

modity rarely to be met with, while love to self is abundantly prevalent among professing Christians. Is a word spoken which tends to lessen or destroy among us those bonds of union which are the perfection of the church, — is a remark made that weakens in our hearts the active religious life, some may with tardy steps and slow come forward with rebuke. But let a word be uttered against self, or the church to which self belongs, and all the powers of language are immediately enrolled to fight the battle. It seems as if the glory of God were a small thing in comparison with the glory of self.

Christian friends, have you most cause to love yourselves or to love your God? In yourselves exist all the sources of sorrow and of trouble. In God exists all the sources of joy and of peace. From yourselves have proceeded actions that have led you into toil and care. From God has proceeded those works of love that cause the nations of the earth to rejoice. In you exists the germ of eternal misery. In God exists the source of eternal glory. Be earnest in self-examination, and the knowledge of your own worthlessness will cause you to despise yourself. While the knowledge that God has done so much for such a worthless creature, will cause you to love him. Love him with the pure and exalted love that never thinks of self nor cares for self, but delights in glorifying the Author of your comforts by keeping his commandments.

The man who, with this love in his heart, has for his motive in every action the glory of God, will seldom be found going astray in the path of sin. If, however, there still exists a selfish inclination, when self and duty seem opposed, self prevails and duty remains unaccomplished. Suppose, for example, a large pecuniary gain could easily be attained by the sacrifice of what the Bible commands as a duty. The command of the Bible is enforced by promises of *future* gain; the enticement for self is enforced by the promise of *present* gain. Self looks to the present; the pecuniary gain is secured to the exclusion of duty and the detriment of the moral nature. In such a case, had love to God prevailed, and glory to God been the motive, the pecuniary and present gain would have appeared a paltry prize, and the agent would feel the comfort and happiness consequent on one other victory gained by the regenerate man over the unregenerate.

The second table of the law refers to our duties to our neighbor, and the verses preceding our text give us reason to believe that the apostle applied these words more particularly to the commands contained therein. It is almost impossible to conceive of a heart having become so depraved as not to love a friend. Did we find amongst us a fellow-mortal towards whom every kindness had been shown, who had been clad and fed, delivered from trouble and from poverty, turn upon the man who had thus befriended him, and return evil for good, and curses for blessings; with one voice his

deserved condemnation would be spoken, unworthy of a place even among mankind. You can all remember the time when one who was your friend seemed to become your enemy, and all can even now number many friends who analyze the feelings of your mind, and discover whether it was the pure and holy love of the Bible, or the selfish love of the world that did or does exist within your breast. The Bible love embraces not only friends but enemies: "Love your enemies." While we were enemies to God, God loved us. And if we would be like him—which we must be ere we see him—we must also love our enemies. To the natural heart this seems an impossibility. With God all things are possible, and the Spirit of God is required to produce this. Let us examine and see in what this love consists. The natural man loves his friends, because from them he has received some kindness, for in this consists the character of friend. His kindness is withdrawn; the friend changes into a person from whom no more kindness is expected, and the love ceases. This shows it was only a selfish love—a feeling originated in the heart by some action or actions advantageous to self, and expelled from the heart as soon as no more advantage was likely to be gained. This former friend, in the exercise of duty, or from the frailty of human nature, may do somewhat against him who formerly loved him, and a hatred deep and strong as was the former love, takes its place. This because the love existed only as a means of gain to self; indifference existed so long as neither loss nor gain might be expected; hatred succeeded when loss was found to accrue. In all this it was not soul loving soul, but self loving self. It was not because the Lord of heaven expected advantage to himself that he condescended to provide a means for man's salvation. Our prayers cannot add to his happiness. Our service cannot add to his glory. Our obedience cannot add to his power. For man's own sake he loved him and provided the glorious sacrifice. That man might have happiness here, and inherit the perfection of joy hereafter, did the Lord of glory tread the earth. If he who is thus high and holy loved us thus for our own sakes while we were his enemies, it were surely little that we love each other for the sake of Him, since he commands it. If for no advantage to himself he loved us, is it not a small matter in us to love for no advantage to ourselves. Our fellow-men each and all bear in their souls the impress of the hand divine,—created after the image of God, although that image has become defaced. And has it not become defaced in every one of Adam's race—in us as in him we call our enemy? The Psalmist, in speaking of the enemies of God, says: "Do not I hate them, O Lord, that hate thee? and am not I grieved with those that rise up against thee? I hate them with perfect hatred; I count them mine enemies." Here it is plain no selfish motive produced the enmity,—no action committed to the Psalmist's hurt caused him to exclaim