

**COME
TO THE
MARRIAGE**

Christ's character is sinless because it does not have the inherited tendencies to sin. Only this character can meet the claims of a perfect law. Therefore Christ's character must stand in place of man's character as his substitute. Satan wants to substitute the character of man that has the innate desires for self-exaltation as the standard of a perfect character in place of the sinless character of Christ that has no innate desires for self-exaltation.

Chapter 3

MAN'S SUBSTITUTE

In order for man to have a perfect standing with God he needs a substitute. He needs constant intercession. In our previous chapter we reviewed that the reason that Christ's character must stand in place of man's character is because man is sinful by nature. (SC 62)

If the reason that we need a substitute is because we are sinful by nature then the nature of Christ would need to be different in order for Christ to be our substitute.

"Be careful, exceedingly careful as to how you dwell upon the human nature of Christ. Do not set him before the people as a man with the propensities of sin. He is the second Adam. The first Adam was created a *pure, sinless being, without a taint of sin* upon him; he was in the image of God. He could fall, and he did fall through transgressing. Because of sin his *posterity was born with inherent propensities of disobedience*. But Jesus Christ was the only begotten Son of God. He took upon Himself human nature, and was tempted in all points as human nature is tempted. He could have sinned; He could have fallen, but not for one moment was there in Him an evil propensity. He was assailed with temptations in the wilderness, as Adam was assailed with the temptation in Eden." 5 BC 1128.

This quotation makes it very clear that there is a difference between Christ and man. Christ did not have the propensity of sin whereas man is born with the propensity of sin. This is the reason why man needs a substitute and why Christ can substitute man's sinful nature.

For man to see his constant need of an intercessor he would need to realize that his nature remains imperfect after he is converted.

"The closer you come to Jesus, the more faulty you will appear in your own eyes; for your vision will be clearer, and your imperfection will be seen in broad and distinct contrast to His perfect nature. This is evidence that Satan's delusions have lost their power; that the vivifying influence of the Spirit of God is arousing you."

"No deep-seated love for Jesus can dwell in the heart that does not realize it's own sinfulness. The soul that is transformed by the grace of Christ will admire His divine character; but if we do not see our own moral deformity, it is unmistakable evidence that we have not had a view of the beauty and excellence of Christ." SC 64, 65.

Notice in the above that the closer man come to Christ his vision becomes clearer and he clearly sees the perfect nature of Christ in contrast to his imperfect nature.

In order for this quotation to agree with the many quotations about Christ fallen degenerate nature we need to realize that the use of the word "nature" in this quotation refers to the character of Christ not to his fallen degenerate physical and mental nature. It is

the character of Christ that must stand in place of man's character. Man does not need an intercessor because his physical nature is degenerate. Man needs an intercessor because his character is sinful by nature. We will discuss this aspect in more detail in our next chapter. Let us contrast the character of man with the character of Christ. Man is born with a desire to exalt self. This is a defect in his character by birth. That means that the desire to exalt self is in his very nature. Christ did not have the desire to exalt self in his nature. He did not have for one moment an evil propensity.

"The will of God is the law of heaven." CG 79

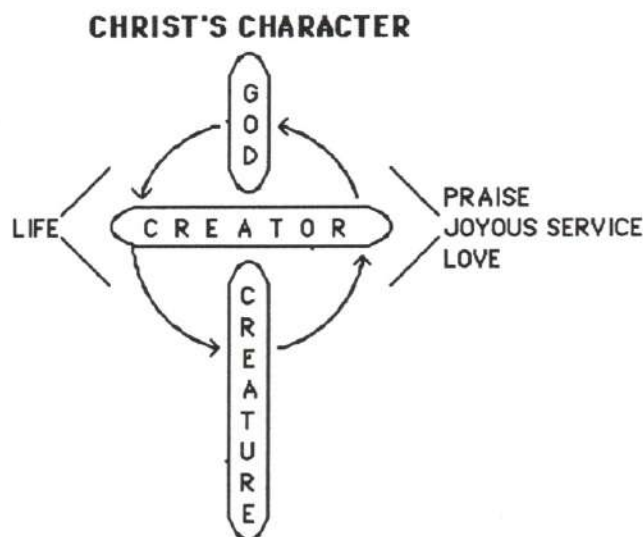
"The will of God is expressed in the precepts of His holy law, and the principles of this law are the principles of heaven." MB 109

The term "will" means wish, desire, inclination, appetite, or passion.

The law is the transcript of God's character. If we say that the will of God is the law of heaven, we would be saying that the will of God is the character of God. The will of God would be His desire, inclination, appetite, or passion. Notice the character is expressed in terms of desire.

The paragraph below illustrates the will (character) of God, the law of life.

