

IX. - The Queen of the world.

Without natural love. 2 TIM. 3 :3.

We drew a sharp line of distinction between the "small flock" and the "wide multitude" which is still to be found in some churches. The fact is that the circle of the personally conceived was always small, compared to the wide circle of those who only nominally participated, without consciously living. Since there is still an ongoing connection between this small and large circle, we spoke of the smaller group in the Holy Place and the wider group in the court. Among those who live in the Holy Place, the religion of course continues to live in unbroken strength, but among those who wander into the Sanctuary, the level of religion declines with each new decade; and for many the time of apostasy has come. They see for themselves that the faith that has been handed down no longer has any hold over them; that therefore, on the face of it, they do not even belong in the court anymore; and one by one they sneak out of the court. A few to look for a new stimulus for higher feelings in a Buddhist chapel or at a spiritualistic séance, but by far the most to do without Religion until their death. And it was pointed out that the steady descent of the stream of religion into the broad bed of life, not to strike hard at those who were cast away, but rather to show how times and circumstances in the great multitude sometimes sharpen the stimulus of religious feeling, and at other times blunt that same religious feeling, without any appreciable difference being noticeable in the condition of the unregenerate heart in the course of the centuries. It is and remains the same person in every nation and in every century, with precious seeds for higher learning, but also with strong seeds for the most fearful sin and for the decay of the poisoned heart. Now times and circumstances used to be favorable for the maintenance of a certain general religiosity; but those same times and circumstances have now become more and more unfavorable for the flourishing of that general religiosity. Hence the sinking of the significance of religion in public life; hence the ever-widening doubt and indifference; and hence, finally, the increasing apostasy, not among the faithful, but among those who followed. A decline, which you sometimes see in the same family, when you see the very old in the family still go to church, the second generation still has a certain respect for the transmitted religion, but the grandchildren grow up completely without religion.

Yet man's higher nature prevents the loss of any higher aspiration, of any search for a common ideal. Christian society once found that higher aspiration, that common ideal, in the Christ; now it seeks and finds it in a more highly strung

world life, which is called modern life. In that modern life a common spirit agitates and reigns, which gives life unity of tone and unity of purpose, and that common spirit rises in the great metropolises, and from those metropolises it draws in land and people, gradually conquering whole nations. Thus, a fashion for life, a tone of life, a view of life, emanates from the metropolises, which nevertheless reunites the damned spirits in a certain unity. It is this modern Babylon that now, as Queen, is increasingly subjugating our modern society and controlling it in every aspect of life. And she does this so tyrannically that no one who wants to keep up with the times and count dares to oppose her order of life. The man of the world slavishly follows her fashion, her tone of life, her usability and her view of life. Thus, powerfully organized, the kingdom of the world rises up against the kingdom of Christ. We feel that what is left of the Church's influence in our lives stands in the way of the pursuit of that kingdom of the world. These are all ties from the past that prevent the modern spirit from spreading its wings freely and joyfully. Hence the gradually rising anti-clericalism, which is anxious to repel these ecclesiastical influences from all quarters and cannot rest until every influence of the former general Christian life has been broken and nullified. Science, art, pleasure-seeking, money-seeking, they must all work together as instruments in the service of that general world spirit which is modernizing all life and all life-existence with ever-increasing vigor and which is celebrating its triumphs over nothing from modern Babylon. It is this spirit that internationally and cosmopolitically unites all compassionate nations under its scepter, gathers the entire civilized world under its scepter, and thus takes the place previously occupied by the reign of Christ, from which the Kingdom of Christ is now increasingly being displaced. Once the Kingdom of Christ had managed to win a place in the hearts of the nations. Even then all sorts of lower passions stirred, but the Gospel managed to remain in control and to unite all the baptized peoples in a higher aspiration. But now this has ended. An entirely different spirit has taken over the hearts of the nations. An entirely different spirit has arisen that binds them together and controls them. At the center of life, it is no longer the spirit that emanates from Christ that is in control, but the modern world spirit. And the focal point of its power is found in the modern Babylon of our cities, which are distinct but nevertheless work together in harmony.

Now, in the past, when the spirit of Christ set the tone in the great world drama, it joined the natural life, as it is given in the nature of our human existence. The single human being lived in natural bonds. In the bond of family life, in the bond

of family life, in the bond of his home life, in the bond of his profession, in the bond of national life. Powerfully he could develop his personality, but never except in these natural ties. These ties were expressed in what is called "the natural love. Certainly, even beyond those natural ties there were ties of friendship and spirit-sympathy, but "the natural love" was and still remained the backbone of all social life. It was the love of parents for their children, of children for their parents, of sisters and brothers among themselves, of members of one and the same family and gender for each other; the love for one's village and town; the love for one's business or profession; the love for one's region and fatherland, in which natural love expressed itself, which bound everyone together, could fill the whole nation with enthusiasm, and gave direction and direction to life.

