**“The First Commandment. The Lust of the Eyes” The Present Truth 18, 10, pp. 148, 149.**

**THE FIRST COMMANDMENT**

THE second of the three forms under which “the world” is embraced, and idolatry manifested, is— {PTUK March 6, 1902, p. 148.1}

“The lust of the eyes.” {PTUK March 6, 1902, p. 148.2}

The lust of the eyes can be summed up in one word, vanity; and vanity is simply love of display. Something is put on ourselves, or that which is ours, merely for display, to attract the attention and excite the lust of the eyes of others, and cause them to envy our condition. {PTUK March 6, 1902, p. 148.3}

Further, on our own part, this idolatry is indulged in our seeing something that somebody else has, and not being content until we have imitated him by obtaining for ourselves a like thing. {PTUK March 6, 1902, p. 148.4}

That which we see with others may be perfectly proper, and strictly becoming, to them; yet, when imitated by us, it may be altogether improper, and unbecoming in itself, besides our indulging idolatry in the use of it. Because, if our eyes had not seen that particular thing, no thought of our own, and no need of our life, would ever have suggested that we should have it. The only reason of our having it being solely that our eyes saw it in possession of some other one, the possession of it by us is sheer idolatry in the lust of the eyes. {PTUK March 6, 1902, p. 148.5}

This principle of idolatry is expressed in the one word, the worldly word, “fashion.” The world spends time in inventing particular styles of dress, or whatever else may be a part of the living. The world is expected to follow, and expects to follow, the fashion set by the world. {PTUK March 6, 1902, p. 148.6}

God has made no two persons alike. He has made each person with characteristics which single him out distinctly from all others in the universe. This is for a purpose. We are created for the glory of God; that is, the purpose of our creation is that each one, in the characteristics which make him himself alone, distinct from all others in the universe, shall be a means of making God manifest,—of reflecting a ray of the light of God, in a way that no other can possibly do, that by each one God shall be manifested as not by any other one. And, in order that this shall be so, it is essential that each one shall be joined only *to God*, and this with all his heart, and all his soul, and all his mind, and all his strength—the whole being. {PTUK March 6, 1902, p. 148.7}

This principle is expressed in the parable of the talents in Matthew 25. When the master took his journey into a far country, and delivered to his servants his goods,—to one five talents, to another two, and to another one, he gave “to every man according to his several [individual; not common to two or more; separate, particular] ability.” And from the master, at His returning and reckoning, each one receives according as he has used the gift of God, according to this “several ability.” {PTUK March 6, 1902, p. 148.8}

No one is to use, indeed no one can use, this gift of God in *imitation of others*. To attempt to use it in imitation of others is to separate from God, and put others in His place; it is to have other gods before the Lord; it is idolatry. {PTUK March 6, 1902, p. 149.1}

There are desires of the flesh which are not lusts of the flesh, in the wrong sense. While we are in this world, it will be necessary for us to eat and to drink—not to make a god of the belly, not for the satisfaction of appetite, not for the lust of the flesh, but for *the glory of God*. Those who serve God in the keeping of the First Commandment eat and drink that which, in every respect, enables them best to discern what is the will of God, and how best to serve Him according to that will. {PTUK March 6, 1902, p. 149.2}

While we are in the world, it will be essential to clothe ourselves—not to please the world; not to conform to some silly style that our eyes see, which is altogether of the world, and which we ourselves would never think of it our eyes had not seen it as displayed by the world—not that; but the glory of God. {PTUK March 6, 1902, p. 149.3}

It is proper, indeed it is essential, to our glorifying God, that we shall dress neatly; that we shall wear as good clothing as we honestly can; that it shall be made to fit us becomingly, that is, that it shall conform strictly to our own individuality; that it shall be a proper expression of our own several selves, as God has made us. But to imitate the dress of others, to put something on ourselves simply because we have seen it on others, to adopt a style for ourselves which we have seen adopted by others,—all this is of the lust of the eyes; all this is not of the Father, but is of the world; it is idolatry. {PTUK March 6, 1902, p. 149.4}

A long coat is strictly becoming to a long man, but not at all so to a short man. A high collar is entirely proper for a man who has a long neck; but for a man with a short neck to wear a collar so high that it throws up his head as if he were constantly gazing at the moon, is not at all proper. A blue dress, or one of some other color, may be exactly becoming to the one whom you saw wearing it; but it may be the last color in the world that you should wear in a dress. {PTUK March 6, 1902, p. 149.5}

