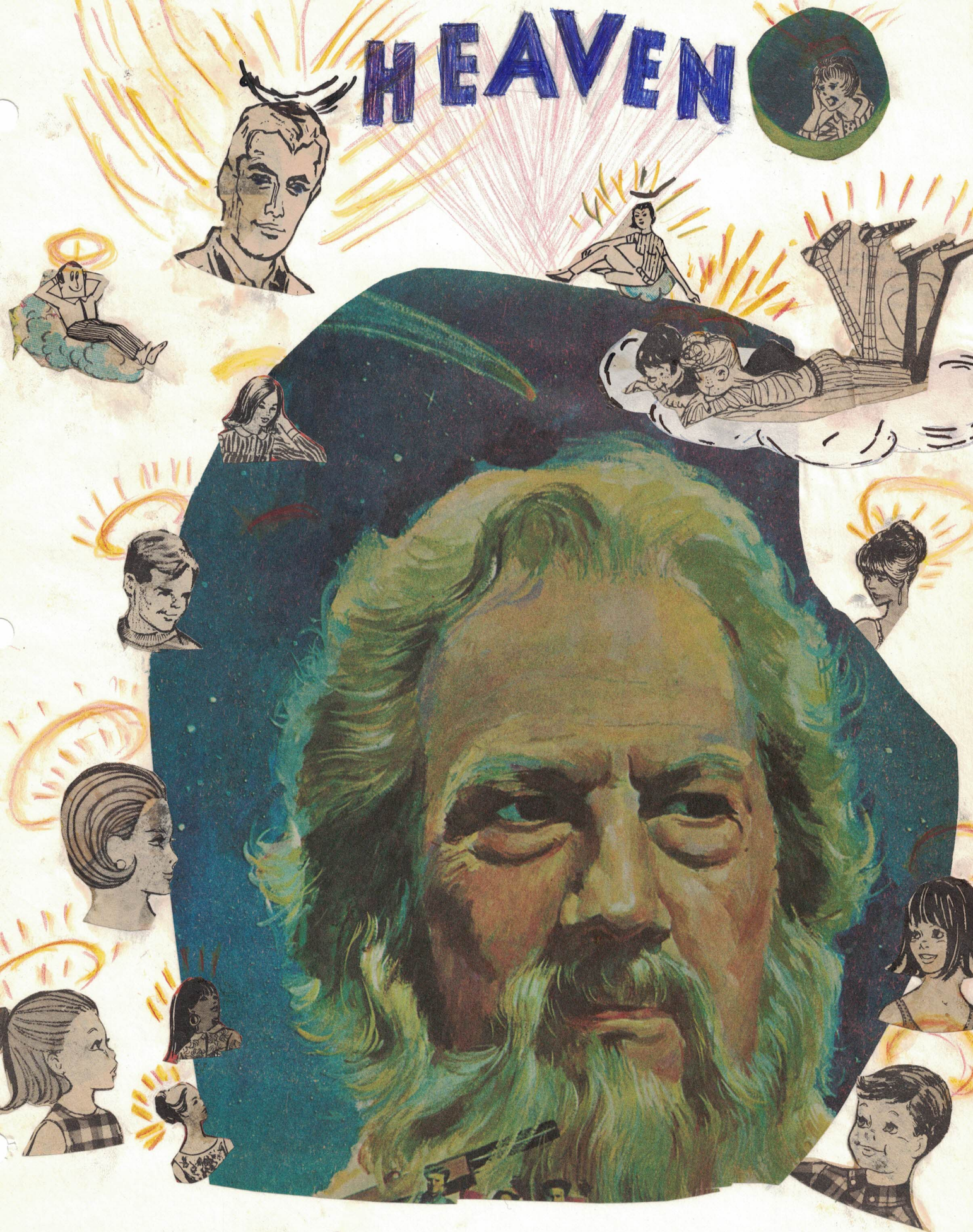


THE DOCTRINE OF SIN

HEAVEN



ULTIMATE GOAL OF CHURCHIANITY

SIN

Catholic Point of View

In analysing this doctrine, we need to know why any doctrine exists in "Christianity." All these doctrines reflect Satan's purpose--to rob mankind of his heritage. This doctrine is not a doctrine of truth. In it are portions of truth twisted into a false concept and therefore into a lie.

Satan was created to bring knowledge truth and understanding. He became dedicated to the exact opposite calling. He has attached happenings in his life to the lives of all mankind. It was Satan who was perfect in his way, not Adam. It was Satan who fell to a lower estate, not Adam. Satan is the god of this world. The doctrine of sin is another tool in Satan's hands. His churches are palming it off on a gullible society, leading it to destruction.

Original Sin

On account of their sin Adam and Eve lost sanctifying grace, the right to heaven, and their special gifts; they became subject to death, to suffering, and to a strong inclination to evil. The loss of all these gifts is indicated by the author when he says that they were driven from the Garden of Paradise.

It might be asked how one sin could have brought about such terrible punishments. Man had every reason for remaining faithful to God. Moreover, his sin overturned the very order of creation. The creature man wished to be like the Creator God. The punishment given man served forcefully to remind him of his creaturehood.

On account of the sin of Adam, we, his descendants, come into the world deprived of sanctifying grace and inherit his punishment,

as we would have inherited his gifts had he been obedient to God.

Because of original sin, heaven was closed to all men until the death of Our Lord Jesus Christ. Our Lord instituted the sacrament of Baptism in order to restore to us the right to heaven that Adam had lost.

All mankind must suffer for the sin of Adam because he was the head and representative of the whole human family. We should have shared in Adam's blessings of soul and body without any merit of our own, if he had not sinned. In the same way we share in his guilt.

If concupiscence--original sin-- the state of sin--is universal in all men--if it is passed on by heredity--if man has no power to resist concupiscence and master his own body--how can we explain a sinless Christ? Augustine's explanation was the doctrine of the "Immaculate Conception."

Few non-Catholics properly understand this doctrine. It refers, not to the conception of Jesus in the womb of His mother, Mary, but to that of Mary.

Because of the "fall," this "original sin"--this state of sin--is transmitted by the father at the instant of conception. Because Mary was to receive the great dignity of becoming the "Mother of God," she was preserved free from "original sin," in the very instant of her conception. Apparently Mary's parents are supposed to have lived so righteously that they were changed from a carnal or human nature, to a spiritual or divine nature.

As Augustine reasoned, there was none of this concupiscence or hereditary sin in Mary at all. It was not there to be passed on, by heredity, to Christ.

When David cried out, "Behold, I was shapen in iniquity; and in sin did my mother conceive me" (Psalm 51:5), he was not accusing his mother of committing sin in the act of his conception. This Psalm is David's heart-rending prayer of repentance, and his broken-hearted and tearful plea for forgiveness. It followed his act of adultery with Bathsheba and the murder of her husband. David is not trying to excuse himself by blaming the guilt on his mother. He is confessing his own sin! He is speaking of the human nature, which was in David from the very instant of conception. He referred to the sinful nature in him from the instant of conception.

Venial Sin

Venial sin is a less serious offense against the law of God, which does not deprive the soul of sanctifying grace, and which can be pardoned even without sacramental confession.

A sin can be venial in two ways: 1. When the evil done is not seriously wrong. 2. When the evil done is seriously wrong, but the sinner sincerely believes it is only slightly wrong, or does it on the spur of the moment, without sufficient reflection, or without full consent of the will.

If a person is in the state of grace, venial sins are forgiven without necessity of confession. Provided one has sorrow and a sincere resolution not to commit the sins again, they are forgiven not only by Confession, but also by Holy Communion, by acts of contrition, prayer, good works, etc.

Mortal Sin

Mortal sin is a grievous offense against the law of God. Any willful thought, desire, word, action or omission, in serious violation of God's law, is a mortal sin. Examples of mortal sin

of God's law, is a mortal sin. Examples of mortal sin are blasphemy, wilful murder, adultery, arson, robbery, etc.

This sin is called mortal, or deadly, because it deprives the sinner of sanctifying grace, the supernatural life of the soul. Without sanctifying grace, the soul is displeasing to God, unclean, and can never behold Him or be with Him in heaven.

Without sanctifying grace, the soul loses the friendship of God; and if an adult dies in that state, he will suffer the torments of the damned.

Sanctifying grace is that grace which confers on our souls a new life, that is, a sharing in the life of God Himself. By sanctifying grace, our souls are made holy and pleasing to God.

