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## THE SUPPOSED CHORUS OF GRACES.

II PETER i. 5-7.

THERE is a peculiarity in the structure of this section of Scripture, that is not exhibited in the present rendering, which, otherwise is correct enough. At present, the graces of Christian character seem to stand side by side, as the chorus in a Grecian dance, who danced with joined hands: *Clarke*. We cannot think this gives the true figure used here, by the apostle. There is no dancing in it; and there should be none countenanced by Christians, who should set the example of rational men and women; and not of spinning-tops. They who have minds and souls, can afford to leave dancing, to the inferior orders of creatures.

“And beside this:” *Kai auto touto de*, “*auto touto*, governed by *kata* or *dia* understood, *II Pet.* i. 5, which I take to be the *apodosis*, or correspondent member of the sentence, to ver. 3. *Hoos*, *As* or *since his divine power hath given us all things that (pertain) to life and godliness*, etc. *Kai (kat’)* *auto touto de*—*So also agreeably, or according to, this very thing, or to all that I have just said, giving all diligence, add,*” etc. *Parkhurst*.

“Add to your faith virtue:” Add (*epichoreegeesate*, from *epichoreegeoo*, “to furnish besides, in addition, to supply further, to minister;” *Robinson*. “To supply, furnish; or rather, to supply or furnish abundantly, \* \* \* occurring *II Pet. i. 5*. I am aware that *Sir Norton Knatchbull* and *Doddridge* have supposed that the word, in this place, alludes to the ancient custom of dancing *in chorus*, Faith being represented as the *leading* grace in the chorus of Christian virtues, and they accordingly explain *epichoreegeesate* by *join*, or *associate to the chorus*, of Christian virtues, namely. This exposition, it must be confessed, is ingenious, and well suited to the apostle’s discourse; but I can find no authority for *epichoreegeoo* being ever thus used, which is the less probable in this place, because at the eleventh verse it is evidently applied in its usual sense of *supplying, furnishing, or ministering.*” *Parkhurst*. The word being compounded of *epi*, besides, or to, and *choreegeoo*, from *choreegos*, the leader of the ancient chorus, also he who supplied the chorus, at his own expense, with ornaments and all other necessaries, (*Ibid.*;) is used in the N. T. five times, of which this is one instance, and in the other four there is no vestige of leading in a chorus. “Now he that ministereth (*epichoreegoon*) seed to the sower both minister (*choreegeesei*) bread for (your) food,” etc. *II Cor. ix. 10*. “He therefore that ministereth (*epichoreegoon*) to you the Spirit, and worketh miracles among you,” etc. *Gal. iii. 5*. “And not holding the Head, from which all the body by joints and bands *having nourishment ministered* (*epichoreegoumenon*, this one participle being rendered by the three English words italicized) and knit together, increaseth,” etc. *Coloss. ii. 19*. Then, after the place in hand, “For so an entrance shall be ministered unto you (*epichoreegeetheesetai humin*) abundantly into the everlasting kingdom of our Lord

and Saviour Jesus Christ." *II Peter* i. 11. It would be contrary to safe criticism, to adhere to the dancing chorus fancy, in the presence of such facts. The judicious Dr. Robinson does not even hint at such a sense; Dr. Parkhurst, a thorough student, denies it; and it is discountenanced, by all the other uses of the word in the N. T. Liddell & Scott, whose lexicon is justly ranked among the best, give us the following definitions: "*epichoreegeoo*, to furnish, supply besides; in general, to furnish, supply: *epichoreegeema*, an additional supply; hence, 2,=*epiphoreema*, dèssert, sweetmeat: *epichoreegia*=the foregoing; in general, a supply, N. T." So, we accept *supply* as the sense here).