Now, all this imitating of others, all following of fashion, is but the lust of the eyes, is of the world, and is idolatry. {PTUK March 6, 1902, p. 149.6}

Ask God what He will have you do. It can never be a proper question with you, as to whether anybody else in the wide universe does it. You are to glorify God, not others. {PTUK March 6, 1902, p. 149.7}

Study, in the fear of God, your own self as the workmanship of God; and study, in the fear of God, asking *Him only* what you shall wear, what you shall eat, what you shall drink, what you shall do, that shall most fully glorify Him, that shall most fully represent the talent which He has given you to be used for Him only, according to *your* “several ability.” {PTUK March 6, 1902, p. 149.8}

A. T. JONES.

**“The First Commandment. The Pride of Life” The Present Truth 18, 11, pp. 163, 164.**

**“THE PRIDE OF LIFE.**

ANOTHER phase of the worship of “the god of this world,” included in “the pride of life,” is the worship of Mammon, or riches. And this is not by any means least, though it is the last one in the list. For is it not written, “The love of money is the root of all evil”? {PTUK March 13, 1902, p. 163.1}

There is nothing that gives worldly glory so quickly, so easily, and so abundantly as money; and there is nothing that gives power so quickly and so easily as does money. All this, simply because Mammon is such a familiar deity to mankind, because mankind is naturally so worshipful of Mammon. And yet it is all idolatry; it is all a denial of the true God; it is a breaking of the First Commandment, which says, “Thou shalt have no other gods before Me.” For, says Jesus: “Yet can not,“—not, Ye ought not; not, Ye should not; but,—“Ye *cannot* serve God and Mammon.” {PTUK March 13, 1902, p. 163.2}

Since the true worship of God is to love God with all the heart, and all the soul, and all the mind, and all the strength; and anything that draw away either the heart, soul, mind, or strength to it, and comes between man and the true worship of God, is another god; so the allowing of money, the desire for money, the love of money, to come between a man and his true service to God, is the worship of Mammon. And to allow the desire for money, the love of money, to separate a man from true Christian thoughtfulness, and care of mankind temporally and eternally, is the worship of Mammon; it is to have another god than the Lord; it is to break the First Commandment. {PTUK March 13, 1902, p. 163.3}

The distinction may be clearly drawn by saying that the keeping of the First Commandment is the being right, and doing right, with no thought whatever, at any time, as to what it will cost. No amount of money can ever have any consideration whatever in any question of serving God; in any question of loving God with all the heart, or our neighbor as ourself. And yet everybody knows that “What will it cost?” does have a positive bearing with the vast majority, even of professed Christian people, upon the exercise of their love to God with all the heart, and their neighbour as themselves. {PTUK March 13, 1902, p. 163.4}

But to allow this question to have any bearing whatever is the worldly way. It is not of the Father, but of the world. For with the world the first question is always, “What will it cost?” “How much can I make?” In all the dealing, all the traffic of business relationship, in the world, the way of the world, and the inquiry of the world, is only, “How much can I make?” And if more can be made by oppressing the neighbour, the oppression takes precedence of the love of the neighbour; and the neighbour is deliberately robbed. {PTUK March 13, 1902, p. 163.5}

If a neighbour begins business of the same order as that of a man who has already begun, he is deliberately underbidden, undersold, that, if possible, he may be crowded completely out of the business, in order that the first one may be left alone, to have all, in order that he alone may be rich, and have the worldly glory of his little kingdom of the crossroads. And those that have succeeded most fully at this, form gigantic combinations to crush out, or absorb, all lesser ones, until there remains but one vast combination drawing tribute from all the people in the nations, and even of the whole world. {PTUK March 13, 1902, p. 163.6}

But God has written of it all that “he is a proud man” “who enlargeth his desire as hell, and is as death, and can not be satisfied, but gathered unto him all nations, and heapeth unto him all people;” “that coveteth an evil covetousness to his house, that he may set his nest on high, that he may be delivered from the power of evil.” But “shall not all these take up a parable against him, and a taunting proverb against him, and say, Woe to him that increaseth that which is not his? how long?” “Shall they not rise up suddenly that shall bite thee, and awake that shall vex thee, and thou shalt be for booties unto them? Because thou hast spoiled many nations, all the remnant of the people shall spoil thee.” Habakkuk 2:5-9. {PTUK March 13, 1902, p. 163.7}