We should have contrition for mortal sin because it is the greatest of all evils, gravely offends God, keeps us out of heaven, and condemns us forever to hell.

A person in mortal sin can regain the state of grace before receiving the sacrament of Penance, by making an act of perfect contrition, with the sincere purpose of going to confession. An act of perfect contrition takes away sin immediately. Our sins however grievous are forgiven before we confess them although the obligation to confess as soon as possible remains.

One may not receive Holy Communion after committing a mortal sin, if we merely make an act of perfect contrition; one who has sinned grievously must go to confession before receiving Holy Communion.

The fall of man is the base of all religion. In teaching this fall, Satan tries to pass on damnation due him to us. This doctrine hides the fact that it is our nature which is inherently evil. It

prevents us from recognizing what we are and repenting of the nature we have within us.

Salvation requires individual relationship to God. This false doctrine hides that relationship. Adam did not fall from supernatural original sanctity.

Baptism is relegated to infant level, thus there is no thought, no repentance associated with it; and the true purpose for baptism is lost.

The Catholic Church claims power to pardon both mortal and venial sins. This is made possible by the merits of Christs possessed by the church. The approach is the Catholic Church as the all powerful body with the merits of Christ in its possession.

All Catholics have to look to the church, not Christ, for their salvation. The church is placed as an intermediary between God and men. The priest is the judge. He can have the knowledge to render a right judgment only from the penitent sinner. Catholics are not to withhold any knowledge from the priest so that he can render a proper judgment.

The Holy Eucharist forgives actual sins. Eucharist is a means by which one is purged or expiated from ones sins. The church keeps one looking to symbols, artifacts and other physical things, and the mind is taken off Christ, and the church is the ultimate judge.

Protestant Point of View

None of the doctrines of the various religions are producing good human beings. From this we can see that these doctrines do not produce godliness. Christianity does not produce morality. These doctrines are a success because they are set up for an entirely different reason than they are reported to be. These doctrines produce in man the way of sinfulness, and ultimately the lake of fire. They are successful because everything is going as Satan planned.

One does not recognize the sin around because there is no clear definition of sin in Protestantism. Sin is not sin anymore, it is rationalized away.

Most of professing Christianity has the ethical standards of wild animals. People have been led in the way of lasciviousness. What has produced this result is man without the true God. Mankind does not realize that it is without God because it has a false god. Millions have no way of deciding what is good or what is evil.

Religion does not let men equate wrong doing with sin. What is right or what is wrong is relative. Sin depends on the situation or circumstances in which one finds himself.

Part of Protestantism portrays sin as a terrible, horrible, wretched evil. They enjoin people to change, to turn to religion in order to have their sins removed. This is what Satan wants.

Others portray sin as a type of evolutionary process. One does not have to do anything very heroic about it. Each one of these doctrines complement the others. They have to do with the way mankind looks on God. Man evolves his own law of human conduct. The doctrine of sin cannot stand alone but is related to all other false

doctrines.

Man was not intended to keep the law but it was to be a mirror to reveal sin to man. This means that God winks at sin. So one does not feel guilty because of disobedience. Mankind does not repudiate God, they just don't live by what He says anymore. They think the image that they have received of God is irrelevant today. Sin isn't so bad after all. Sin is relative, it depends on ones conscience and the society in which one lives.

Some define sin as--the name given to a moral evil from the point of view of religion. This doctrine keeps man from coming to true repentance. There is no absolute standard of perfection to fall short of. The only relevant standard is comperable to a sliking scale. No human is able to say what is sin and what is not sin.

Modernists relegate the Bible to mere Jewish literature. They say Jesus had no doctrine of sin but looked on individual sins. This causes people not to live in constant thought that their actions may warrant a penalty. They teach mercy alone without repentance.

Mankind is not wholly inclined to evil. Sin is refusal of faith and love, it is not in direct relationship to conduct. Until Christ came sin wss seated in the flesh as an alien. Since Christ, His spirit has triumphed over the sin in our flesh. Man's state is revealed to him through conscience.

Protestantism does not look on "Original Sin" as do the Catholics. It should not impart to one a feeling of guilt, and it is not a stain. They do, however, believe that with Adam's sin man fell to a lower nature. Sin is catagorized by some in a manner similar to that in Catholicism.

Baptists- A Baptist affirms the competency of the individual, under God, in matters of religion. Every true believer in Christ as personal Savior is saved--without the intervention of preacher or church. Each individual must give evidence of his personal redemption by faith, good works and the Christian way of life. The confession of sin is a personal matter between the individual and God. Hence no priestly mediation or resort to the confessional is needed.

With most Protestants, Baptists believe that man sins against the holiness and righteousness of God, that he willfully disobeys God's commands, allows his selfishness to motivate his life, and is therefore in need of salvation. A good Baptist definition of sin explains it as "lack of conformity to the moral law of God, either in act, disposition or state." Man cannot save himself. He needs and finds in Jesus Christ a divine redeemer who unites in Himself both the human nature and the divine. By His death on the Cross, man was reconciled to God and God to man. Through faith in this reconciling ministry of Christ, man is saved from his sins.

Lutheran- Sin is the word describing the situation of all people as disobedient to God. Sin is not specific wrongdoing (this is the result of sin), but the basic condition of our personality. It is our nature to try to make ourselves the center of our lives. Sin means trying to pretend that we are God. It is refusal to accept the restriction on our freedom which is the inescapable consequence of the fact that we are created beings and that the only reason for our existence is doing the will of our Creator. This is portrayed in the old story of Adam and Eve in the garden, who were not satisfied to accept the one

limitation placed on them--that they must not eat the fruit of a certain tree.

Quaker-- For over 300 years, the Quakers have pointed to the inherent goodness in men and women, instead of emphasizing the inheritance of sin from the fall of Adam and Eve as recorded in the Bible. In this, Friends oppose the views of both Catholics and the majority of Protestants. Roman Catholics hold that it is the high calling of the Church, through its sacraments, to save its members from sin. The majority of Protestants regard sin as the fundamental fact of man's life on earth and hold that the will of God is discovered through faith, not reason.

Quakers believe that while sin is a fact in life, it is best described as existing in a universe like a checkerboard of black (sin) and white (goodness) squares. But the black squares are imposed on the basic white squares, not the reverse. There is an "ocean of light over the ocean of darkness," George Fox said. To Friends, the term "original sin" over-emphasizes the power of evil. Even when he is fallen, man still belongs to God, who continues to appeal to the goodness within him.

Unitarians-- Recognize the evil in our world and man's responsibility for it. They do not agree with the Christian doctrine that holds that the disobedience of Adam (original sin) has so completely incapacitated man for anything good that only God's "grace," operation through a church and its rites and sacraments, can save him.

Most orthodox Christian churches teach that because of the total depravity of man, God sent His only-begotten Son into the world to die, in order that "whosoever believeth in Him may have everlasting life." Such doctrine Unitarians find unbelievable and un-Biblical.

It is certainly inconsistent with the nature of God or the dignity of man, whom the Eternal One created "in his own image" to love with "an everlasting love."

Unitarians believe that man has innate capacities for both good and evil. His natural tendency for good can grow through proper environment, effective education and spiritual awareness. Man, in striving for the good life, can achieve the stature of "the man of God."
Christian Science-- Man is really sinless and free. Sin is the belief in the real existence of a mind or minds other than the divine Mind, God. Mortal mind, which believes in decaying and dying, is the sinner. Saint Paul called it the "carnal" mind. If a person accepts the carnal mind, its sins will appear to be his sins, and its suffering his suffering.

Christian Scientists rid themselves of sin by breaking the false notion that the carnal mind is real, or one's own. Penalty for sin lasts only as long as such false belief lasts. The Christian Scientist tries to live so that the divine Mind is revealed as his mind.

Christian Scientists hold that sin is unreal. But this does not mean that one can sin with impunity. The sinner does not know that sin is unreal; if he did, this would destroy his capacity for sinning.

Truth

Sin is the transgression of the law. (I Jn 3:4). Law is an extension of God, who is the supreme lawgiver. All things, both physical and spiritual, are governed by law. Any breach of law is sin. Law is eternal, it governs all, and it does not vary.