"Supply (in) to your faith virtue;" insert virtue to your faith: *en teei pistei humoon teen areteen*; into the faith of you, force, energy. "When, however, N. T. expositors took *en* simply for a nota dativi (mark of the dative) even where a Dative proper (not an Ablative) is required, they went too far, and their opinion could not find even a remote support in the Hebrew idiom." *Winer*, 217. This able grammarian refers to *I John* iv. 9, in illustration: "In this was manifested the love of God toward us (*hee agapee tou Theou en heemin*);" which he takes to signify, "the love of God was manifested *in* (respect to, *on*) *us* which differs unquestionably from *to us*." And *Gal.* i. 16; "To reveal his Son in me (*ton whion autou en emoi*)." We are not to take *en teei pistei* as a simple dative, and the sentence in which it stands as signifying that energy is to be supplied to faith, as a mere associate: but the energy is to be inserted, introduced, put in; according to the proper use of *en*: for if the apostle had meant simple association, the simple dative would have been sufficient without the *en*. And it is remarkable, that throughout this series of seven precisely similar sentences, the *en* invariably precedes the dative followed

by the accusative. Thus the energy is to be supplied into the faith; the knowledge, into the energy; the temperance (self restraint), into the knowledge; the patience, into the self restraint; the godliness, into the patience; the brotherly kindness, into the godliness; the love (*agapee*), into the brotherly kindness. The similarity of construction, and of the use of *en* in the construction is complete, unvarying. Supply *en teei pistei* (*hymoon*) *teen areteen*; *en de teei areteei teen gnoosin*; *en de teei gnoosei teen egkrateian*; *en de teei egkrateiai teen hupomoneen*; *en de teei hupomoneei teen eusebeian*; *en de teei eusebeiai teen philadelphian*; *en de teei philadelphiai teen agapeen*. There we have the series; than which nothing could be in more complete similarity; even in gender alike; the *en*, the *de*, the *dative*, the *accusative*: the *de* is connective; the *en* local, signifying place, position.

Like a bulb, faith is the outward tunica or peel, enwrapping energy, enwrapping knowledge, enwrapping temperance, enwrapping patience, enwrapping godliness, enwrapping brotherly kindness, enwrapping love; the heart of the bulb, in which is the life germ, the principle of growth, of propagation: for without that, the *tunicæ*, the peels, all the rest, the peels, are nothing. Love is the precious, crowning, principal, Christian grace; and this brotherly, godly, patient, continent, intelligent, energetic faith is to produce and protect this all important love. The life of the beautiful plant, the germ of all propagation, is love. Without this, a Christian profession is the sound of hollow brass, the tinkling of a cymbal.

## IS IT HE, OR IT, SHALL APPEAR?

I JOHN iii. 2, 3.—Beloved, now are we the sons of God, and it doth not yet appear what we shall be: but we know that, when he shall appear, we shall be like him; for we shall see him as he is. And every man that hath this hope in him purifieth himself, even as he is pure.

“**B**ELOVED:” Believers that Jesus is the Christ: brethren according to the faith expressed in the succeeding sentence.

“Now are we the sons of God:” *Tekna Theou*; he that loveth is born of God: the children of the same Father, Christians, love one another: love is the distinguishing characteristic of a Christian: but it must be observed, that while love covers faults, hides defects, and is very patient; love is quick to detect and careful to signify anything wrong, sinful, and therefore pernicious in the character or conduct of the beloved one, for his own sake, and not because of the annoyance to the perceiver. The children of God; a very great distinction, indeed! To be a child of a very distinguished man is considered honorable. It is said, that when Rev. Joseph Wollff, the eminent convert from Judaism, asked the hand of a noble lady in marriage, her father was disposed to decline, what he considered an alliance with one of inferior rank; until his good sense yielded to the plea, that the blood of Abraham was inferior to none other. But while the Israelite may glory in being a child of Abraham, the Christian holds himself to be a child of God.

“And it doth not yet appear what we shall be:” *Kai oupoo ephaneroothee ti esometha*: the *ti esometha*, what we shall be, is not yet manifested, made to appear, being in the future. Now, in the present, we are exhibited

to the world, as being the children of God. We have been regenerated by the Holy Ghost through the instrumentality of the gospel. We are new creatures in Christ Jesus: born of God; the children of God. All this is manifest, now. We are the children of God.

