

The Lawz of they World.



Romans, XII. 2. "Be not conformed to this World."

"How shall we succeed in the world, unless we adopt its Policy," is the natural exclamation of most persons, entering upon an active life! How shall we secure a respectable standing among men; or wield any influence over them, if we refuse to follow their favourite pursuits!

Yet, Paul urges this Exhortation, with almost the solemnity of an oath, "I beseech you, by the mercies of God, be not conformed to this World."

The apostle's meaning, is, that men are, naturally, inclined to sin, and averse to Holiness, their hearts and minds, "not being subject to the Law of God;" and, to obtain His Favour, they must be "transformed", by the Holy Spirit, and become living sacrifices to Christ, consecrated to His service, and devoted to such privations and sufferings, as He sees fit to assign to each Believer. In other words, the Laws which govern worldly men, utterly fall short, of the End that are sought, to be attained, by the Conversion of the carnal heart.

Whatever good, these Laws may accomplish, they do not propose, to bring sinners into a state of acceptance with God. It is by no means, designed, then, that Christians ~~shall~~ ^{shall} forego the benefits, that are to be derived from human Institutions; but, that our Grand Concern, is, to be conformed to the supreme Law of our Saviour's Love, which comprehends, & enforces, all other laws, suitable to our condition. Paul does not say, we must cease to be Gentlemen, or Good Citizens, but, that we shall, eminently,

sustain both of these Characters, when we walk, consistently, by the Cross of Christ.

We are required to live in Society; and to discharge its Duties, with Fidelity, and without Reproach. But, the Established Maxims of the social state, are imperfect, and insufficient, even to regulate our intercourse with each other, so as to secure our Happiness; because they say not one word, of the True Sources of Forbearance, and Self-Denial, and Charity; and of many other Obligations, laid on us by a common Redemption;

and, they are wholly at fault, in any prison for coming before God, with Penitence, & in Peace.

Paul was writing to the Christians at Rome, which was the seat of Idolatry, where Honour, and Justice, and Modesty, ~~honourable~~, ^{nevertheless}, were deified, by Multitudes, who were treacherous, and cruel, and corrupt. Yet, in that abandoned city, there could be found Saints, even in "Caesar's Household," who, without affecting any singularity in things indifferent, would not participate in the vain amusement; Sensual

Pleasures, and inordinate pursuit of wealth, dis-
tinction, and power, so eagerly coveted by such as
"mind earthly things." So far as "Fashion" would
persuade these chosen few, to comply with the
Observance which tended to prevent their growth
in spirituality, and piety, towards God and man;
they cheerfully took all the odium and
Ridicule, that were cast upon them, for their
scrupulousness, and precision; and, they parted
with their lives, sooner than they would peril
the welfare of their souls, for any supposed

advantages, which their acquiescence could
have procured them.

At the present period, men do not, as a
general thing, live in closer conformity with
their own chosen principles, than they did at
Rome. None are ever better than the standard
that they adopt; and, the standards themselves,
are either altogether defective; or essentially
corrupt. What the law of Honour permits; nay
enjoins, is well known; and, when it has done
all that it can do, to make men civil, it

over-comes no sinful affection; turns back from
no wicked habit; frowns not on any one vice;
and takes not a single step, in a humble re-
-liance on an over-ruling Providence. We should
recoil, with horror, from taking ^{up} our residence
in a Community, where this law should be
the only Rule; since neither Person, nor
Property, would be regarded; and there could be
no security either for Life, or for Game.

So, the Laws of the Land, however useful
for our present needs, are wholly ineffectual

to keep men from ruining in this world; or from
reaping everlasting Destruction from the Presence of
the Lord, in the next. Princely Estates, may be
accumulated, and protected, by their aid; but, without
the government of a "more perfect way," they are
only higher than ordinary molehills; from which,
Death casts their owners down to more signal
ruin.

Most systems of morals, also, which men have
framed, are radically unsound, and unavailing;
because they deal not with our Race, as lost

Sinners, needing an Infinite Ransom for their Guilt
before God, and incapable of Reconciliation, except
by submitting to be led by the Holy Spirit.
Various excellent rules, they set forth, for the
voluntary improvement of our several Relations;
and capable of immense benefit, when they
are properly observed; but, they are not enforced,
by the awful Sanctions of a Judgment to come.
We may aim at the most exact conformity,
to the line of Conduct, which they suggest;
and, we may, in a great measure, succeed; yet,

God Law looks to see ^{obstinate} Rebels, changed to
Devoted Worshippers, by Divine Grace; and miserable
Sinners, coming to know the Love of God, which
perfect Knowledge. And the Reason, is, that
none could have known it; had not Jesus
Christ, so revealed the Father.