"All unrighteousness is sin" (I Jn 5:17)-- and David defined God's Commandments as righteousness (Ps 119:172). But James explains not only what is sin, but how it takes place. He says: "Every man is tempted, when he is drawn away of his own lusts, and enticed. Then, when lust hath conceived, it bringeth forth sin: and sin, when it is finished, bringeth forth death" (Jas 1:14-15).

James states that the temptation never comes from God. Paul explains there is a "law of sin" "in our members" (Rom 7:23)--that is, in human flesh. This law is, simply, human nature. And human nature is merely a "pull," like the downward pull of the force of gravity. You hold a book in your hand. Gravity exerts a pull downward--but you can resist, and hold up the book.

We were all born human. We all were born with human nature. Like the strongest magnet, human nature draws us in the way of Satan--that is a pull toward pride and vanity, selfishness and greed, a lack of outgoing concern for others--the spirit of competition, opposition, strife, effort to acquire, and to exalt the self. Human nature is the spirit of rebellion against authority, hostility toward God and the Law of God.

Originally God created the beautiful archangel Lucifer. He sealed up the sum of wisdom, knowledge and beauty. But one thing he lacked--the righteous character to choose the right way, and resist the

wrong--to discipline the self in the way he ought to go, instead of the way of self-desire. Satan fell from his original state (Lk.10:18). It was Satan, not man who committed the "original sin".

God's purpose in having created humanity, is to reproduce Himself. God is able to create character within us--but it must be done as a result of our independent free choice. We, as individual separate entities, have our part in the process. Belief in the fall of man and the "original sin" has mankind repenting of God's purpose.

God purposely put within us this nature that exerts a heavy pull against that perfect righteous character--to give us something to strive against, for the very purpose of strengthening and developing right character. He even puts within us His divine nature--when we repent and turn from the wrong way of this world, begin to resist it, and turn to Him through faith in Jesus Christ as personal Saviour!

Sickness is the result of physical sins (ICor 11:30;Mat. 9:1-7). Only those who have received God's Spirit are vulnerable to the second death in general.

One does not have to be converted in order to commit the unpardonable sin. God's Spirit can be dealing with a person and by resisting, refusing to do what one knows to be right one can commit this sin.(Heb 6:4-6;10:6). The committing of the unpardonable sin is a process. It is genuine wilful blasphemy.

Through the process of repentance, we are not counted as sinners. Christ's sacrifice reconciles us to God (Isa 53:4;IPet 2:24). If we repent of sin--and acknowledge Jesus Christ as personal saviour. Then the promise is, we shall receive the gift of the Holy Spirit. And then, if we grow in grace and in knowledge--if we overcome the

the world, overcome ourselves and our own natures, if we endure until the end--then we shall be made immortal--we shall be born into the very family of God at last.

LAW, DIVINE, MORAL ASPECT OF.—Divine Law is that which is enacted by God and made known to man through revelation. We distinguish between the Old Law, contained in the Pentateuch, and the New Law, which was revealed by Jesus Christ and is contained in the New Testament. The Divine Law of the Old Testament, or the Mosaic Law, is commonly divided into civil, ceremonial, and moral precepts. The civil legislation regulated the relations of the people of God among themselves and with their neighbours; the ceremonial regulated matters of religion and the worship of God; the moral was a Divine code of ethics. In this article we shall confine our attention exclusively to the moral precepts of the Divine Law. In the Old Testament it is contained for the most part and summed up in the Decalogue (Ex., xx, 2-17; Lev., xix, 3, 11-18; Deut., v, 1-33).

The Old and the New Testament, Christ and His Apostles, Jewish as well as Christian tradition, agree in asserting that Moses wrote down the Law at the direct inspiration of God. God Himself, then, is the lawgiver, Moses merely acted as the intermediary between God and His people; he merely promulgated the Law which he had been inspired to write down. This is not the same as to say that the whole of the Old Law was revealed to Moses. There is abundant evidence in Scripture itself that many portions of the Mosaic legislation existed and were put in practice long before the time of Moses. Circumcision is an instance of this. The religious observance of the seventh day is another, and this, indeed, seems to be implied in the very form in which the Third Commandment is worded: "Remember that thou keep holy the sabbath day." If we except the merely positive determinations of time and manner in which religious worship was to be paid to God according to this commandment, and the prohibition of making images to represent God contained in the first commandment, all the precepts of the Decalogue are also precepts of the natural law, which can be gathered by reason from nature herself, and in fact they were known long before Moses wrote them down at the express command of God. This is the teaching of St. Paul—"For when the Gentiles, who have not the law, do by nature those things that are of the law; these having not the law [of Moses], are a law to themselves: who shew the work of the law written in their hearts, their conscience bearing witness to them" (Rom., ii, 14, 15). Although the substance of the Decalogue is thus both of natural and Divine law, yet its express promulgation by Moses at the command of God was not without its advantages. The great moral code, the basis of all true civilization, in this manner became the clear, certain, and publicly recognized standard of moral conduct for the Jewish people, and through them for Christendom.

Because the code of morality which we have in the Old Testament was inspired by God and imposed by Him on His people, it follows that there is nothing in it that is immoral or wrong. It was indeed imperfect, if it be compared with the higher morality of the Gospel, but, for all that, it contained nothing that is blameworthy. It was suited to the low stage of civilization to which the Israelites had at the time attained: the severe punishments which it prescribed for transgressors were necessary to bend the stiff necks of a rude people; the temporal rewards held out to those who observed the law were adapted to an unspiritual and carnal race. Still its imperfections must not be exaggerated. In its treatment of the poor, of strangers, of slaves, and of enemies, it was vastly superior to the civilly more advanced Code of Hammurabi and other celebrated codes of ancient law. It did not aim merely at regulating the external acts of the people of God, it curbed also licentious thoughts and covetous desires. The love of God and of one's neighbour was the great precept of the Law, its summary and abridgment, that on which the whole Law and the Prophets depended. In spite of the undeniable superiority in this respect of the Mosaic Law to the other codes of antiquity, it has not escaped the adverse criticism of heretics in all ages and of Rationalists in our own day. To meet this adverse criticism it will be sufficient to indicate a few general principles that should not be lost sight of, and then to treat a few points in greater detail.

It has always been freely admitted by Christians that the Mosaic Law is an imperfect institution; still Christ came not to destroy it but to fulfil and perfect it. We must bear in mind that God, the Creator and Lord of all things, and the Supreme Judge of the world, can do and command things which man the creature is not authorized to do or command. On this principle we may account for and defend the command given by God to exterminate certain nations, and the permission given by Him to the Israelites to spoil the Egyptians. The tribes of Chanaan richly deserved the fate to which they were condemned by God; and if there were innocent people among the guilty, God is the absolute Lord of life and death, and He commits no injustice when He takes away what He has given. Besides, He can make up by gifts of a higher order in another life for sufferings which have been patiently endured in this life. A great want of historical perspective is shown by those critics who judge the Mosaic Law by the humanitarian and sentimental canons of the twentieth century. A recent writer (Keane, "The Moral Argument against the Inspiration of the Old Testament" in the Hibbert Journal, October, 1905, p. 155) professes to be very much shocked by what is prescribed in Exodus, xxi, 5-6. It is there laid down that if a Hebrew slave who has a wife and children prefers to remain with his master rather than go out free when the sabbatical year comes round, he is to be taken to the door-post and have his ear bored through with an awl, and then he is to remain a slave for life. It was a sign and mark by which he was known to be a lifelong slave. The practice was doubtless already familiar to the Israelites of the time, as it was to their neighbours. The slave himself probably thought no more of the operation than does a South African beauty, when her lip or ear is pierced for the lip-ring and the ear-ring, which in her estimation are to add to her charms. It is really too much when a staid professor makes such a prescription the ground for a grave charge of inhumanity against the law of Moses. Nor should the institution of slavery be made a ground of attack against the Mosaic legislation. It existed everywhere and although in practice it is apt to lead to many abuses, still, in the mild form in which it was allowed among the Jews, and with the safeguards prescribed by the Law, it cannot be said with truth to be contrary to sound morality.