This is all “the pride of life,” which is not of the Father, but is of the world. It is all Mammon worship. And since the literal, original meaning of the word “mammon” is “that in which one *trusts*,” it is particularly appropriate that these various combinations, which crush out all individuality and demand tribute of all peoples, should be called “trusts.” {PTUK March 13, 1902, p. 163.8}

Yet the most gigantic of the “trusts” is but the extreme of that trick of trade held by the individual, by which, to get the trade, he undersells and crowds out the man across the way. {PTUK March 13, 1902, p. 163.9}

The most gigantic “trust” is but the extreme of that trick in trade by which the individual or the little partnership or corporation asks more for a thing when there is no competition than would be asked if there were competition. Whosoever, without competition, demands a greater price than he knows that he would take if there were competition, is an exactor of unjust gain. And “he that by usury and unjust gain increases his substance, he shall gather it for him that will pity the poor.” Proverbs 28:8. {PTUK March 13, 1902, p. 163.10}

The most gigantic “trust” is but the extreme of that trick in trade on the part of the individual, by which, through his beating down, or “jewing,” he tries his best to get a thing for less than he knows that it is worth. “It is naught, it is naught, saith the buyer: but when he is gone his way, then he boasteth.” Proverbs 20:14. {PTUK March 13, 1902, p. 163.11}

The organiser or the president of the “trust” who boasts in his enormous gains is no more an idolater and a sinner in this thing than is the *individual* who, in his degree, and to the extent of *his* power, does the same thing precisely. If *he* had the ability, or the power, of the organiser or the president of the “trust,” he would be doing precisely the same things that he is doing *now*, only in the larger measure that would be his, as the head of a mighty corporation. And so certainly is it true, as written, “In the world, the god of traffic is the god of fraud.” {PTUK March 13, 1902, p. 163.12}

All such is but the worship of Mammon; it is idolatry; it is to have another god before the Lord; it is not of the Father, but is of the world; it is neither loving God with all the heart nor the neighbor as the self. “If I have made gold my hope, or have said to the fine gold, Thou art my confidence; if I rejoiced because my wealth was great, and because mine hand had gotten much; ... this also were an iniquity to be punished by the judge: for I should have denied the God that is above.” And this equally and as really as if I were a worshipper of the sun and the moon. Job 31:24-29. {PTUK March 13, 1902, p. 163.13}

There is a better way: it is the way of the keeping of the commandments of God: “Thou shalt have no other gods before Me.” It is the way of Christianity: “All things whatsoever ye would that men should do to you, do ye even so to them.” You know that you do not like to have a man work a scheme upon you, by which he requires you to pay for a thing more than he would take for it if there were competition. You know that you would not like to have people beat you down to take for a thing less than you know that it is worth. Put yourself in the other man’s place—and stay there. Look at things from his side, and continue to do so. “Look not every man on his own things, but every man also on the things of others.” This is Christianity; it is the keeping of the First Commandment. Yea, it is the keeping of all “the law and the prophets.” {PTUK March 13, 1902, p. 163.14}

Nor is it hard to do this. It is the easiest thing in the world for him who has the *heart* to do it. And *God gives the heart* to do it; as it is written: “A new heart also will I give you, and a new spirit will I put within you.” {PTUK March 13, 1902, p. 164.1}

“I am the Lord thy God, which have brought thee out of the land of Egypt, out of the house of bondage.” “Out of Egypt have I called my Son.” “Thou shalt have no other gods before Me.” A. T. JONES. {PTUK March 13, 1902, p. 164.2}

**“The Second Commandment” The Present Truth 18, 12, p. 179.**

“I AM the Lord thy God, which have brought thee out of the land of Egypt, out of the house of bondage. {PTUK March 20, 1902, p. 179.1}

“Thou shalt not make unto thee any graven image, or any likeness of any thing that is in heaven above, or that is in the earth beneath, or that is in the water under the earth: thou shalt not bow down thyself to them, nor serve them: for I the Lord thy God am a jealous God, visiting the iniquity of the fathers upon the children unto the third and fourth generation of them that hate me; and showing mercy unto thousands of them that love me, and keep my commandments.” Exodus 20:2, 4-6. {PTUK March 20, 1902, p. 179.2}

The First Commandment forbids the having of any other god than the Lord; and so calls upon all to have God alone, and Him with all the heart, and all the soul, and all the mind, and all the strength. {PTUK March 20, 1902, p. 179.3}

Thus the First Commandment requires all creatures to worship only the true God; and the Second Commandment forbids the worshiping of Him in any but the true way. {PTUK March 20, 1902, p. 179.4}

