



*As much as you have done it to one of  
the least of these My brothers, you have  
done it to Me.*

Matthew 25:40



# Matthew 25

34 Then shall the King say to those on His right hand, Come ye, the blessed of My Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the founding of the world;

35 for I was hungry, and you gave Me to eat; I was thirsty, and you gave Me to drink; I was a sojourner, and you gathered Me in;

36 naked, and you clothed Me; I was sick, and you visited Me; I was in prison, and you came to Me.

37 Then shall the just answer Him, saying, Lord, when<sup>d</sup> did we see Thee hungry, and fed Thee, or thirsty, and gave Thee to drink?

38 And when did we see Thee a sojourner, and gathered Thee in, or naked, and clothed Thee?

39 And when did we see Thee sick, or in prison, and came to Thee?

40 And the King answering shall say to them, Amen I say to you, **As much as you have done it to one of the least of these My brothers, you have done it to Me.**

## Conjugal Love 386

THAT FROM THE LORD PROCEED TWO UNIVERSAL SPHERES FOR THE PRESERVATION OF THE UNIVERSE IN THE STATE CREATED, OF WHICH THE ONE IS THE SPHERE OF PROCREATING, AND THE OTHER **THE SPHERE OF PROTECTING THE THINGS PROCREATED.**

The Divine proceeding from the Lord is called a sphere because it goes forth from Him, surrounds Him, fills both worlds, the spiritual and the natural, and brings into operation the effects of the ends which the Lord predestined at creation and for which He provides after it. All that flows out from a subject and encompasses and surrounds it, is called a sphere; as, for example, the sphere of light and heat from and around the sun; the sphere of life from and around a man; the sphere of the fragrance of a plant around it; the sphere of the attraction of a magnet around it, and so on.

But the universal spheres here treated of are from and around the Lord, and they proceed from the sun of the spiritual world in the midst of which He is. From the Lord through that sun proceeds a sphere of heat and light, or, what is the same thing, a sphere of love and wisdom, for the bringing into operation of ends which are uses. This sphere is designated by different names according to its uses. The Divine sphere looking to the preservation of the universe in its created state by means of successive generations, is called the Sphere of Procreating; and the Divine sphere looking to the preservation of the generations in their beginnings and afterwards in their progressions, is called **the Sphere of Protecting what is procreated.** Besides these two, there are many other Divine spheres and these are named according to their uses, thus differently, as can be seen above (no. 222). The operations of uses by means of those spheres are the Divine Providence.

## Conjugal Love 391

**THAT THE SPHERE OF THE LOVE OF INFANTS IS A SPHERE OF PROTECTION AND SUPPORT OF THOSE WHO CANNOT PROTECT AND SUPPORT THEMSELVES.**

It was said above (no. 386), that the bringing into operation of uses by the Lord through the spheres proceeding from Him is Divine Providence. It is this Providence, therefore, that is meant by the sphere of protection and support of those who cannot protect and support themselves; for it is provided from creation that things created shall be preserved, guarded, protected, and supported, otherwise the universe would go to ruin. With living creatures to whom is left freedom of choice, this cannot be done by the Lord immediately; therefore it is done mediately through His love implanted in fathers, mothers, and nurses. That the love is a love that is in them from the Lord, this they do not know, for they do not perceive the influx and still less the omnipresence of the Lord. But who does not see that this is not a thing of nature but of Divine providence operating in nature by nature? and that a universal of this kind is not possible except from God by a spiritual sun which is in the center of the universe, and whose operation, being without space and time, is instant and present in things last from things first?

As to how that Divine operation, which is the Lord's Divine Providence, is received by animate beings, this shall be told in what follows. **Mothers and fathers protect and support their infants because these are not able to protect and support themselves.** This, however, is not the cause of the love of infants but is a rational cause due to the coming down of that love into their understanding. From the rational cause alone, in the absence of a love breathed in and inspiring it, or without the compulsion of law and punishment, man would no more provide for his infants than a statue.

## Conjugal Love 399

**THAT WITH PARENTS THERE IS A RATIONAL STATE OF INNOCENCE AND PEACE IN RESPECT TO THEIR INFANTS,**

**IN THAT THE LATTER KNOW NOTHING AND CAN DO NOTHING FROM THEMSELVES BUT FROM OTHERS, ESPECIALLY THEIR FATHER AND MOTHER; AND THAT THIS STATE SUCCESSIVELY RECEDES AS THEY ACQUIRE KNOWLEDGE AND ARE ABLE TO ACT FROM THEMSELVES AND NOT FROM THEIR PARENTS.** That the sphere of the love of infants is a sphere of protection and **support of those who cannot protect and support themselves**, was shown above in its own article, no. 391. It was there stated, that with man this is only the rational cause of the love with them, but not the cause itself. **The originating cause of that love is innocence from the Lord. This flows in unknown to the man and brings forth the rational cause.** Therefore, as the first cause effects recession from that love, so at the same time does this second cause; or, what is the same thing, as the communication of innocence recedes, so the persuading reason accompanies it. This, however, is the case only with man, and this in order that he may do what he does from freedom according to reason, and that from this, as from rational and at the same time moral law, he may support his grown-up offspring according to necessity and use. This second cause is lacking in animals devoid of reason. They have only the prior cause which with them is instinct.

## True Christian Religion 429

THERE ARE DUTIES OF CHARITY, SOME PUBLIC, SOME DOMESTIC, AND SOME PRIVATE. The benefactions of charity and the duties of charity are distinct, like the things done from choice and the things done from compulsion. But **by the duties of charity official duties in a kingdom or state are not meant, as the duties of a minister to minister, of a judge to judge, and so on, but the duties of everyone whatever his employment may be.** Thus these duties are from a different origin, and flow forth from a different will, and are therefore done from charity by those who have charity, and on the other hand from no charity by those who have no charity.

## True Christian Religion 431

**The domestic duties of charity are those of the husband toward the wife, and of the wife toward the husband, of fathers and mothers toward their children, and of children towards their fathers and mothers,** also the duties of masters and mistresses towards servants, male and female, and of the latter towards the former. These duties, because they are the duties of education and management at home, are so numerous that if recounted they would fill a volume. To the discharge of these duties everyone is moved by a love different from that which moves him to discharge the duties of his employment; husbands and wives are moved to their duties towards each other by marriage love and according to it; parents towards their children by the love implanted in everyone, called parental love; and children towards their parents by and according to another love which is closely connected with obedience from a sense of duty. But the duties of masters and mistresses towards their servants, male and female, have their source in the love of governing, and this love is according to the state of each one's mind.

But marriage love and the love of children, with the duties of these loves and the practice of these duties, do not produce love to the neighbor as the practice of the duties in one's employment does; for the love called parental love exists equally with the bad and the good, and is sometimes stronger with the bad; moreover, it exists in beasts and birds, in which no charity can be formed. It is known that it exists with bears, tigers, and serpents, as much as with sheep and goats, and with owls as much as with doves.

**As to the duties of parents to children in particular, they are inwardly different with those who are in charity and those who are not, although externally they appear alike. With those who are in charity, that love is conjoined with love towards the neighbor and love to God; for by such children are loved according to their morals, virtues, good will, and qualifications for serving the public.** But with those who are not in charity, there is no conjunction of charity with the love called parental love; consequently, many such parents love even wicked, immoral, and crafty children more than the good, moral, and discreet; thus they love those who are useless to the public, more than those who are useful.