

THE KINGDOM OF GOD IS WITHIN YOU

Christianity Not As A Mystical Teaching But As A New
Concept of Life

by Leo Tolstoy

[Podcast 13 of 13]

[Dear Soul, This book has been edited to begin with Chapter Five instead of the Author's original Preface and Chapters One through Four. Chapters One through Four are essentially a defense of Tolstoy's previous book on Christianity, entitled My Religion, a fascinating book which emphasizes the importance of adhering to the teachings of Jesus Christ. For one who is already familiar with that previous book, the Author's original order is not — in the view of the editor — most effective. Tolstoy's opening chapters, which are still good to read, are included after Chapter Twelve.

Peace be with you, Alan Lewis Silva, editor]

CHAPTER FOUR Now I will speak of another putative comprehension of Christianity, which interferes with the correct comprehension of it — the scientific comprehension. The churchmen regard as Christianity that conception of it which they have formed, and this comprehension of Christianity they regard as the one indubitably true one. The men of science regard as Christianity only what the different churches have been professing, and, assuming that these professions exhaust

the whole significance of Christianity, they recognize it as a religious teaching which has outlived its time. To have it made clear how impossible it is with such a view to understand the Christian teaching, we must form an idea of the place which the religions in general and Christianity in particular have in reality occupied in the life of humanity, and of the significance which is ascribed to religion by science. As an individual man cannot live without having a definite idea of the meaning of his life, and always, though often unconsciously, conforms his acts to this meaning which he ascribes to his life, even so aggregates of men living under the same conditions — nations cannot help but have a conception about the meaning of their collective life and the activity resulting therefrom. And as an individual, entering into a new age, invariably changes his comprehension of life, and a grown man sees its meaning in something else than in what a child sees it, so an aggregate of people, a nation, inevitably, according to its age, changes its comprehension of life and the activity which results from it. The difference between the individual and the whole of humanity in this respect consists in this, that while the individual in the determination of the comprehension of life, proper to the new stage of life into which he enters, and in the activity which arises from it, makes use of the indications of men who have lived before him and who have already passed through the period of life upon which he is entering, humanity cannot have these indications, because it all moves along an untrodden path, and there is no one who can tell how life is to be understood, and how one is to act under the new conditions into which it is entering, and in which no one has lived before. And yet, as a married man with children cannot continue to understand life as he understood it when he was a child, so humanity cannot in connection with all the various changes which have taken place — the density of the population, and the established intercourse between the nations, and the improvement of

the means for struggling against Nature, and the accumulation of science — continue to understand life as before, but must establish a new concept of life, from which should result the activity which corresponds to that new condition into which it has entered or is about to enter. To this demand responds the peculiar ability of humanity to segregate certain people who give a new meaning to the whole of human life — a meaning from which results the whole new activity which is different from the preceding one. The establishment of the new life-conception, which is proper for humanity under the new conditions into which it is entering, and of the activity resulting from it, is what is called religion. And so religion, in the first place, is not, as science thinks, a phenomenon which at one time accompanied the evolution of humanity, and later became obsolete, but is a phenomenon always inherent in the life of humanity, and is in our time as inevitably inherent in humanity as at any other time. In the second place, religion is always a determination of the activity of the future, and not of the past, and so it is obvious that the investigation of past phenomena can in no way include the essence of religion. The essence of every religious teaching does not consist in the desire to express the forces of Nature symbolically, or in the fear of them, or in the demand for the miraculous, or in the external forms of its manifestation, as the men of science imagine. The essence of religion lies in the property of men prophetically to foresee and point out the path of life, over which humanity must travel, in a new definition of the meaning of life, from which also results a new, the whole future activity of humanity. This property of foreseeing the path on which humanity must travel is in a greater or lesser degree common to all men, but there have always, at all times, been men, in whom this quality has been manifested with particular force, and these men expressed clearly and precisely what was dimly felt by all men, and established a