But what we shall be, our future, of course the future can be predicted, but it can be manifested only when that future shall have become the present. Grand things are predicted of us: victory over the flesh, the world, and Satan; victory over death and the grave; an abundant entrance into the glorious city; the crown, the harp, the following the Lamb to the fountain of living water, the wiping away of tears forever; etc. But these pure and never fading glories are not yet manifested. They belong to the future. They are to come. "But we know:" Equivalent to the full assurance of faith. We know that the blessed future is predicted, promised, but it is not an object of sense, and therefore we perceive it by faith. We walk by faith, and not by sense.

"That when he shall appear:" *Hoti ean phanerootheei*, we know, we are sure, we firmly believe, that when IT (our future condition) shall appear, be made manifest. "He shall appear" is not the natural construction. John says NOW WE ARE the sons of God; and it doth not yet appear WHAT WE SHALL BE; but we know that, when it shall appear (WHAT WE SHALL BE). This is the proper, natural construction. *What* does not appear? Certainly, "what we shall be:" well, when *that* shall appear, what then? This is what he proceeds to tell us.

"We shall be like him:" whom shall we be like? Surely, God. In verse first, we are pointed to the wonderful love of the Father, who hath arranged a plan, in the execution of which, sinners shall be called, become, the sons of God: the world not recognizing us, because it did not recognize him; and, we being like him, it

does not recognize us. Then being now the sons of God, and it not appearing what we shall be; we are very sure that, when our future condition shall appear, whatever glory shall have come to us, we shall still be like our Father: although our advancement shall be beyond what we can now imagine; it never can be beyond that, the likeness to God, our moral character being like his. We were created "in his image, after his likeness;" and through Jesus Christ, sent to be our Saviour from the loss of that likeness, we have recovered it, and shall retain it forever: for our Second Adam hath procured for us an "eternal salvation;" not failing us as did the first Adam. *Heb. v. 9.*

We are now like Jesus. We have his Spirit; we have his mind; he is the Son of God, we are the sons of God; the spirit of adoption impels us to say, Abba, Father. And if Jesus be the express image of God, and we be like Jesus, it follows that, we are like God. The possession of a body, does not prevent our being like God; for such a fact did not hinder his being like him; nor will our having on the resurrection body, made like unto his glorious body, prevent our bearing that likeness to God; for it is a moral, and not a physical likeness.

No changes of season, or state,  
Can make any change in (the) mind:

And whatever shall occur as we pass through the impenetrable gloom of the valley of the shadow of death, or when the radiance of the heavenly city shall glow upon us, the moral likeness shall not diminish, but shine in brighter degree.

"For, we shall see him as he is:" *Hoti opsometha auton kathoos estin*: not, that our seeing him as he is will make us to be like him; for that has occurred; it was at the time of our new birth, our regeneration.

Then we became the sons of God, and were made like him. But *hoti* is to be taken in the sense of *seeing that*, as "What shall I do? for (*hoti*) my lord taketh away from me the *stewardship*." *Luke* xvi. 3. "Dost not thou fear God, seeing that (*hoti*) thou art in the same condemnation?" *Ib.* xxiii. 40. The gospel declares that, the pure in heart shall see (*opsontai*) God (*Matth.* v. 8); not in a physical sense, but with the mind, shall perceive the development of his invisible, inscrutable nature, as to his moral characteristics; in his works, and in his methods, administration, reign: shall perceive and sufficiently understand, to delight our minds and hearts, filling us to the full with joy. This is the case here: the believer sees God in his grace and providence, until he is filled with joy unutterable and full of glory. But his vision is imperfect, now: and, so, he knows but in part. Then however, then, "when it shall appear" what we shall be; in that blessed day, our eyes will be stronger than those of Moses, who had to be sheltered, while God allowed him to see what was least brilliant of himself; though that was the most glorious sight ever witnessed outside Eden; until he who walked in that garden in the cool of the day, impressed with his sacred feet the appointed soil, where he shed for us that precious blood, that made atonement for our sins. There, in the bright world of reality, we shall see him as he is.