Polygamy and divorce, though less insisted on by Rationalist critics, in reality constitute a more serious difficulty against the holiness of the Mosaic Law than any of those which have just been mentioned. The difficulty is one which has engaged the attention of the Fathers and theologians of the Church from the beginning. To answer it they take their stand on the teaching of the Master in the nineteenth chapter of St. Matthew and the parallel passages of Holy Scripture. What is there said of divorce is applicable to plurality of wives. The strict law of marriage was made known to our first parents in Paradise: "They shall be two in one flesh" (Gen., ii, 24). When the sacred text says *two* it excludes polygamy, when it says *one flesh* it excludes divorce. Amid the general laxity with regard to marriage which existed among the Semitic tribes, it would have been difficult to preserve the strict law. The importance of a rapid increase among the chosen people of God so as to enable them to defend themselves from their neighbours, and to fulfil their appointed destiny, seemed to favour relaxation. The example of some of the chief of the ancient Patriarchs was taken by their descendants as being a sufficient indication of the dispensation granted by God. With special safeguards annexed to it Moses adopted the Divine dispensation on ac-

count of the hardness of heart of the Jewish people. Neither polygamy nor divorce can be said to be contrary to the primary precepts of nature. The primary end of marriage is compatible with both. But at least they are against the secondary precepts of the natural law: contrary, that is, to what is required for the well-ordering of human life. In these secondary precepts, however, God can dispense for good reason if He sees fit to do so. In so doing He uses His sovereign authority to diminish the right of absolute equality which naturally exists between man and woman with reference to marriage. In this way, without suffering any stain on His holiness, God could permit and sanction polygamy and divorce in the Old Law.

Christ is the author of the New Law. He claimed and exercised supreme legislative authority in spiritual matters from the beginning of His public life until His Ascension into heaven. In Him the Old Law had its fulfilment and attained its chief purpose. The civil legislation of Moses had for its object to form and preserve a peculiar people for the worship of the one true God, and to prepare the way for the coming of the Messias who was to be born of the seed of Abraham. The new Kingdom of God which Christ founded was not confined to a single nation, it embraced all the nations of the earth, and when the new Israel was constituted, the old Israel with its separatist law became antiquated; it had fulfilled its mission. The ceremonial laws of Moses were types and figures of the purer, more spiritual, and more efficacious sacrifice and sacraments of the New Law, and when these were instituted the former lost their meaning and value. By the death of Christ on the Cross the New Covenant was sealed, and the Old was abrogated, but until the Gospel had been preached and duly promulgated, out of deference to Jewish prejudices, and out of respect for ordinances, which after all were Divine, those who wished to do so were at liberty to conform to the practices of the Mosaic Law. When the Gospel had been duly promulgated the civil and ceremonial precepts of the Law of Moses became not only useless, but false and superstitious, and thus forbidden.

It was otherwise with the moral precepts of the Mosaic Law. The Master expressly taught that the observance of these, inasmuch as they are prescribed by nature herself, is necessary for salvation—"If thou wouldst enter into life keep the commandments"—those well-known precepts of the Decalogue. Of these commandments those words of His are especially true—"I came not to destroy the law but to fulfil it." This Christ did by insisting anew on the great law of charity towards God and man, which He explained more fully and gave us new motives for practising. He corrected the false glosses with which the Scribes and Pharisees had obscured the law as revealed by God, and He brushed aside the heap of petty observances with which they had overloaded it, and made it an intolerable burden. He denounced in unmeasured terms the externalism of Pharisaic observance of the Law, and insisted on its spirit being observed as well as the letter. As was suited to a law of love which replaced the Mosaic Law of fear, Christ wished to attract men to obey His precepts out of motives of charity and filial obedience, rather than compel submission by threats of punishment. He promised spiritual blessings rather than temporal, and taught His followers to despise the goods of this world in order to fix their affections on the future joys of life eternal. He was not content with a bare observance of the law, He boldly proposed to His disciples the infinite goodness and holiness of God for their model, and urged them to be perfect as their heavenly Father is perfect. For such as were specially called, and who were not content to observe the commandments merely, He proposed counsels of consummate perfection. By observing these His specially chosen followers, not only conquered their vices, but destroyed

the roots of them, by constantly denying their natural propensities to honours, riches, and earthly pleasures. Still it is admitted by Catholic theologians that Christ added no new merely moral precepts to the natural law. There is of course a moral obligation to believe the truths which the Master revealed concerning God, man's destiny, and the Church. Moral obligations, too, arise from the institution of the sacraments, some of which are necessary to salvation. But even here nothing is added directly to the natural law; given the revelation of truth by God, the obligation to believe it follows naturally for all to whom the revelation is made known; and given the institution of necessary means of grace and salvation, the obligation to use them also follows necessarily.

As we saw above, the Master abrogated the dispensations which made polygamy and divorce lawful for the Jews owing to the special circumstances in which they were placed. In this respect the natural law was restored to its primitive integrity. Somewhat similarly with regard to the love of enemies, Christ clearly explained the natural law of charity on the point, and urged it against the perverse interpretation of the Pharisees. The Law of Moses had expressly enjoined the love of friends and fellow-citizens. But at the same time it forbade the Jews to make treaties with foreigners, to conclude peace with the Ammonites, Moabites, and other neighbouring tribes; the Jew was allowed to practise usury in dealing with foreigners; God promised that He would be an enemy to the enemies of His people. From these and similar provisions the Jewish doctors seem to have drawn the conclusion that it was lawful to hate one's enemies. Even St. Augustine, as well as some other Fathers and Doctors of the Church, thought that hatred of enemies, like polygamy and divorce, was permitted to the Jews on account of their hardness of heart. It is clear, however, that, since enemies share the same nature with us, and are children of the same common Father, they may not be excluded from the love which, by the law of nature, we owe to all men. This obligation Christ no less clearly than beautifully expounded, and taught us how to practise by His own noble example. The Catholic Church by virtue of the commission given to her by Christ is the Divinely constituted interpreter of the Divine Law of both the Old and the New Testament.

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T. SLATER.

Law.—I. CONCEPT OF LAW.—A. By law in the widest sense is understood that exact guide, rule, or authoritative standard by which a being is moved to action or held back from it. In this sense we speak of law even in reference to creatures that are incapable of thinking or willing and to inanimate matter. The Book of Proverbs (ch. viii) says of Eternal Wisdom that it was present when God prepared the heavens and when with a certain law and compass He enclosed the depths, when He encompassed the sea with its bounds and set a law to the waters that they should not pass their limits. Job (xxviii, 25 sqq.) lauds the wisdom of God Who made a weight for the winds and weighed the water by measure, Who gave a law for the rain and a way for the sounding storms.

Daily experience teaches that all things are driven by their own nature to assume a determinate, constant attitude. Investigators of the natural sciences hold it to be an established truth that all nature is ruled by universal and constant laws and that the object of the natural sciences is to search out these laws and to make plain their reciprocal relations in all directions. All bodies are subject, for example, to the law of inertia, i. e. they persist in the condition of rest or motion in which they may be until an external cause changes this condition. Kepler discovered the laws according to which the planets move in elliptical orbits around the sun, Newton the law of gravitation by which all bodies attract in direct proportion to their mass and inversely as to the square of the distance between them. The laws which govern light, heat, and electricity are known to-day. Chemistry, biology, and physiology have also their laws. The scientific formulæ in which scholars express these laws are only laws in so far as they state what processes actually take place in the objects under consideration, for law implies a practical rule according to which things act. These scientific formulæ exert of themselves no influence on things; they simply state the condition in which these things are. The laws of nature are nothing but the forces and tendencies to a determinate, constant method of activity implanted by the Creator in the nature of things, or the unvarying, homogeneous activity itself which is the effect of that tendency. The word *law* is used in this latter sense when it is asserted that a natural law has been changed or suspended by a miracle. For the miracle does not change the nature of things or their constant tendency; the Divine power simply prevents the things from producing their natural effect, or uses them as means to attaining an effect surpassing their natural powers. The natural tendency to a determinate manner of activity on the part of creatures that have neither the power to think nor to will can be called law for a twofold reason: first, because it forms the decisive reason and the controlling guide for the activities of such creatures, and consequently as regards irrational creatures fulfils the task which devolves upon law in the strict sense as regards rational beings; and further, because it is the expression and the effect of a rational lawgiving will. Law is a principle of regulation and must, like every regulation, be traced back to a thinking and willing being. This thinking and willing being is the Creator and Regulator of all things, God Himself. It may be said that the natural forces and tendencies placed in the nature of creatures, are themselves the law, the permanent expression of the will of the Eternal Overseer Who influences creatures and guides them to their appointed ends, not by merely external influences but by their innate inclinations and impulses.