Hence, while some make Works the ground
of their Confidence, they build on a sandy founda-
-tion, though they boast loudly, of their Zeal
for Christ; not having the Witness of the Spirit.
The true ground of assurance, is the Sanctification
of the heart & soul, & mind, & body, which will
of necessity, be obedient to all afforded admonitions,
because, otherwise the Spirit cannot be dwelling.

John says truly, though plainly, that he is a liar,
who professes to know Christ, but does not obey Him.

Every Child knows by heart, the story of the sons of
Jacob, who were led by visions of plenty in Egypt,

to leave their homes, where God had supported them for a long period; but few persons remember that Abraham himself, once, before, betook himself thither; and fell into a most grievous snare; from which, Divine Grace, only, could deliver him. The same apparent exigency and distress, arose, also, in Isaac's time; but the Child of Promise was too well settled in the Faith, to swerve, for a moment, no matter how pressing the need might be, from the Command Go not down to Egypt. He submitted to the plain teaching of God's Word, and sought not the favour of Princes!

The Law, has no exceptions, or evasions, like those of men. On the altar of the burnt sacrifices, the fire was kept continually burning. Our hearts must never let the flame go out. How often did Christ upbraid His Chosen Disciples, with their low estimate of the Dignity & Excellency of His Power;

and their disposition not to understand His spiritual explanations of Jewish Rites and Ceremonies. With what Zeal did He temper His Rebukes, of their House of Belief. How unlike, was His admonition, to that of many of His appointed Ministers! Wherefore, let none be kept back, by false shame, or by unnecessary fear; for we are all dealing with our Blessed Saviour, rather than with His fallible servants; and we can always appeal to Him, for the honesty of our purposes, to read His Will aright. We know, that His Spirit is striving within, to bring us, to obedience, when we experience contrary feelings, inclining us, to yield our opposition. He no longer sends Angels, to communicate, expressly, as of old; but, we may be certain, He has other methods, no less effectual.

Do any Ministry, here, claim, that they have no need of any Ministry, to come between God, & their spirits, to

give them a sense of Reconciliation & His Will! Dear
Heaven, do not believe any such suggestions of your
evil heart of aversion to His Law! You do not
in fact, trust your own professor of independence!
You feel, at times, the Crumbling of the ground on
which you stand! You know, that you are
unworthy of His Mercy, and you are too proud, to
seek it, by unconditional submission! The most perfect
are not worthy, of the loving kindness of the Lord, but,
that can be no good cause, to keep them from
coming to the Cross, and cultivating the deepest
convictions of their dependence!

Are there any here, disposed to censure others, for
coming to the Lord's Ordinances, with no better pre-
paration, (as they think), than their own! We
ask such, how can you make this, (granting
that unworthy members do come), any apology
for your disobedience! So far from releasing you,

of any portion of your sin, they only add to it, the
guilt of uncharitableness!

Are any who have once "tasted the good Word
and the power of the World to come" disposed to turn
back, and forsake their Father's Bond! At
every step they take, they tread on thorns! They
can have no Peace with God, no Peace with
themselves, in their estrangement from their first
Love, till they repent of their indifference
and concessions, and return to their former Way!

Doubtless, some, here, promise themselves a
death-bed Repentance. They trust, some brief space,
~~it~~ will afford room for a compliance,
before the last struggle, and the consummation
of a holy Faith, may, so, fall to them! -
But these Hopes, & Comforts, are a portion to
Believers, for Life, and not for Death! -

God has other ministries, for His Chosen People,
when the time comes, to take them to
Himself. His Pastors and Teachers, are set
in His Church militant, to break the
Bread of Life, to His faithful servants;
but, when He bids them "Come up hither"
He sends Angels, to strengthen them. Oh,
do not rely on the Sacrament, then, that
you hope to take, at your last hour
on Earth; as a sort of Charm to drive
the terror of the Great Enemy! There is
but faint promise, that you shall grasp
these holy pledges compulsively, & your
comfort, while the days of a whole life
shall crowd on your remembrance!

