will see that the delicate curve predominates. Man has made, makes things sharp, and often cruel, not God.

The Law of the Spirit is absolute and also relative, as has already been mentioned throughout this imperfect study on such a theme. The Christian must keep growing under that guidance, which, while it leads forward, does not cripple him.

It is not easy for a Christian to say that everything he has is *not* his; hence, the Apostles had to resort to special exhortations. Neither is it common to see churches really generous: this is the reason that faithful servants, humble and enlightened, must, in the fear and love of God, feel free at times to advise their flocks, so that people remain firm to the ultimate plan, even though that plan is attained gradually, for so has God Himself decided. Therefore, it

is given to the Church, guided by the Holy Spirit, to have power to bind and to unloose. Wisdom is coupled to understanding, for the things of heaven have weight, number, and measure.

The Law of the Spirit—the perfection of all laws—leads to the greatest of heights. But not everyone can proceed swiftly and rapidly in the ascent. Some move more slowly than others, by degrees; yet no one should remain still or abuse the patience of the Lord. Everyone, if honest and loyal, must strive to obey as best he can. God does not despise the honest intentions of the heart. He is satisfied if one has done what was possible. He will qualify us perfect, whereas we are always imperfect. And He, blessed Lord, above all human goodness, He, in the end, will accomplish what may still be lacking in us, for He, our Covenant, is the Fulness that filleth all in all.

How many covenants have we? And it seems we still hear from some well-intentioned ones that some covenants of old were never abrogated. Indeed? If this were so, then Jesus is not the perfect Redeemer. He has absorbed and personifies all covenants, before and after Moses. Jesus Christ has become the only Covenant between us and God. He is everything.

It is to this reality that the Law of the Spirit brings us. And to those who have studied to love and serve Him, not weighing the quantity but noting the quality, who, scrutinizing the intentions of their inner life, have desired and tried to do their best, He will say: *Enter into the joy of thy Lord.*

CHAPTER XV

TO KNOW

A QUESTION: Does *knowing*, in the things of God, refer primarily to intellectual or spiritual knowledge? Whereas unredeemed man defines knowledge as intellectual attainments, the spiritual man begins with the revelation given him by the Holy Spirit, for it is only by the Holy Spirit that we have truth (cf. I John 5:7).

In John 17:3 we read: "This is life eternal: to know Thee the only true God, and Him Whom Thou didst send, Jesus Christ."

To know, in the vocabulary of the Spirit, mostly refers to *affection*, *reverence*, and *communion*, rather than to curious and fanciful investigations.

Divine, eternal realities are above all human reasonings and definitions. They are mysteries, sacred secrets, to be opened only when, how, and as much as the Holy Spirit deems. True, to the Church is given to know the mysteries of the Kingdom of God, but the key to such a knowledge is a spiritual key, for spiritual things are spiritually discerned (cf. I Corinthians 1, 2).

When Jacob, in that eventful night, was met by the Man-Angel-God and asked the Stranger his name, the Divine Being was not displeased at the request, but gave an answer to be pondered: "Wherefore dost thou ask after my name?" (Genesis 32:29). Another case in point is recorded in Judges 13:17, 18. We read: "And Manoah said unto the angel of the Lord, What is thy name? . . . and the angel of the Lord said unto him, Why askest thou thus after my name, seeing it is secret [wonderful]?"

~~The Holy Spirit does not lend Himself to mental curiosities.~~ Alas, it is a sad fact, that the Visible Church has, as the result of much reasoning and definitions, been subjected to many painful wrangles.

The sacred script informs of much, but does not demonstrate everything. In fact, a devout Christian will never attempt to reason things to their ultimate conclusion from an intellectual standpoint. He possesses an intuition of many truths, the evidence of which he has not, except in a limited sense. He can give the reason of his hope (cf. I Peter 3:15), but he does not see things as they really are or as they will be. He sees, instead, Jesus—the *Man* Jesus (cf. Hebrews 2:9), Who, seen first as Man, unique in every aspect, is then discovered, the more one climbs the Mount and contemplates Him, as the Son of God.

Truth, as an entity and in detail, always starts by presenting the *Man*. We insist on this, for visions or revelations which do not present the Man-God in His humiliation and in His glory are fallacious. The Apostle exhorts to try the spirits, for "every spirit"—

and there are many seductive spirits—"every spirit that confesseth not that Jesus Christ [the Man] is come in the flesh is not of God" (I John 4:1-5).

It is the Holy Spirit Who enables us to see our inner ruins, depravity, in order to lead us to accept the Man-God, God-Man as the Saviour. It is the Holy Spirit, also, Who, as our Teacher and Conductor, leads us throughout the earthly pilgrimage. He is the Truth as well as the Revealer and Portrayer of the Truth—Jesus Christ the Lord. While Jesus is above preparing the place, the Holy Spirit is preparing us here below for the final rendezvous with the King and Bridegroom of our souls. By yielding continuously to Him, we will be taken from height to height, till transported into the finality of God's Kingdom.

Of course, the knowledge of the spirit will, in a measure, extend and enlighten our intellects, also; but while we are in these vessels of clay we never know anything as we should. "For," thus admonishes an Apostle of great mind and holiness, "For we know in part, and we prophesy in part, but when that which is perfect is come, that which is in part shall be done away" (I Corinthians 13:9, 10).

Let us, then, ask the Lord for Grace to be enlightened only in that which is pleasing to Him. And, in such a spirit, let us fall and remain at the blessed feet of Jesus, in love and adoration.

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