And in the whole wide field in which this natural love worked and bound and animated, one could not suppress the inner realization that all these ties, in which one felt united with others, had been created by the higher hand. We did not choose our parents, but were born of our parents. Caring for the life and upbringing of one's offspring was a life task imposed by the Almighty. To love and obey one's father and mother was felt to be an obligation imposed by God. His sisters and brothers were placed in the same family as us by a higher order, and the bond of blood was drawn. The "Thou hast, O, All-embracing King, destined the place for each one's dwelling, the circle in which he shall work," lived, especially in the few moving and relocating, in everyone's heart. Father and son usually worked in the same profession, and the guild bond was woven into the family tie. And when peace was disturbed and the homeland threatened, father-country love worked like an electric spark that set the whole nation ablaze. Thus, the whole of human existence was summed up in bonds of natural love, and the whole weave of these bonds presented itself as a consequence of a higher order. We felt that natural love was innate, that it was worked into us by God, and that it lifted us up from worship as a matter of course.

The Christian religion had never questioned these bonds. Certainly, it had always made the unity of our human race prevail over narrow-minded patriotism. It had always extended mercy and compassion to the stranger. And she had never forgotten that there might be cases in which he who loves his father or mother above Christ would be unworthy of him. But in all this there was nothing but a necessary corrective of all the abuses that selfish or sinful views could make of natural love. But, with this reservation, the Christian Religion had always been connected with family life, connected with local, regional and national life, and

had penetrated sanctifyingly into every profession. She did not disrupt natural life, she did not set it aside, she did not regard it as indifferent, but penetrated it with her spirit, brought it back to its original purity, and offered herself to supplement it.

The life of the human being passed over the border of the grave. It could not and should not be understood as exhausted in this brief existence. For some, a period of sixty or seventy years could still be called an existence. But what about the tens of thousands and millions who died young or barely reached manhood? The human heart cried out for eternal existence. Life, with its short duration, with its full measure of human misery, with its overflowing measure of iniquity, could not be life. Thus, our human existence was in the minds of everyone as if it had started here, but as if it had never ended here. Rather, it was seen as having only its beginning and development here, only to reach its full, infinite unfoldment later in an eternal existence. One reckoned with dying, one reckoned with the awesome power of death. And the question of what would be next weighed on everyone's heart and placed each person's inner life before the Judge of the living and the dead. Our entire earthly existence was dwarfed, yes, almost insignificant, compared to that infinite eternity that opened its gates to us in death. And this all-embracing moment of memento mori automatically connected with our appearance before the Almighty, and thus made our stained and sinful existence withdraw before His Holiness. Hence questions and problems to which earthly life did not offer even a hint of a solution. And it is at this point that the Christian Religion offers itself to fill up this gap in our existence with a treasure of divine light and divine mercy. Expectations, which otherwise hovered in vague form, thereby took solid shape. Through the dark shadows of death, it showed us the way. The temporary was connected to the eternal with a firm hand. Our existence broadened, widened. And even standing at the gate of eternity, the heart of man retained its sense of rest. The life here and the life hereafter were united in holy unity. One spirit could penetrate both. And the spirit that was to inspire our human life here now, and later on when we entered eternity, was the spirit of Christ, who, seated at the right hand of the Father, was vested with all power over the living and the dead. Thus unity! The sum total of our existence in one holy harmony, which emerged from Christ as the King of all, and which found its natural point of connection in that "natural love" which God, as the Creator of all, had placed in our hearts and in our human relationships. Thus, Religion sanctified life, and life led to Religion.

But of course, for the modern spirit of the age, this could not stand. That spirit of the world also meant to bind life together. Without fixed ties unity, nor power, nor dominion is conceivable; but natural love could not retain its honor. The modern spirit of the age proceeds rather from the assumption of the free individual, of the equality of individuals, of the mechanical binding together of individuals according to their own choice and will. This spirit of the world cannot take its starting point from something that lies outside our world. In that world itself it seeks and finds the secret of its power. In that world, of course, man is the controlling element, and thus man's choice and will must organize this modern world. That free choice and free will of man is a direct requirement as soon as you take the individual as your starting point. Every bond of birth, family, relatives, place of residence or whatever else, would, if taken more deeply, still be laid by the Higher Power, and thus make the individual unfree, and determine the individual not of himself but by a power from outside. And after all, any recognition of a power that determines us, that lies outside, behind or above us, would not leave the decision about us and our life's destiny in our hands, but would place it in the hands of the Almighty, and thus lead to the help of religion again. And that is exactly what we must not do. This would be a relapse into the error of our ancestors. It would make us dependent again on all kinds of influences that acted upon us from a higher world. And this is now certain, our life must be explained from the world and must merge into the world. It must and will remain a life from and for the Kingdom of the world. Influences may work on us, and if necessary, control us completely, as long as they are and remain influences originating from nature or from man to man. But it must always originate from the world and man, and in the case of an omnipotent man from his own choice and will. Not every one of us, not every human being, can remain master and ruler over himself. The influence of man on man is admitted. But even that influence of man on man must not and may not arise from necessity of the Higher Order, but must find its origin in a human invention, in a human contrivance, in a human choice of will, in a human act. You can go back in history as far as you like; but however far you trace the working of man to man, the impulse, the drive that once went out and is now working in you, must always originate in the individual and reach and affect you as an individual. There is a separate, very complicated pathology also of the multitude, and the mysteries which this pathology of the multitude hides from us have not yet been revealed for a long time. But this is certain, that one can never count with anything but individuals, and furthermore with the coincidental ties that the one individual has made with the other individual.