Can you answer me, any one of these Reasons,
which I have urged, why you should give up
your powers of body & mind, to the Law of Love!
Christ, by suffering for you in the flesh,
has revealed all that man needs to know
of Eternity. He unveils your Spirit to your
own gaze; making you know both
God, & yourself in the full extent of your
dependence; telling you, your Dangers,
and providing for your safety. He will
not readily give you up, after He has
done so much for your Salvation. He
will bring you home to His Mansion
in Heaven, if you will permit Him to
be your Guide!

None can plead Ignorance of the Law. Moses told the Children of Israel, "It is not hidden from thee; neither is it far off;" and again, "It is not too hard or heavy for thee". i. e. not unintelligible; nor impracticable. It can readily be learned, and easily performed. No philosophy need be paid; no orators employed; to make laborious investigations, or studied applications, of these holy truths. No merchants are required to bring it as gold or precious stones, from beyond the sea. Though the pearl be of great price, "the word is very nigh thee, in thy mouth and in thy heart, that thou mayest do it". Such was the preaching of Moses. He tells the people they have the living word, by heart, and in their whole history, sermons, almost without number, and that none need ask "Who shall ascend into Heaven, or who shall descend into the Deep," but that everywhere, they may know, that "our Redeemer liveth!"

On every occasion of our public worship, we profess that we believe in one Church; not in many Churches, or different divine doctrines, but in one, holy, and Catholic. In some sense, then, all of God's people form one Church; and we are at no loss to know who they are; for He has told us, that He will own those who do His Will. We know, that He tasted death, for every man; and, therefore, the blessings of salvation can be extended to all. His Law, was broad enough to embrace Abraham, in a heathen land, and make him "the father of the faithful;" even insufficient for Job, the model of all who follow the light of Nature. Our article says "the old Testament is not contrary to the New". They both teach one Church. Both have but one Justification. No matter by what pledges, or under what form, the condition are the same; "Repentance toward God, & faith in our

Lord Jesus Christ - There must be a deep sense
of the sinfulness of Sin; and an earnest longing
for the Guidance of the Holy Spirit. In the
Old Covenant, there was obscurity & indis-
-tinctness, in regard to the Future State; but
none whatever on the path of Submission to
the Will of God. The Fathers knew that such
a State of coming felicity must exist; but,
the particulars were not revealed. Each e. g.
had walked with God, and God took him. They
were as certain, as we, that some final Rest
must be reached, by the Spirit, though they
had never seen a glorified body, restored from
Dust. Bodies had been translated, and the Power
that could do it, in one way; could open another.
Doubtless, there was good reason for not revealing
the future Reward and Punishment, to that stiff-
-necked & rebellious generation. It was His Will to

govern them, by present Judgment, & signal Miracles.
He chose such a People, for His Demonstration
because they were so bad, that they could not
feel, that they had any claim to such Mercies,
above other Nations around them!

the great cause of this inconsistency between man's
life & his other reactive, is human selfishness.
Private Judgment, supersedes public Authority.
We are willing to be ruled by ourselves, or
by such as think & act, exactly, as we do!
It is no more than the natural expansion
of our pride; and hence, the range of our love
is coextensive with the limits of our party.
Our Charity hopeth all things; believeth
all things; may endureth all things; for such
as are afraid to all our opinions! We discover no
despotism, in these, so long as they remain
in power; although, in their successors, who
do the same things, we can detect it, without
glance! How different, is the law of Christ!
He bridles the tongue, & binds the hand, of those
who have tasted the Liberty, where with the Gospel
makes us free!

Hence, the perpetual change in human laws,
solely because these ^{divine principles} popular opinions, like
the ebb & flow of the ocean, ~~in their endless~~
~~vacillations~~, cast up 'mine & thine'! For
they cannot hold out before us, this Kingdom
is an unchanging Kingdom. ~~From the~~ Heavenly
~~for~~ all earthly Kingdoms; ~~substituting~~ no
and, much as we permit men to alter
or will, their civil & social institutions,
We do not suffer them to shift the
principles of this Gospel -

David had said that the Prince is not to the mass.
nor the battle to the strong - He a mere stuffer, but
prostrated voluntarily with a King, because he had enlisted the
armies of the living God!

No boast more common, than of our freedom - none
with less reason - 'Who dares think, & speak, and act, independently
of the masses! A policy, or a religion, we are obligatory to know
what others will say or do before we shape our course. Few take
the onward path, that he sees as the right & true path, fully fraternal reap -