B. In a stricter and more exact sense law is spoken of only in reference to free beings endowed with reason. But even in this sense the expression law is used sometimes with a wider, sometimes with a more restricted meaning. By law are at times understood all authoritative standards of the action of free, rational beings. In this sense the rules of the arts, poetry, grammar, and even the demands of fashion or etiquette are called laws. This is, however, an inexact and exaggerated mode of expression. In the proper and strict sense laws are the moral norms of action, binding in conscience, set up for a public, self-governing community. This is probably the original meaning of the word *law*, whence it was gradually transferred to the other kinds of laws (natural laws, laws of art). Law can in this sense be defined with St. Thomas Aquinas (Summa Theol. I-II, Q. xc, a. 4) as: A regulation in accordance with reason, promulgated by the head of

Law is first a regulation, i. e. a practical principle, which aims at ordering the actions of the members of the community. To obtain in any community a unified and systematized co-operation of all there must be an authority that has the right to issue binding rules as to the manner in which the members of the community are to act. The law is such a binding rule and draws its constraining or obligatory force from the will of the superior. Both because the superior wills and so far as he wills, is law binding. Not every regulation of the superior, however, is binding, but only those in accordance with reason. Law is the criterion of reasonable action and must, therefore, itself be reasonable. A law not in accordance with reason is a contradiction. That the Divine laws must of necessity be reasonable and just is self-evident, for the will of God is essentially holy and just and can only command what is in harmony with the Divine wisdom, justice, and holiness. Human laws, however, must be subordinate to the Divine law, or at least, must not contradict it, for human authority is only a participation in the supreme Divine power of government, and it is impossible that God could give human beings the right to issue laws that are unreasonable and in contravention of His will. Further, law must be advantageous to the common welfare. This is a universally acknowledged principle. That the Divine laws are advantageous to the common welfare needs no proof. The glory of the Creator is, truly, the final goal of the Divine laws, but God desires to attain this glory by the happiness of mankind. Human laws must also be useful to the common wel-

fare. For laws are imposed upon the community as such, in order to guide it to its goal; this goal, however, is the common welfare. Further, laws are to regulate the members of the community. This can only come about by all striving to attain a common goal. But this goal can be no other than the common welfare. Consequently all laws must in some way serve the common welfare. A law plainly useless or a fortiori injurious to the community is no true law. It could have in view only the benefit of private individuals and would consequently subordinate the common welfare to the welfare of individuals, the higher to the lower.

Law therefore is distinguished from a command or precept by this essential application to the common welfare. Every law is a form of command but not every command is a law. Every binding rule which a superior or master gives to his subordinates is a command; the command, however, is only a law when it is imposed upon the community for the attainment of the common welfare. In addition, the command can be given for an individual person or case. But law is a permanent, authoritative standard for the community, and it remains in force until it is annulled or set aside. Another condition of law is that it should proceed from the representative of the highest public authority, be this a single person, several persons, or finally the totality of all the members of the community, as in a democracy. For law is, as already said, a binding rule which regulates the community for the attainment of the common welfare. This regulation pertains either to the whole community itself or to those persons in the highest position upon whom devolves the guidance of the whole community. No order or unity would be possible if private individuals had the liberty to impose binding rules on others in regard to the common welfare. This right must be reserved to the supreme head of the community. The fact that law is an emanation of the highest authority, or is issued by the presiding officer of the community by virtue of his authority, is what distinguishes it from mere counsels, requests, or admonitions, which presuppose no power of jurisdiction and can, moreover, be addressed by private persons to others and even to superiors. Laws, finally, must be promulgated, i. e. made known to all. Law in the strict sense is imposed upon rational, free beings as a controlling guide for their actions; but it can be such only when it has been proclaimed to those subject to it. From this arises the general axiom: *Lex non promulgata non obligat*—a law which has not been promulgated is not binding. But it is not absolutely necessary to promulgation that the law be made known to every individual; it suffices if the law be proclaimed to the community as such, so that it can come to the notice of all members of the community. Besides, all laws do

ent, laws are considered sufficiently promulgated when they are published in official journals (State or imperial gazettes, law records, etc.).

In addition to the moral law as treated above, it is customary to speak of moral laws in a wider sense. Thus it is said it is a moral law that no one is willingly deceived, that no one lies without a reason, that every one strives to learn the truth. But it is only in an unreal and figurative sense that these laws are called moral. They are in reality only the natural laws of the human will. For although the will is free, it remains subject to certain inborn tendencies and laws, within which bounds alone it acts freely, and these laws are called moral only because they bear on the activities of a free will. Therefore they are not expressed by an imperative "must". They merely state that by reason of inborn tendencies, men are accustomed to act in a given way, and that such laws are observed even by those who have no knowledge of them.

To understand still better the significance of moral law in the strict sense, henceforth the sole sense intended in this article, two conditions of such law should be considered. It exists first in the intellect and will of the lawgiver. Before the lawgiver issues the law he must apprehend it in his mind as a practical principle, and at the same time perceive that it is a reasonable standard of action for his subjects and one advantageous to the common welfare. He must then have the will to make the observance of this principle obligatory on those under him. Finally, he must make known or intimate to those under him this principle or authoritative standard as the expression of his will. Strictly construed, legislation in the active sense consists in this last act, the command of the superior to the inferiors. This command is an act of the reason, but it necessarily presupposes the aforesaid act of the will and receives from the latter its entire obligatory force. The law, however, does not attain this obligatory force until the moment it is made known or proclaimed to the community. And this brings us to the point that law can be considered objectively, as it exists apart from the lawgiver. At this stage law exists either in the mind of the subjects or in any permanent token which preserves the memory of it, e. g. as found in a collection of laws. Such outward tokens, however, are not absolutely necessary to law. God has written the natural moral law, at least in its most general outlines, in the hearts of all men, and it is obligatory without any external token. Further, an external, permanent token is not absolutely necessary for human laws. It suffices if the law be made known to the subjects, and such knowledge can be attained by oral tradition.

II. OBLIGATION IMPOSED BY LAW.—Law (in the strict sense) and command are pre-eminently distinguished from other authoritative standards of action, inasmuch as they imply obligation. Law is a bond imposed upon the subjects by which their will is bound or in some way brought under compulsion in regard to the performance or the omission of definite actions. Aristotle, therefore, said long ago that law has a compelling force. And St. Paul (Rom., xiii, 1 sq.) teaches that we are bound to obey the ordinances of the authorities not only through fear but also for conscience' sake. In what then does this obligation which law imposes upon us consist? Modern ethical systems which seek to construct a morality independent of God and religion, are here confronted by an inexplicable riddle. The utmost pains have been taken to construct a true obligation without regard to God. According to Kant our reason itself is the final source of obligation, it obliges us of itself, it is nomothetic and autonomous, and the absolute form in which it commands us is the categorical imperative. We are obliged to fulfil the law only on account of itself or because it is the law of our reason; to do something because another has commanded us is not moral, even should this other be God. This view is entirely untenable. We do not owe obedience to the laws of Church and State because we bind ourselves thereto, but because their superior authority obliges us. The child owes obedience to its parents not because it engages so to do but because the authority of the parents obliges it. Whoever asserts that man can bind only himself, strikes at the root of all authority and asserts the principle of anarchism. Authority is the right to issue to others binding, obligatory regulations. Whoever maintains that none can put more than himself under obligation denies, thereby, all authority. What is said of human authority is equally valid of the Divine authority. We owe adoration, obedience, and

love to God, because God obliges us by His commands. The assertion that to do something because God has commanded us is heteronomy (subjection to the law of another) and therefore not moral, implies in principle

the destruction of all religion, which in its essence rests upon the subjection of the creature to his Creator.