The First Commandment forbids the having of any false gods; the Second Commandment forbids the having of the true God in a false way. {PTUK March 20, 1902, p. 179.5}

It is thus forbidden to worship God, or to think of Him, under any form or representation of any kind whatever. This is made clear by the word of the Lord in the fourth chapter of Deuteronomy. Having described how God came down upon Mount Sinai and spoke to the people out of the midst of the fire, declaring the Ten Commandments, it is remarked especially: “Ye heard the voice of the words, *but saw no similitude*.” {PTUK March 20, 1902, p. 179.6}

It is not suggested that there *was no similitude* there. There were similitudes: multitudes of the host of heavenly angels were there; four-winged and four-faced cherubim were there; six-winged bright seraphim were there; Christ was there; and the glory of God, which was like devouring fire, was there. {PTUK March 20, 1902, p. 179.7}

But all this glory, and all these similitudes, were completely hidden from any eye of man by the “blackness, and darkness, and tempest: that enveloped the whole mount. For “Mount Sinai was altogether on a smoke;” and “the smoke thereof ascended as the smoke of a furnace,” which formed a “thick cloud upon the mount,” a cloud of “thick darkness;” and the voice of God was heard “out of the midst of the darkness.” {PTUK March 20, 1902, p. 179.8}

Now, why was it that this wonderful scene of glory, even the *brightness* of the glory itself, was so completely hidden from the eyes of the people? Here is the answer: “Ye *saw no manner of similitude* on the day that the Lord spake unto you in Horeb out of the midst of the fire: *lest ye corrupt yourselves*, and *make you a graven image*, the similitude of any figure, the likeness of male or female, the likeness of any beast that is on the earth, the likeness of any winged fowl that flieth in the air, the likeness of anything that creepeth on the ground, the likeness of any fish that is in the waters beneath the earth: and lest thou lift up thine eyes unto heaven, and when thou seest the sun, and the moon, and the stars, even all the host of heaven, shouldest be driven to worship them, and serve them.” Deuteronomy 4:15-19. {PTUK March 20, 1902, p. 179.9}

If the people had been allowed that day to see any similitude, or any figure, on Sinai, they would inevitably have formed a likeness of it, as a means of their worshipping God. If they could have seen but the wings of the cherubim or seraphim, they would have used winged creatures, or the likeness of them, as a means of their worshipping God. And even though they had seen no figure or similitude, yet if only they had seen the *brightness* of the glory, then they would have employed the *brightness* of the glory, then they would have employed the *brightness of the sun* or the *moon*, or the *stars*, as symbols, representations, by which they would offer worship to the true God. {PTUK March 20, 1902, p. 179.10}

Nor would they have taken these representations which they would have made as of themselves gods, so as to worship the images or representations themselves; but would have *used them* as *visible symbols*, as *aids* in fixing their attention upon God, the better and more exactly to worship Him. And they would have claimed all the time that, in this, they were worshipping the true God, and that such worship was true worship of God. {PTUK March 20, 1902, p. 179.11}

But all such idea as this, even all possibility of such idea, was utterly excluded by the Lord himself, in enveloping the whole grand array and glorious scene in impenetrable darkness. And then, by this fact, and in telling them why He did it, He gave His own clear interpretation of His own Second Commandment, and the plainest possible instruction to men as to how to observe it. In this the Lord Himself has given, in the plainest and most forcible way, instruction to all people, that in the worship of God no conceivable form or similitude can be used in any way, or to any extent whatever. And thus there was said at Sinai precisely what Jesus said to the woman at the well, neither more nor less: that “God is Spirit: and they that worship Him must worship Him in spirit and in truth.” {PTUK March 20, 1902, p. 179.12}

God is Spirit, and is to be only spiritually discerned, and, therefore, can be worshipped only in spirit and in truth. {PTUK March 20, 1902, p. 179.13}

He can be worshipped only in truth as in spirit, because it is only by His word, which is the truth, that men can know what is true and acceptable worship. No man can know God except by revelation; and God must be worshipped strictly according to His own revelation: otherwise He is not worshipped at all. {PTUK March 20, 1902, p. 179.14}

This will be further considered next week. {PTUK March 20, 1902, p. 179.15}

A. T. JONES.

**“The Second Commandment. Image Worship” The Present Truth 18, 13, pp. 197, 198.**

WE have seen that no similitude or likeness was seen on Sinai when God spoke His law, though there were many similitudes and likenesses there. We have seen that this was so, especially “lest ye corrupt yourselves, and make you a graven image” or likeness. And thus in the Second Commandment there is forbidden, in the worship of God, the use of any similitude or likeness of any kind in any way whatever. {PTUK March 27, 1902, p. 197.1}

