**“Human Nature and Its Restraints” The Present Truth 7, 13, pp. 203, 204.**

LET anyone compare the two pictures drawn by Paul, the one in Romans 1:28-31, of the iniquity of ancient heathenism, the other in 2 Timothy 3:1-8, of the iniquity of the last days, even among those who have “a form of godliness,” and he will see that they are exactly alike. Human nature, unrestrained, is the same in all ages. Whether in the days of Christ, or two thousand years before, or two thousand years after; whether manifested in the habitants of Canaan, or in the inhabitants of the United States, it is always the same. It is for this very reason that the Bible fits men, wherever on the earth it may find them. It is a book not for one tribe only, nor for one class, nor for one nation, but for the human race. *And it is the only book in the world that is*. The reason for that is, that the book was given by One who knows human nature in its very essence. {PTUK June 18, 1891, p. 203.1}

God made man upright. But he turned from the bright course which God set before him; he sinned, and so sold himself to do evil; and not the sublime powers which the Lord bestowed upon him, to be exerted in the way of righteousness, are prostituted to evil; his “course is evil,” and his “force is not right.” If ever, then, man shall be raised from his fallen state, if ever his lapsed powers shall be restored, it is indispensable that the tendency of every faculty be restrained, turned into the right course, and trained to follow it. The Bible meets this necessity; it meets it in every part, and satisfies it to the full. Therefore, this of itself is proof that *the Creator of man is the Aauthor of the Bible*. {PTUK June 18, 1891, p. 203.2}

Human nature being the same everywhere, the only thing that makes one person to differ from another *is the degree of restraint* each one recognizes in his own case. If, in a person, all the restraints of the law of God are recognized, he will be a man fitted for the society and fellowship of the angels. If, on the contrary, none of these are recognized, he will be a man fit only for the society and fellowship of demons. Upon many persons, and in many ways, these restraints exert themselves unconsciously, as in the case of the infidel, who denies the authority or the existence of God, and despises his word. Yet the principles of that word are so imbedded in the society of which he is a member that he yields obedience to them, while he thinks he is defying them; but transplant him to the state of society which he advocates, where none of these principles are recognized, and none exerted, and he will run as readily in the way of iniquity as the veriest heathen that ever dwelt in the land of Canaan. And that other class of persons who call themselves “Christians”, or even “Christian ministers,” who, in their opposition to the obligations of the ten commandments, can hardly frame sentences that will sufficiently express the bitterness of their contempt for the law of God, only let the time come when such seed shall have borne its fruit, when society in following such teaching shall have reached that condition which would be defined in the very opposite of the ten commandments, and they will go as greedily in that evil way as did Balaam of old. {PTUK June 18, 1891, p. 203.3}

Again, many will restrain themselves from *doing* evil through fear of punishment; but take away the prospect of punishment, or satisfy them that there will be none, and they will go to any length that circumstances may allow. Henry VIII., although he regarded not God, as long as he feared the Pope did not dare to divorce his wife, but when he had broken through that restraint, he *cut off the heads of* *three wives*, and only a witty speech saved the head of the fourth. {PTUK June 18, 1891, p. 203.4}

There is another course by which men reach the same state of cruelty. That is, not by denying the existence of God, but by making themselves the depositaries of what they choose to define as his will, and then holding themselves as the sole expositors and executors of that will. As in every single instance it is only *their own will* which is thus exalted to the supremacy, and therefore is of only human authority, the only way in which it can be enforced is by human enactment; and then instead of being simply executors, they make themselves *executioners* in carrying into effect their arbitrary will. Making their own will supreme, and themselves the sole interpreters of that will, even though they claim it to be the will of God, they just as veritably put themselves beyond restraint as do the men who deny God outright. Both classes reach the same point, and both commit the same enormous crimes, the one illustrated in the fearful orgies of the Reign of Terror, the other illustrated in the terrible torments of the Inquisition. {PTUK June 18, 1891, p. 203.5}

The Scriptures confirm all that this investigation suggests. In the beginning of this article we cited Romans 1:28-31 as the description of the ancient heathendom, and 2 Timothy 3:1-8 as the description of the last days of modern Christendom, and we find them exactly alike. It is by resistance to the truth of God that men loosen its restraints upon them, and deliver themselves up to the sway of Satan. In the last days it is only those who “received not the *love of the truth* that they might be saved,” in whom Satan works “with all power and signs and lying wonders.” It is only those “who believe not the truth” but have “pleasure in unrighteousness,” who become so deluded that they “believe a lie.” {PTUK June 18, 1891, p. 203.6}

From the beginning of the world God has left no nation without witness. Acts 14:16, 17. By a then “present truth” He has witnessed to different ages. In obedience to that truth, and in the love of it, lay the salvation of the people in each respective age. In the last days God sends a message which continues sounding to the end of the world, and is therefore His last message to the world. It is the Third Angel’s Message, “Here are they that keep the commandments of God, and the faith of Jesus.” Revelation 14:9-16. The commandments of God are truth. Psalm 119:151. The faith of Jesus is the faith of Him who is the truth. John 14:6. Both together embrace the whole Word of God, which is truth (John 17:17), and restrain men. “*Thou shalt not*” is the key-note of the commandments of God; “and if any man will come after Me, *let him deny himself*,” exclaims Jesus. Therefore the Third Angel’s Message, in holding forth the “commandments of god and the faith of Jesus” presents the summary of all those restraints which are demanded in checking and transforming the tendencies of human nature, and in leading them by the “right course,” to goodness and to God. And when the word shall deliberately reject the Third Angel’s Message, it thereby places itself beyond those restraints, and is then ready to be led captive by Satan *at his will;* and then it is that he works with all power in them that perish, “*because* they received not the love of the truth that they might be saved.” By the Third Angel’s Message, the harvest of the earth will be ripened for good or for ill; for glory or for shame; to be gathered into the garner of God, or to be bound in bundles to be burned. {PTUK June 18, 1891, p. 204.1}

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