The adherents of the Kantian autonomy can also be asked whether man binds himself of necessity or voluntarily? If voluntarily, then he can at any moment annul this obligation; consequently, in a practical sense, no obligation exists. If of necessity, the question arises whence comes this necessity to bind oneself unconditionally? To this question Kant has no answer to give. He refers us to an undemonstrable and incomprehensible necessity. He says: "All human reason is incapable of explaining how pure reason may be practical (imposing obligation). . . . Thus, it is true, we do not comprehend the practical, unconditioned necessity of the moral imperative, but we do, however, comprehend its incomprehensibility, which is all that can, in fairness, be demanded from a philosophy that seeks to reach the principles which mark the limit of human reason" ["Grundleg. zur Metaphys. der Sitten", ed. Hartenstein, IV (1838), 91-93]. Kant, who without hesitation sets aside all Christian mysteries, in this way imposes upon us in philosophy a mystery of his own invention. Kant's views contain a germ of truth, which, however, they distort until it can no longer be recognized. In order that a human law may be obligatory upon us we must have in ourselves from the beginning the conviction that we are to do good and avoid evil, that we are to obey rightful authority, etc. But the further question now arises, whence do we receive this conviction? From God, our Creator. Just as our whole being is an image of God, so also is our reason with its powers and inborn tendencies an image of the Divine Reason, and our cognitions which we involuntarily form in consequence of natural tendency are a participation in the Divine wisdom,—are, it may be said, a streaming in of the Divine light into the created reason. This is, indeed, not to be so understood as though we had innate ideas, but rather that the ability and inclination are inborn in us by virtue of which we spontaneously form universal concepts and principles, both in the theoretical and practical order, and easily discern that in these practical principles the will of the Supreme Director of all things manifests itself.

The Kantian philosophy has now but few adherents; most champions of independent ethics seek to explain the origin of duty by experience and development. Typical of writers on ethics of this school are the opinions of Herbert Spencer. This philosopher of evolution believed that he had discovered already in animals, principally in dogs, evidences of conscience, especially the beginnings of the consciousness of duty, the idea of obligation. This consciousness of duty is further developed in men by the accumulation of experiences and inheritance. Duty presents itself to us as a restraint of our actions. There are, however, several varieties of such restraints. The inner restraint is developed by induction, inasmuch as we discern by repeated experience that certain actions have useful, others injurious results. In this way we are attracted to the one, and frightened away from the other. Added to this is the external restraint, the fear of evil results or punishments which threaten us from without and are threefold in form. In the earliest stages of development man has to abstain from actions through fear of the anger of uncivilized associates (social sanction). At a higher stage man must avoid many actions, because such would be punished by a powerful and bold associate who has succeeded in making himself chief (state sanction). Finally, we have in addition the fear of the spirits of the dead, especially of the dead chiefs, who, it was believed, lingered near and still inflicted punishment upon many actions displeasing to them (religious sanction). The external restraint, i. e. the fear of punishment, created in mankind, as yet little developed, the concept of compulsion, of obligation in relation to certain actions. This concept originally arose only in regard to actions which were quickly followed by external punishments. Gradually, by association of ideas, it was also connected with other actions until then performed or avoided purely on account of their natural consequences. Through evolution, however, he goes on to say, the idea of compulsion, owing only to confusion or false generalization, tends to disappear and eventually is found only in rare cases. Spencer claimed to have found, even to-day, here and there men who regularly do good and avoid evil without any idea of compulsion. Most modern writers on ethics, who

Spencer, Leslie, Fouillée, and many others. Spencer and his followers are nevertheless wrong, for their explanation of duty rests on entirely untenable premises. It presupposes that the animal has already a conscience, that man does not differ essentially from the animal, that he has gradually developed from a form of animal, that he possesses no essentially higher spiritual powers, etc. Moreover, their explanation of duty is meaningless. No one will assert of a man that he acts from duty if he abstains from certain actions through fear of police penalties, or the anger of his fellow-men. Besides, what is the meaning of an obligation that is only an accidental product of evolution, destined to disappear with the progress of the latter, and for regarding which we are responsible to no superior?

In contrast with these modern and untenable hypotheses the Christian theistic conception of the world explained long since the origin and nature of duty in a fully satisfactory manner. From eternity there was present to the Spirit of God the plan of the government of the world which He had resolved to create. This plan of government is the eternal law (*lex aeterna*) according to which God guides all things towards their final goal: the glorifying of God and the eternal happiness of mankind. But the Creator does not move creatures, as men do, simply by external force, by pressure, or impact, and the like, but by tendencies and impulses which He has implanted in creatures and, what is more, in each one according to its individual nature. He guides irrational creatures by blind impulses, inclinations, or instincts. He cannot, however, guide in this way rational, free men, but only (as is suited to man's nature) by moral laws which in the act of creation He implanted in the human heart. As soon as man attains to the use of reason he forms, as already indicated, on account of innate predispositions and tendencies, the most general moral principles, e. g. that man is to do good and avoid evil, that man is to commit no injustice, etc. He also easily understands that these commands do not depend on his own volition but express the will of a higher power, which regulates and guides all things. By these commands (the natural moral law) man shares in a rational manner in the eternal law; they are the temporal expression of the eternal, Divine law. The natural moral law is also the foundation and root of the obligation of all positive laws. We recognize that we cannot violate the natural moral law, and the positive laws that are rooted in it, without acting in opposition to the will of God, rebelling against our Creator and highest Master, offending Him, turning away from our final end, and incurring the Divine judgment. Thus man feels himself to be always and everywhere bound, without losing his freedom in a physical sense, to the order appointed him by God. He can do evil but he ought not. If of his own will he violates God's law he brings guilt upon himself and deserves punishment in the eyes of the all-wise, all-holy, and absolutely just God. Obligation is this necessity, arising from this knowledge, for the human will to do good and avoid evil.

III. CLASSIFICATION OF LAWS.—A. The actual, direct effect of law is obligation. According to the

varieties of duty imposed, law is classified as: commanding, prohibitive, permissive, and penal. Commanding laws (*leges affirmativæ*) make the performance of an action, of something positive, obligatory; prohibitive laws (*leges negativæ*), on the other hand, make obligatory an omission. The principle holds good for prohibitive laws, at least if they are absolute, like the commands of the natural, moral law, ("Thou shalt not bear false witness", "Thou shalt not commit adultery", etc.) that they are always and for ever obligatory (*leges negativæ obligant semper et pro semper*—negative laws bind always and forever), i. e. it is never permissible to perform the forbidden action. Commanding laws, however, as the law that debts must be paid, always impose an obligation, it is true, but not for ever (*leges affirmativæ obligant semper, sed non pro semper*—affirmative laws are binding always but not forever), that is, they continue always to be laws but they do not oblige one at every moment to the performance of the action commanded, but only at a certain time and under certain conditions. All laws which inflict penalties for violation of the law are called penal, whether they themselves directly define the manner and amount of penalty, or make it the duty of the judge to inflict according to his judg-

mentally obligatory, but simply impose penalty in case one is convicted of transgression. Thus they leave it, in a certain sense, to the choice of the subject whether he will abstain from the penal action, or whether, if the violation is proved against him, he will submit to the penalty. The objection cannot be raised that purely penal laws are not actual laws because they create no bounden duty, for they oblige the violator of the law to bear the punishment if the authorities apprehend and convict him. Whether a law is a purely penal law or not is not so easy to decide in an individual case. The decision depends on the will of the lawgiver and also upon the general opinion and custom of a community.

B. In treating of promulgation a distinction has to be made between natural moral law and positive law. The first is proclaimed to all men by the natural light of reason; positive laws are made known by special outward signs (word of mouth or writing). The natural moral law is a law inseparable from the nature of man; positive law, on the contrary, is not. In regard to the origin or source of law, a distinction is made between Divine and human laws according as they are issued directly by God Himself or by men in virtue of the power granted them by God. If man in issuing a law is simply the herald or messenger of God, the law is not human but Divine. Thus the laws which Moses received from God on Mount Sinai and proclaimed to the people of Israel were not human but Divine laws. A distinction is further made between the laws of Church and State according as they are issued by the authorities of the State or of the Church. Laws are divided as to origin into prescriptive and statute law. Prescriptive, or customary, law includes those laws which do not come into existence by direct decree of the lawgiving power, but by long continued custom of the community. Yet every custom does not give rise to a law or a right. In order to become law a custom must be universal or must, at least, be followed freely and with the intention of raising it to law by a considerable part of the population. It must further be a custom of long standing. Finally, it must be useful to the common welfare, because this is an essential requisite of every law. Custom receives its binding, obligatory force from the tacit or legal approval of the lawgiver, for every true law binds those upon whom it is imposed. Only he can impose a binding obligation on a community on whom the supervision of it or the power of jurisdiction over it devolves. If the legislative power belongs to a

people itself it can impose obligation upon itself as a whole, if it has not this power the obligation can only be formed with the consent of the lawgiver (see Custom).