What we see here, we have hinted at in our reference to Moses. We refer to that wonderful revelation promised to him, when he prayed so earnestly, "I beseech thee shew me thy glory. \* \* \* And the Lord said, Behold there is a place by me, and thou shalt stand upon a rock: and it shall come to pass, while my glory passeth by, that I will put thee in a clift of the rock, and will cover thee with my hand while I pass by: and I will take away my hand, and thou shalt see my back

parts: but my face shall not be seen." *Exod.* xxxiii. 18-23. And yet Moses saw "The Lord, the Lord God, merciful and gracious, long-suffering, and abundant in goodness and truth, keeping mercy for thousands, forgiving iniquity and transgression and sin, and that will by no means clear the guilty; visiting the iniquity of the fathers upon the children, and upon the children's children, unto the third and to the fourth generation." *Exod.* xxxiv. 6, 7. Unvarying, unfaltering justice and truth, with mercy, grace, long-suffering, abundant goodness. An intelligent mind could not desire a ruler with superior characteristics to these. Yet this glorious view of God, is not his face. We are to see a brighter glory than that, whose reflection merely made Moses' face to shine so, that the eyes of the people could not endure it: we shall see him as he is.

"And every man that hath this hope in him," *teen elpida tauteen ep' autooi*, this hope in, concerning God, this hope founded in or upon God: not the man has this hope in, within himself; though that is true of course, but the hope that is in this hoper is "this hope in God;" that he will see God as he is. If there be any instances of *epi* being thus used to signify what is within one's self, we can recollect none. Its general import is *upon, above*, etc. Here it means *concerning*, as in *Acts* xi. 19, "Now they that were scattered abroad upon the persecution that arose about Stephen (*epi Stephanooi*, concerning Stephen)." And "— that now at the last your care of me hath flourished again; wherein (*ep'h' hooi*, concerning which) ye were also careful, but ye lacked opportunity." *Philip.* iv. 10. Then we read "every man that hath this hope concerning him (God)."

"Purifieth himself (*hagnizei heauton*):" The reflexive pronoun is properly rendered "himself:" the man having the blessed hope, nourished by his faith in God's

word, that he shall resemble God more strikingly, and that he shall see God more clearly ; will love God more fervently, and his love energizing his faith, his heart will be purified, and, so, his life.

“As he (*ekeinos*) is pure :” Here of the two subjects of the apostle’s remark, *himself*, the one that *purifieth himself* ; and the one that is pure, that one upon whose word the hoper rested ; *ekeinos* refers to that one, God, upon whom the hope of the believer is resting. That is, the *ekeinos* (demonstrative) refers to God, as represented by *Theou, autooi, auton*, in ver. 2, and by *autooi* in ver. 3 ; and not to the child of God, as represented by *heauton*, himself, in ver. 3.

“As,” *kathoos*, does not signify an equality of purity, as to the believer and God : but has the sense of that *adverb* in *John* xvii. 2, “As (*kathoos*, as, inasmuch as, since) thou hast given him power over all flesh, that he should give,” etc. And, “And even as (*kai*, and, *kathoos*, as, inasmuch as, since) they did not like to retain God in their knowledge,” etc. *Rom.* i. 28. Also, “Even as (*kathoos*, as, inasmuch as, since) the testimony of Christ was confirmed in you.” *I Cor.* i. 6. Again, “Purge out therefore the old leaven, that ye may be a new lump, as (*kathoos*, as, inasmuch as, since) ye are unleavened.” *Ib.* v. 7. So, “According as (*kathoos*, as, inasmuch as, since) he hath chosen us in him before the foundation of the world —” i. e. he chose to have the Gentiles to share the blessings coming through the Christ of man, before he arranged the Jewish dispensation, which, in fact, was but an *adjunct* to his plan. *Ephes.* i. 4. And, “Even as (*kathoos*, as, inasmuch as, since) it is meet for me to think this of you all,” etc. *Phil.* i. 7. These citations are sufficient.