"I seek not Mine own glory, but the glory of Him that sent Me." John 8:50;. . .In these words is set forth the great principle which is the law of life for the universe. All things Christ received from God, but He took to give. So in the heavenly courts, in His ministry for all created beings: through the beloved Son, the Father's life flows out to all; through the Son it returns, in praise and joyous service, a tide of love, to the great Source of all. And thus through Christ the circuit of beneficence is complete, representing the character of the great Giver, the law of life." DA 21



This diagram illustrates the character of Christ. Every being in heaven is involved in giving. God gives life, not because He wants praise, service, and love, but because He has the desire to make others happy. This illustration of the law is to demonstrate that God is unselfish. Every being in heaven operates on the principle that you do not seek your own will (desires) but the desires of others.

"'I seek not Mine own glory,' but the glory of Him that sent Me. John 8:50;. . .In these words is set forth the great principle which is the law of life for the universe." DA 21

The word 'glory' is a term used to mean the character of God. The term 'will' also means the character of God. These terms can be used interchangeable.

The expression, "I seek not mine own glory but the glory of Him that sent me." John 8:50, and the expression, "I seek not mine own will, but the will of the Father which hath sent me." John 5:30, are both expressions that refer to the character of God. Two wills are not being pictured in Christ. All the heavenly beings are pictured as not doing their own will but the will of God. They have one will or one desire. The heavenly intelligences constantly seek the will of others. That is the law of life in heaven and earth.

"It will be seen that the glory shining in the face of Jesus is the glory of self-sacrificing love. In the light from Calvary it will be seen that the law of self-renouncing love is the law of life for earth and heaven; that the love that 'seeketh not her own' has its source in the heart of God; and that in the meek and lowly One is manifested the character of Him who dwelleth in the light which no man can approach unto." DA 20

The word glory in the above paragraph denotes character. A law of self-renouncing love would refer to a character of self-renouncing love. This is so because the law is a

perfect reflection of character. God's law is described as a law of self-renouncing love. The expression self-renouncing means by definition that you give up your own desires for the good of others. That does not always mean that you have evil desires to give up in order to do good for others. It means you always places the desires of others before your own desires. Self-seeking means you place your own desires first. The expressions self-renouncing and self sacrificing, are describing a type of character. When Christ stated that "He did not seek His own will", He was describing His character. Christ was sinless so He did not have one innate desire to seek His own desires first. The human race is defective in character because it has innate evil desires that seek their own will. This is demonstrated by the life of Paul.

"The life of the apostle Paul was a constant conflict with self. He said, 'I die daily,' 1 Corinthians 15:31. His will and desires every day conflicted with duty and the will of God. Instead of following inclination, he did God's will, however crucifying to his nature." MH 452,453

Let us carefully note some terms used in the above. Paul's life was a constant conflict with self. His will and desires every day conflicted with duty and the will of God. The terms will and desires are terms describing character. Therefore the term self would also describe character because it is used interchangeably in the above with will and desire. Next, the term inclination is used interchangeably with will, desire, and self. Here we see that the old nature, desires, inclination, or self refers to the character of Paul. Paul had an inward struggle with his old nature but notice that he gained the victory over his old nature. It was this old nature that gave him the desire to exalt self but he never gave into these desires. It could be said of Paul that he did not seek his own will but the will of God. The will of Paul was the old selfish desires. It is these old desires that give man the defect in his character because they naturally want to exalt self. Christ did not have these old desires. All the desires in Christ were desires to help and bless others. In Paul's old nature were desires to exalt self and this made Paul defective in character and this is the reason Christ's character must stand in place of man's character even after he is converted

The reason man needs a substitute is because he is sinful by nature. The old desire that man is born with and that he cultivates as soon as he is old enough to make choices is the nature that is defective and needs substitution. As Christ imparts his righteousness man develops new desires of unselfish but he must battle the old desires in his nature. It is because of these old desires that man need an intercessor. To say that Christ had the desire for self-exaltation in His nature would to make Christ's character the same as converted man's. This theory, followed to its logical conclusion does away with the reason why we need a substitute after we are converted. We have a perfect standing with God as long as Christ's character is standing in place of our character, therefore Satan wants man to believe that Christ's character has the same desires that man has. Those desires are desires to exalt self.

"In heaven itself this law was broken. Sin originated in self-seeking. Lucifer, the covering cherub, desired to be first in heaven. He sought to gain control of heavenly beings, to draw them away from their Creator, and to win their homage to himself. Therefore he misrepresented God, attributing to Him

the desire for self-exaltation. With his own evil characteristics he sought to invest the loving Creator. Thus he deceived angels. Thus he deceived men." DA 21, 22

If we believe that Christ had a desire for self-exaltation then that desire is not sin because Christ was sinless . If that desire is not sin I can be perfect, like Christ, with those innate desires. As soon as my character is perfect I do not logically need the character of Christ placed to my account in heaven. We need to guard against any theories that lead to the logical conclusion that we can be perfect without the atonement or substitute.