A classification of law, as limited to law administered in the courts, and familiar to Roman jurisprudence, is that of law in the strict sense and equity (*jus strictum et jus æquum et bonum*). Equity is often taken as synonymous with natural justice. In this sense we say that equity forbids that anyone be judged unheard. Frequently, however, we speak of equity only in reference to positive laws. A human lawgiver is never able to foresee all the individual cases to which his law will be applied. Consequently, a law though just in general, may, taken literally, lead in some unforeseen cases to results which agree neither with the intent of the lawgiver nor with natural justice, but rather contravene them. In such cases the law must be expounded not according to its wording but according to the intent of the lawgiver and the general principles of natural justice. A reasonable lawgiver could not desire this law to be followed literally in cases where this would entail a violation of the principles of natural justice. Law in the strict sense (*jus strictum*) is, therefore, positive law in its literal interpretation; equity, on the contrary, consists of the principles of natural justice so far as they are used to explain or correct a positive human law if this is not in harmony with the former. For this reason Aristotle (*Ethica Nicomachea*, V, x) calls equity the correction (*ἐπιφροσύνη*) of statute or written law.

ST. THOMAS, *Summa Theologica*, I-II, Q. xc sqq.; SUAREZ, *De legibus et legislatore Deo*, I; LAYMANN, *Theologia moralis*, I, tract. iv; BOUQUILLON, *Theologia fundamentalis*, no. 52 sqq.; TAPARELLI, *Saggio teoretico di diritto naturale*, I, n. 93 sqq.; MEYER, *Grundsätze der Sittlichkeit und des Rechts* (1868); IDEM, *Institutiones juris naturalis*, I (Freiburg, 1906), no. 218 sqq.; WEBER, *Jus Decretalium*, I (Romæ, 1898), 79 sqq.; SCHIFFINI, *Philosophia moralis*, I (Turin, 1891), 104 sqq.; LEHMKEHL, *Theologia moralis*, I, 67 sqq.; RICKABY, *Moral Philosophy or Ethics and Natural Law* (London, 1888); AUSTIN, *The Duties and Rights of Man* (London, 1888); CATHELIN, *Moralphilosophie*, I (Freiburg, 1904), 332 sqq.; SCHLEIERMÄCHER, *Ueber den Unterschied von Sittengesetz und Naturgesetz* (Berlin, 1825); ZELLER, *Begriff und Begründung der sittlichen Gesetze* (Berlin, 1883); LACKNER, *Wie unterscheidet sich das Sittengesetz vom Naturgesetz?*; SPENCER, *Principles of Ethics*: I, *Data of Ethics* (London, 1881), vii; PAULSEN, *System der Ethik*, I (Berlin,

Law, NATURAL.—I. ITS ESSENCE.—In English this term is frequently employed as equivalent to the laws of nature, meaning the order which governs the activities of the material universe. Among the Roman jurists natural law designated those instincts and emotions common to man and the lower animals, such as the instinct of self-preservation and love of offspring. In its strictly ethical application—the sense in which this article treats it—the natural law is the rule of conduct which is prescribed to us by the Creator in the constitution of the nature with which He has endowed us.

According to St. Thomas, the natural law is “nothing else than the rational creature’s participation in the eternal law” (I-II, Q. xciv). The eternal law is God’s wisdom, inasmuch as it is the directive norm of all movement and action. When God willed to give existence to creatures, He willed to ordain and direct them to an end. In the case of inanimate things, this Divine direction is provided for in the nature which God has given to each; in them determinism reigns. Like all the rest of creation, man is destined by God to an end, and receives from Him a direction towards this end. This ordination is of a character in harmony with his free intelligent nature. In virtue of his intelligence and free will, man is master of his conduct. Unlike the things of the mere material world he can vary his action, act, or abstain from action, as he pleases. Yet he is not a lawless being in an ordered universe. In the very constitution of his nature, he too has a law laid down for him, reflecting that ordination and direction of all things, which is the eternal law. The rule, then, which God has prescribed for our conduct, is found in our nature itself. Those actions which conform with its tendencies, lead to our destined end, and are thereby constituted right and morally good; those at variance with our nature are wrong and immoral.

The norm, however, of conduct is not some particular element or aspect of our nature. The standard is our whole human nature with its manifold relationships, considered as a creature destined to a special end. Actions are wrong if, though subserving the satisfaction of some particular need or tendency, they are at the same time incompatible with that rational harmonious subordination of the lower to the higher which reason should maintain among our conflicting tendencies and desires (see *Good*). For example, to nourish our bodies is right; but to indulge our appetite for food to the detriment of our corporal or spiritual life is wrong. Self-preservation is right, but to refuse to expose our life when the well-being of society requires it, is wrong. It is wrong to drink to intoxication, for, besides being injurious to health, such indulgence deprives one of the use of reason, which is intended by God to be the guide and dictator of conduct. Theft is wrong, because it subverts the basis of social life; and man’s nature requires for its proper development that he live in a state of society. There is, then, a double reason for calling this law of conduct natural: first, because it is set up concretely in our very nature itself, and second, because it is manifested to us by the purely natural medium of reason. In both respects it is distinguished from the Divine positive law, which contains precepts not arising from the nature of things as God has constituted them by the creative act, but from the arbitrary will of God. This law we learn, not through the unaided operation of reason, but through the light of supernatural revelation.

We may now analyse the natural law into three constituents: the discriminating norm, the binding norm (*norma obligans*), and the manifesting norm. The discriminating norm is, as we have just seen, human nature itself, objectively considered. It is, so to speak, the book in which is written the text of the law, and the classification of human actions into good and bad. Strictly speaking, our nature is the *proximate* discriminating norm or standard. The remote and ultimate norm, of which it is the partial reflection and application, is the Divine nature itself, the ultimate groundwork of the created order.

The binding or obligatory norm is the Divine authority, imposing upon the rational creature the obligation of living in conformity with his nature, and thus with the universal order established by the Creator. Contrary to the Kantian theory that we must not acknowledge any other lawgiver than conscience, the truth is that reason as conscience is only *immediate* moral authority which we are called upon to obey, and conscience itself owes its authority to the fact that it is the mouthpiece of the Divine will and *imperium*. The manifesting norm (*norma denuntians*), which determines the moral quality of actions tried by the discriminating norm, is reason. Through this faculty we perceive what is the moral constitution of our nature, what kind of action it calls for, and whether a particular action possesses this requisite character.

II. THE CONTENTS OF THE NATURAL LAW.—Rationally, the natural law consists of one supreme and universal principle, from which are derived all our natural moral obligations or duties. We cannot discuss here the many erroneous opinions regarding the fundamental rule of life. Some of them are utterly false—for instance, that of Bentham, who made the pursuit of utility or temporal pleasure the foundation of the moral code; and that of Fichte, who taught that the supreme obligation is to love self above everything and all others on account of self. Others present the true idea in an imperfect or one-sided fashion. Epicurus, for example, held the supreme principle to be, “Follow nature”; the Stoics inculcated living according to reason. But these philosophers interpreted their principles in a manner less in conformity with our doctrine than the tenor of their words suggests. Catholic moralists, though agreeing upon the underlying conception of the Natural Law, have differed more or less in their expression of its fundamental formulæ. Among many others we find the following: “Love God as the end and everything on account of Him”; “Live conformably to human nature considered in all its essential respects”; “Observe the rational order established and sanctioned by God”; “Manifest in your life the image of God impressed on your rational nature.” The exposition of St. Thomas is at once the most simple and philosophic. Starting from the premise that good is what primarily falls under the apprehension of the practical reason—that is of reason acting as the dictator of conduct—and that, consequently, the supreme principle of moral action must have the good as its central idea, he holds that the supreme principle, from which all the other principles and precepts are derived, is that good is to be done, and evil avoided (I-II, Q. xciv, a. 2).