Therefore, we read, “Beloved, now are we the sons of God, and it doth not yet appear what we shall be : but we are sure that *when* it shall appear, we shall be

like him, for *we shall see* him as he is. And every man that hath this hope in him (God), purifieth himself, since he (God) is pure."

It may seem to be a weak point, that we have given this adverb *kathoos* a sense in the conclusion of the third, differing from that given to it at the conclusion of the second verse. But, the word has different senses; and it would not be amiss, perhaps, to give it the sense of *since* in verse second: so that we should read "— for *we shall see* him, since HE IS;" he, unlike the deities of the heathen fables, exists: his existence is a certainty; his word is a certainty; that we shall all appear before him is a certainty; and an equal certainty is it that we shall see him, having awakened in his likeness.

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## HE CAN, AND CANNOT, SIN.

I JOHN ii. 1.—My little children, these things write I unto you, that ye sin not. And if any man sin, we have an advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous.

SIN being hateful to God, and hurtful to man, the benevolent and pious old John would have Christians to avoid it; and to that end writes to us; as a father to little children, warning us against this insidious evil; which may spread and destroy like one of those fearful epidemics, that are generated from neglect and carelessness of sanitary rules.

In his teaching he says, — if we walk in the light, as he (God) is in the light, we have fellowship one with another, and the blood of Jesus Christ his Son cleanseth

us from all sin. If we say that we have no sin, we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us. If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness. If we say that we have not sinned (*heemarteekamen*, the perfect tense and used to signify an action or state whose commencement and occasion were completed in time past; as *John* xx. 29, "Thomas, because thou hast seen me (and art still seeing me), thou hast believed (*pepisteukas*, thou hast believed and dost now believe):" and, *Ib.* iii. 18, "He that believeth not is condemned already, because he hath not believed (*mee pepisteuken*, hath not believed, and so does not now believe: i. e. he that believeth not is condemned because he believeth not) in the name of the only begotten Son of God:" again, "She saith unto him, Yea, Lord: I believe (*egoo pepisteuka*), I (emphatically; if no one else, I have believed, and do now believe; sustaining our Eng. Version) that thou art the Christ." *Ib.* xi. 27.) So, the apostle means here by, "If we say that we have not sinned," precisely what he meant in verse 8, by "If we say that we have no sin." These are but two modes of expressing the same idea. As if he had said, "If we say that we have no sin, we deceive ourselves, and contradict God."

But, then, on the other hand, in ch. iii. 9, "Whosoever is born of God doth not commit sin; for his seed remaineth in him: and he cannot sin, because he is born of God." We may not say, that the apostle here speaks of "committing sin," and there is a difference between it and sinning: for there is no difference: to commit sin, and to sin, meaning exactly the same act; as to commit theft, and to thief or steal, are the same; and as to tell a lie, and to lie, are the same. Commit, here, means to do: the expression being, *hamartian*, sin, *ou*, not, *poiei*, he doeth: and that there is no difference of sense between those two modes of expression is seen in

the fact, that in the succeeding part of the same verse, and in view of the same subject, we have "and he cannot sin (*kai ou dunatai hamartanein*, and not is he able to sin, it is impossible for him to sin) because he is born of God."