Thus, the organic bond of life between the sexes is replaced by the mechanical bond of life between the individuals, and in principle natural love is forsaken. The bond of marriage and the bond that binds parents to their offspring become weaker and weaker. That from birth an obligation to respect one's parents would result for the child is no longer admitted. It is considered normal that parents should pay for the pleasure that led to birth by supporting and educating their offspring, but no obligation arises from this for the child. The natural love between parents and children is fundamentally affected by this. Family life loses its nature and character. If necessary, it can be put aside. Where it still survives, it is the fruit of the will of the married or cohabiting couple, but it no longer has any higher order or deeper basis in life. Sisters and brothers can love each other, but they can also leave it at that. The bond that binds them together is entirely accidental, came about without their will, and is the fruit of others' actions for which they are not responsible. In this way the solidity of family life, and with it the basis of all social life, is disrupted; much looser play is being made with the solidarity of the inhabitants of one and the same place or the fellow countrymen of one and the same fatherland. The division into nations and peoples gives false distinctions that have come to us from a wandering past, and everyone's ideal must be the proclamation of the one world republic that will have a general social character and encompass the whole of our human race. Anarchists and Socialists, who present themselves as real *sans patrie's*, certainly go the furthest in this, but still they elaborate in their plan no other ideas than those that are inculcated as basic ideas in all kinds of circles by the modern world spirit. The world city is the ideal. Cosmopolitan in all traffic and trade. International, the ideal of life. And the one spirit of the world breaking through all national walls of division in order to overthrow them. Is not the one world language already in the making?

In this way the old ties are being loosened and their significance diminished, and on the other hand there are all kinds of openings for a completely different, not divinely ordained, not inherent in our nature, but emerging from human choice and will. For the organic union, which God created in life itself, an external, mechanical union, which arises from everyone's submission to the modern world spirit. A bond that is not in the blood, not through the treasure that history has left us, not through local cohabitation, but a bond that is forcibly forged by thinking alike, by following the same customs and ways of life, by being enamored with the same ideals, by being addicted to the same fashion, by adopting the same tone of life, by striving for the same innovations, by allowing oneself to be inspired by the

same spirit, above all by breaking with what was once sacred to all in the Christian religion. - And now this attempt comes up against the natural order of things. The organic connection, laid down by God, cannot be ignored, but it holds firm, and modern world life therefore lacks its natural basis. Just look at the senseless attempt to abolish the difference in principle between man and woman, an attempt which certainly takes its revenge from the earlier underestimation of woman, but which, in denying the inherent nature of woman, makes itself a mockery of the unconditional demands of nature. However, even though the modern spirit of the age is time and again challenged by the nature of things, it does not give up, it ultimately attacks that nature itself, and thus leads to the sad result that in the modern world man's spiritual will and intention increasingly lose their conformity to the natural basis of our existence.

The tenacity with which the Christian tradition still holds firm in the face of this modern spirit (we are not speaking here of believers, but of the great multitude) is primarily due to the fact that the Christian religion coincides with the natural order of life, and that the modern spirit goes against it; that the Christian religion conforms to that natural order, and that the modern spirit breaks with it. Yet the modern spirit is still gaining ground noticeably. This would be inconceivable in an unsanitary society living in accordance with its inherent order. But all sin is loosening of the bonds laid down by God. Again and again the cry of emancipation from the second Psalm: "Let us cast off their bands. And it is on this sinful side of our fallen nature that modern life joins in. Not without the interference of a higher intention, which will once bear its God-given fruit. But the lure for the multitude lies not only in the attractiveness, but also in the sinfulness of the spirit of the age. From the very beginning fallen man also harbors enmity against God, and it is in this spirit of the human heart that the world spirit finds its unsought and powerful ally in a thousand hearts in all parts of the world.

And so, it remains Babylon versus Jerusalem. Both, of course, taken typically. The Queen of the world as opposed to the King anointed by God over His Zion.