Passing from the primary principle to the subordinate principles and conclusions, moralists divide these into two classes: (1) those dictates of reason which flow so directly from the primary principle that they hold in practical reason the same place as evident propositions in the speculative sphere, or are at least easily deducible from the primary principle. Such, for instance, are: “Adore God”; “Honour your parents”; “Do not steal”; (2) those other conclusions and precepts which are reached only through a more or less complex course of inference. It is this difficulty and uncertainty that requires the natural law to be supplemented by positive law, human and Divine. As regards the vigour and binding force of these precepts and conclusions, theologians divide them into two classes, primary and secondary. To the first class belong those which must, under all circumstances, be observed if the essential moral order is to be maintained. The secondary precepts are those whose observance contributes to the public and private good and is required for the perfection of moral development, but is not so absolutely necessary to the rationality of conduct that it may not be lawfully omitted under some special conditions. For example, under no circumstances is polyandry compatible with the moral order, while polygamy, though inconsistent with human relations in their proper moral and social development, is not absolutely incompatible with them under less civilized conditions.

II. THE QUALITIES OF THE NATURAL LAW.—(a) The natural law is *universal*, that is to say, it applies to the entire human race, and is in itself the same for all. Every man, because he is a man, is bound, if he will conform to the universal order willed by the Creator, to live conformably to his own rational nature, and to be guided by his reason. However, infants and in-

reason and cannot therefore know the law, are not responsible for their failure to comply with its demands. (b) The natural law is *immutable* in itself and also extrinsically. Since it is founded in the very nature of man and his destination to his end—two bases which rest upon the immutable ground of the eternal law—it follows that, assuming the continued existence of human nature, it cannot cease to exist. The natural law commands and forbids in the same tenor everywhere and always. We must, however, remember that this immutability pertains not to those abstract imperfect formulae in which the law is commonly expressed, but to the moral standard as it applies to action in the concrete, surrounded with all its determinate conditions. We enunciate, for instance, one of the leading precepts in the words: "Thou shalt not kill"; yet the taking of human life is sometimes a lawful, and even an obligatory act. Herein exists no variation in the law; what the law forbids is not all taking of life, but all unjust taking of life.

With regard to the possibility of any change by abrogation or dispensation, there can be no question of such being introduced by any authority except that of God Himself. But reason forbids us to think that even He could exercise such power; because, given the hypothesis that He wills man to exist, He wills him necessarily to live conformably to the eternal law, by observing in his conduct the law of reason. The Almighty, then, cannot be conceived as willing this and simultaneously willing the contradictory, that man should be set free from the law entirely through its abrogation, or partially through dispensation from it. It is true that some of the older theologians, followed or copied by some later ones, hold that God can dispense, and, in fact in some instances, has dispensed from the secondary precepts of the natural law, while others maintain that the bearing of the natural law is changed by the operation of positive law. However, an examination of the arguments offered in support of these opinions shows that the alleged examples of dispensation are: (a) cases where a change of conditions modifies the application of the law, or (b) cases concerning obligations not imposed as absolutely essential to the moral order, though their fulfilment is necessary for the full perfection of conduct, or (c) instances of *addition* made to the law.

As examples of the first category are cited God's permission to the Hebrews to despoil the Egyptians, and His command to Abraham to sacrifice Isaac. But it is not necessary to see in these cases a dispensation from the precepts forbidding theft and murder. As the Sovereign Lord of all things, He could withdraw from Isaac his right to life, and from the Egyptians their right of ownership, with the result that neither would the killing of Isaac be an unjust destruction of life, nor the appropriation of the Egyptians' goods the unjust taking of another's property. The classic instance alleged as an example of (b) is the legalization of polygamy among the Hebrews. Polygamy, however, is not under all circumstances incompatible with the essential principles of a rationally ordered life, since the chief ends prescribed by nature for the marital union—the propagation of the race and the due care and education of offspring—may, in certain states of society, be attained in a polygamous union. The theory that God can dispense from any part of the law, even from the secondary precepts, is scarcely compatible with the doctrine, which is the common teaching of the School, that the natural law is founded on the eternal law, and, therefore, has for its ultimate ground the immutable essence of God himself. As regards (c), when positive law, human or Divine, imposes obligations which only modify the bearing of the natural law, it cannot correctly be said to change it. Positive law may not ordain anything contrary to the natural law, from which it draws its authority; but it may—and this is one of its functions—determine with more precision the bearing of the natural law, and for good reasons, supplement its conclusions. For example, in the eyes of the natural law mutual verbal agreement to a contract is sufficient; yet, in many kinds of contract, the civil law declares that no agreement shall be valid, unless it be expressed in writing and signed by the parties before witnesses. In establishing this rule the civil authority merely exercises the power which it derives from the natural law to add to the operation of the natural law such conditions as the common good may call for. Contrary to the almost universally received doctrine, a few theologians held erroneously that the natural law depends not on the essential necessary will of God, but upon His arbitrary positive will, and taught consistently with this view, that the natural law may be dispensed from or even abrogated by God. The conception, however, that the moral law is but an arbitrary enactment of the Creator, involves the equally arbitrary absolute destruction of the moral

III. Our Knowledge of the Law.—Founded on our nature and revealed to us by our reason, the moral law is known to us in the measure that reason brings a knowledge of it home to our understanding. The question arises: How far can man be ignorant of the natural law, which, as St. Paul says, is written in the human heart (Rom., ii, 14)? The general teaching of theologians is that the supreme and primary principles are necessarily known to every one having the actual use of reason. These principles are really reducible to the primary principle which is expressed by St. Thomas in the form: "Do good and avoid evil". Wherever we find man we find him with a moral code, which is founded on the first principle that good is to be done and evil avoided. When we pass from the universal to more particular conclusions, the case is different. Some follow immediately from the primary, and are so self-evident that they are reached without any complex course of reasoning. Such are, for example: "Do not commit adultery"; "Honour your parents". No person whose reason and moral nature is ever so little developed can remain in ignorance of such precepts except through his own fault. Another class of conclusions comprises those which are reached only by a more or less complex course of reasoning. These may remain unknown to, or be misinterpreted even by persons whose intellectual development is considerable. To reach these more remote precepts, many facts and minor conclusions must be correctly appreciated, and, in estimating their value, a person may easily err, and consequently, without moral fault, come to a false conclusion.

A few theologians of the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, following some older ones, maintained that there cannot exist in anyone practical ignorance of the natural law. This opinion however has no weight (for the controversy see Bouquillon, "Theologia Fundamentalis", n. 74). Theoretically speaking, man is capable of acquiring a full knowledge of the moral law, which is, as we have seen, nothing but the dictates of reason properly exercised. Actually, taking into consideration the power of passion, prejudice, and other influences which cloud the understanding or pervert the will, one can safely say that man, unaided by supernatural revelation, would not acquire a full and correct knowledge of the contents of the natural law (cf. Vatican Council, Sess. III, cap. ii). In proof we need but recall that the noblest ethical teaching of pagans, such as the systems of Plato, Aristotle, and the Stoics, was disfigured by its approbation of shockingly immoral actions and practices.

As the fundamental and all-embracing obligation imposed upon man by the Creator, the natural law is the one to which all his other obligations are attached. The duties imposed on us in the supernatural law come home to us, because the natural law and its exponent, conscience, tell us that, if God has vouchsafed to us a supernatural revelation with a series of precepts, we are bound to accept and obey it. The natural law is the foundation of all human law inasmuch as it ordains that man shall live in society, and society for its constitution requires the existence of an authority, which shall possess the moral power necessary to control the members and direct them to the common good. Human laws are valid and equitable only in so far as they correspond with, and enforce or supplement the natural law; they are null and void when they conflict with it. The United States system of equity courts, as distinguished from those engaged in the administration of the common law, are founded on the principle that, when the law of the legislator is not in harmony with the dictates of the natural law, equity (*aquitas, epikeia*) demands that it be set aside or corrected. St. Thomas explains the lawfulness of this procedure. Because human actions, which are the subject of laws, are individual and innumerable, it is not possible to establish any law that may not sometimes work out unjustly. Legislators, however, in passing laws, attend to what commonly happens, though to apply the common rule will sometimes work injustice and defeat the intention of the law itself. In such cases it is bad to follow the law; it is good to set aside its letter and follow the dictates of justice and the common good (II-II, Q. cxx, a. 1). Logically, chronologically, and ontologically antecedent to all human society for which it provides the indispensable basis, the natural or moral law is neither—as Hobbes, in anticipation of the modern positivistic school, taught—a product of social agreement or convention, nor a mere congeries of the actions, customs, and ways of men, as claimed by the ethicists who, refusing to acknowledge the First Cause as a Personality with whom one entertains personal relations, deprive the law of its obligatory basis. It is a true law, for through it the Divine Mind imposes on the subject minds of His rational creatures