Does this mean, that if it be possible for any one to sin, it demonstrates that he is not born of God? That he never was at any time born of God; because, if so, the seed would have remained in him, and made it impossible for him to sin? Then why John's "if," ch. ii. 1; If any man (*tis*, any one, any Christian) sin: how could he sin, if he could not sin? And what would be the use of an advocate with the Father, if no Christian could, by any possibility, have any need of him? For the expression could not have been made stronger; *ou*, not, *dunatai*, is he able, *hamartanein*, to sin: and this inability to sin, is because he his born of God. How then can a believer, one born of God, sin? How can he omit any duty, hesitate at any cross, utter an idle word; or lie down after the transactions of the day, without being consciously sure that to the utmost degree of his capacity, he has devoted every moment, and every faculty to the glory of God? As to lying, stealing, smiting, swearing, railing, and other gross sins, of course his conscience is quite clear: and in addition to this every fibre of every faculty, and every moment of every hour, have been, without the slightest negligence or shrinking, honestly and fully devoted to God. He is even with God for that day; as he was even with him yesterday; and as he will be to-morrow; for since he was born of God, he has not been, and is not now able to sin.

Such men must be very rare. We have never been in the company of one such, knowingly. We make no such profession, in our own behalf; for we have no such testimony to offer: our cry being:

O to grace how great a debtor,  
Daily, I'm constrained to be!

But if one could not sin, he would be in no need of grace: for having fulfilled his whole obligation, how could he be offered grace? "If Abraham were justified by works, he hath whereof to glory:" *Rom.* iv. 2. And so would it be of any one else. Besides, it was not the works required by the Mosaic law, that were referred to; for Abraham was centuries before Moses. It meant works of any kind. So, "to him that worketh is the reward not reckoned of grace, but of debt:" the reward is due: it is not grace to give it: it would be unjust to withhold it.

Whatever the apostle meant, it could not have been that he who is regenerate, cannot sin: and yet, apparently, that is precisely what his words signify. In that case, Paul is very wide of the mark, in uttering such solemn warnings against apostasy: for how can a man apostatize, if he cannot sin? Yet in *Heb.* vi. 4-6, he speaks of apostatizing from an advanced stage of Christian experience. True, to shelter the doctrine of final perseverance, an IF is introduced at verse 6; "IF they shall fall away;" but there is no IF used by Paul, the expression being, "— *kai*, and, *parapesontas*, having entirely fallen away:" an impossibility, if a regenerate man cannot sin.

There must be some mode of reconciling John's "if any one sin," with his "he cannot sin, because he is born of God." Adam was born of God, yet he could, and did sin. Was not the inspired David a regenerate man? Yet *he* sinned, and bore testimony that, "If thou, Lord, shouldst mark iniquities, O Lord, who shall stand?" *Psalms* cxxx. 3: that is, as the LXX. render it, "*tis huposteesetai*, who shall endure it?" No one will be able to endure it. "Therefore by the deeds (works) of the law (law) there shall no flesh be justified in his sight." *Rom.* iii. 20. What can be the mode of correctly understanding John's apparently variant modes of expression?

If we turn to the Epistle to the Galatians, we will see Paul remonstrating with them, concerning their turning away from grace and faith, to the law. "Know ye therefore that they which are of faith, the same are the children of Abraham. And the scripture, foreseeing that God would justify the heathen through faith, preached before the gospel unto Abraham, (saying) In thee shall all nations be blessed. So then they which be of faith are blessed with faithful Abraham. For as many as are of the works of the law are under the curse: for it is written, Cursed is every one that continueth not in all things which are written in the book of the law to do them. But that no man is justified by the law in the sight of God, is evident: for, the just shall live by faith. And the law is not of faith: but, The man that doeth them shall live in them. Christ hath redeemed us from the curse of the law, being made a curse for us: for it is written, Cursed is every one that hangeth on a tree: that the blessing of Abraham might come on the Gentiles through Jesus Christ; that we might receive the promise of the Spirit through faith." *Gal.* iii. 7-14.

Then, if we propose to keep the law, and live without sin as respects the law, we undertake an impossibility: humanity is too weak for this: and Paul called the Galatians "foolish" for attempting it even in part: for there is no possibility that a human life can square up to that perfect rule; can lie smoothly by that straight edge. Nor is there any necessity for it. Jesus, the Christ, hath stood for us before the law, and met all demands upon us: so that the law makes no exaction of us: although were we judged by that perfect law; were the Lord to mark iniquities by that straight edge; we should not be able to endure it for a moment.