Yet there are a great number of professed Christians who use images, similitudes, and likenesses in abundance in their professed worship of God. This is worth inquiring into. {PTUK March 27, 1902, p. 197.2}

“This first introduction of a symbolic worship was in the veneration of the cross and of relics.”—*Gibbons*. In “honour” of Christ and the martyrs. {PTUK March 27, 1902, p. 197.3}

And the first introduction of the cross as a *visible symbol* was by Constantine, and in the midst of that flood of evil that made the papacy. {PTUK March 27, 1902, p. 197.4}

It is true that the *sign* of the cross was used as early as the days of Tertullian; but it was only a *sign*, made with a motion of the hand upon the forehead or breast. {PTUK March 27, 1902, p. 197.5}

Constantine enlarged upon this by the introduction of the visible cross itself: in the *Labarum*. He erected in Rome his own statue, “bearing a cross in its right hand, with an inscription which referred the victory of his arms and the deliverance of Rome to that salutary sign, the true symbol of force and courage. {PTUK March 27, 1902, p. 197.6}

“The same symbol sanctified the arms of the soldiers of Constantine; the cross glittered on their helmets, was engraved on their shields, was interwoven into their banners; and the consecrated emblems which adorned the person of the emperor himself were distinguished only by richer materials and more exquisite workmanship.” {PTUK March 27, 1902, p. 197.7}

The *Labarum* was “a long pike intersected by a transversal beam,” forming a cross. “The silken veil which hung down from the beam was curiously inwrought with the *images* of the reigning monarch and his children. The summit of the pike supported a crown of gold, which inclosed the mysterious monogram, at once expressive of the figure of the cross and the initial letters of the name of Christ.” {PTUK March 27, 1902, p. 197.8}

The basis of all this was the fiction and the imposture of Constantine’s “vision of the cross.” And from it “the Catholic Church, both of the East and of the West, has adopted a prodigy which favors, or seems to favor, the popular worship of the cross.” {PTUK March 27, 1902, p. 197.9}

Under Constantine’s patronage also, “magnificent churches were erected by the emperor in Rome, adorned with *images* and *pictures*, where the bishop sat on a lofty throne, encircled by inferior priests, and performing rites borrowed from the splendid ceremonial of the pagan temple.”—*Lawrence*. {PTUK March 27, 1902, p. 197.10}

Pictures were used first. The introduction of these pictures was made under the plea that they were useful to instruct the ignorant, to awaken the cold, and to gratify the prejudices of the heathen proselytes. What some person imagined and produced as a picture of Christ, would be painted on the wall or window; and these people would gaze upon that, and sail away upon a sea of their own imagination. In this they thought they were contemplating Christ, and honoring Him, and indeed worshipping Him. But it was as sheer idolatry as ever was. They were only worshipping themselves, in their own imaginings. Never yet has there been made a picture of Christ. All that ever pretended to be such are only idolatrous imaginings. {PTUK March 27, 1902, p. 197.11}

Soon images were set up along with the pictures, and thus “by a slow, though inevitable, progression, the honors of the original were transferred to the copy; the devout Christian prayed before *the image* of a saint; and the pagan rites of genuflexion, luminiaries, and incense again stole into the Catholic Church. The scruples of reaon or piety were silenced by the strong evidence of visions and miracles; and the pictures which speak, and move, and bleed, must be endowed with a divine energy, and may be considered as the proper objects of religious adoration.” {PTUK March 27, 1902, p. 198.1}

And thus “the use and even the worship of images was firmly established before the end of the sixth century [before A.D. 600]; they were fondly cherished by the warm imagination of the Greeks and Asiatics; the pantheon and Vatican were adorned with the emblems of a new superstition.... The style and sentiments of a Byzantine hymn will declare how far their worship was removed from the grossest idolatry: ‘How can we with mortal eyes contemplate this image, whose celestial splendour the host of heaven presumes not to behold? He who dwells in heaven condescends this day to visit us by His venerable image. He who is seated on the cherubim visits us this day by a picture which the Father has delineated with His immaculate hand; which He has formed in an ineffable manner; and which we sanctify by adoring it with fear and love.’”—*Gibbon*. {PTUK March 27, 1902, p. 198.2}

This will be followed further next week. {PTUK March 27, 1902, p. 198.3}

A. T. JONES.