But, the law, the rule, now, is faith. "He that believeth on him is not condemned: but he that believeth not is condemned already, because he hath not believed

in the name of the only begotten Son of God." *John* iii. 18. Such are the words of the Master. The sin of the present dispensation is unbelief; the holiness, is faith. As the requirement of the Mosaic dispensation, was to keep the law, to do the commandments; and the not doing so was sin: so the requirement of the present dispensation, is to believe in Jesus as the Christ; and the not doing so is sin. So that with respect to THE LAW, "If we say that we have no sin, we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us:" and with respect to FAITH, the believer, the regenerate, "doth not commit sin," i. e. does not sin; "cannot sin;" for it is impossible to believe and not believe at the same time. "He is born of God," is the proof that he is a believer: "Whosoever believeth that Jesus is the Christ is born of God," *I John* v. 1. He then that is born of God is a believer on Jesus and is not condemned, is not a sinner under the requirement of this dispensation; wherein sin is not to believe in the name (Messiahship, Messianic authority) of the only begotten Son of God (Jesus): and the impossibility of the believer to sin, is because it is impossible to believe and to disbelieve at the same time. It is only in this sense that the believer cannot sin.

But, now something concerning the life of the believer, the one born of God, the regenerate. Being justified by faith, he has peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ; and the love of God is shed abroad in his heart by the Holy Ghost, given unto him to help his infirmities. He is a child of God, and is to be educated, trained, fitted for his inheritance; in which he must improve his opportunities, resist enticements to negligence and disobedience; not to become a child of God, but to please his Father, by being useful and happy. He is a soldier, and his foe is strong, artful, persistent, insidious; but he is well armed, has an almighty ally, and must

fight not to be a soldier, but to please his king, by winning the victory. He finds a struggle within himself: the flesh lusteth against the Spirit, but the Spirit against the flesh: but these oppose one another, that he should not do the things that he would: when he would do good, under the impulse of the Spirit, the flesh opposes; when he would do evil, under the impulse of the flesh, the Spirit opposes; and as he, the child of God, who is shielded by the divine promise from intolerable temptation, may choose to walk with the Spirit, his almighty friend; if he do so, he shall not fulfil the lust of the flesh. He may be enticed, but he will not be compelled to consent. The state of his inclinations and will would not measure up creditably, if tried by the law which does not allow a stray, or careless look or feeling; for by the works of the law there shall no flesh be justified in his sight; but he is in Christ, and to him there is no condemnation; regret, to be sure, and sorrow, that he is encompassed and impeded by infirmities; but rejoicing in the blood that makes the foulest clean, and in the grace that upholds such a feeble worm; and the love that counts his faith as righteousness, and grants him such gracious aid and comfort.

The love that is in him fulfils the law. This is his joy. In this wonderful respect alone, is he without sin. He believes and loves. His faith is energized by love: the love is the vitality of the faith, and love worketh no intentional ill to one's neighbor; but ever seeks to do him good. Love is not omniscient, and may err in judgment, plan, device, and do ill; but, never errs in intention. Love, because of human frailty, may weary, flag, droop, cool, in some degree; and would not be able to rejoice in a trial by the law of ALL the heart, ALL the time; except for the shouting of faith, "Jesus Christ by the grace of God tasted death, for every man, and there is no condemnation to them that are in Christ Jesus."

He that loveth is born of God, and he that is born of God is he who believeth that Jesus is the Christ, and has the love of God shed abroad in his heart by the Holy Ghost given unto him: and such a man is not a sinner; his faith is counted for righteousness; and is righteousness, for that is his obedience under this gracious dispensation of salvation by faith. But put this man under the law, and in that instant he is dead. Our life is Christ, who hath redeemed us from the law.

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