new comprehension of life, from which resulted an entirely new activity, for hundreds and thousands of years. We know three such conceptions of life: two of them humanity has already outlived, and the third is the one through which we are now passing in Christianity. There are three, and only three, such conceptions, not because we have arbitrarily united all kinds of life-conceptions into these three, but because the acts of men always have for their base one of these three life-conceptions, because we cannot understand life in any other way than by one of these three means. The three life-conceptions are these: the first — the personal, or animal; the second — the social, or the pagan; and the third — the universal, or the divine. According to the first life-conception, man's life is contained in nothing but his personality; the aim of his life is the gratification of the will of this personality. According to the second life-conception, man's life is not contained in his personality alone, but in the aggregate and sequence of personalities — in the tribe, the family, the race, the state; the aim of life consists in the gratification of the will of this aggregate of personalities. According to the third life-conception, man's life is contained neither in his personality, nor in the aggregate and sequence of personalities, but in the beginning and source of life, in God. These three life-conceptions serve as the foundation of all past and present religions. The savage recognizes life only in himself, in his personal desires. The good of his life is centred in himself alone. The highest good for him is the greatest gratification of his lust. The prime mover of his life is his personal enjoyment. His religion consists in appeasing the divinity in his favor, and in the worship of imaginary personalities of gods, who live only for personal ends. A pagan, a social man, no longer recognizes life in himself alone, but in the aggregate of personalities — in the tribe, the family, the race, the state — and sacrifices his personal good for these aggregates. The prime mover of his life is glory. His

religion consists in the glorification of the heads of unions — of eponyms, ancestors, kings, and in the worship of gods, the exclusive protectors of his family, his race, his nation, his state. AUTHOR'S FOOTNOTE: The unity of this life-conception is not impaired by the fact that so many various forms of life, as that of the tribe, the family, the race, the state, and even the life of humanity, according to the theoretical speculations of the positivists, are based on this social, or pagan, life-conception. All these various forms of life are based on the same concept that the life of the personality is not a sufficient aim of life and that the meaning of life can be found only in the aggregate of personalities. [End of Footnote.] The man with the divine life-conception no longer recognizes life to consist in his personality, or in the aggregate of personalities (in the family, the race, the people, the country, or the state), but in the source of the everlasting, immortal life, in God; and to do God's will he sacrifices his personal and domestic and social good. The prime mover of his religion is love. And his religion is the worship in deed and in truth of the beginning of everything, of God. The whole historical life of humanity is nothing but a gradual transition from the personal, the animal life-conception, to the social, and from the social to the divine. The whole history of the ancient nations, which lasted for thousands of years and which came to a conclusion with the history of Rome, is the history of the substitution of the social and the political life-conception for the animal, the personal. The whole history since the time of imperial Rome and the appearance of Christianity has been the history of the substitution of the divine life-conception for the political, and we are passing through it even now. It is this last life-conception, and the Christian teaching which is based upon it and which governs our whole life and lies at the foundation of our whole activity, both the practical and the theoretical, that the men of so-called science, considering it in reference to its external

signs only, recognize as something obsolete and meaningless for us. This teaching, which, according to the men of science, is contained only in its dogmatic part — in the doctrine of the Trinity, the redemption, the miracles, the church, the sacraments, and so forth — is only one out of a vast number of religions which have arisen in humanity, and now, having played its part in history, is outliving its usefulness, melting in the fight of science and true culture. What is taking place is what in the majority of cases serves as a source of the coarsest human errors — men who are standing on a lower level of comprehension, coming in contact with phenomena of a higher order, instead of making efforts to understand them, instead of rising to the point of view from which they ought to look upon a subject, judge it from their lower point of view, and that, too, with greater daring and determination the less they understand what they are talking about. For the majority of scientific men, who view Christ's vital, moral teaching from the lower point of the social conception of life, this teaching is only a very indefinite, clumsy combination of Hindu asceticism, Stoical and Neoplatonic teachings, and Utopian antisocial reveries, which have no serious significance for our time, and its whole meaning is centred in its external manifestations — in Catholicism, Protestantism, the dogmas, the struggle with the worldly power. In defining the significance of Christianity according to these phenomena, they are like deaf persons who should judge of the meaning and the worth of music according to the appearance of the motions which the musicians make. The result of it is this, that all these men, beginning with Comte, Strauss, Spencer, and Renan, who do not understand the meaning of Christ's sermons, who do not understand why they are uttered and for what purpose, who do not even understand the question to which they serve as an answer, who do not even take the trouble to grasp their meaning, if they are inimically inclined, deny

outright the rationality of the teaching; but if they wish to be condescending to it, they correct it from the height of their grandeur, assuming that Christ wanted to say precisely what they have in mind, but did not know how to say it. They treat his teaching as, in correcting the words of an interlocutor, self-confident men generally speak to one whom they regard as standing below them, "Yes, what you mean to say is this." This correction is always made in the sense of reducing the higher, divine life-conception to the lower, social conception. People generally say that the moral teaching of Christianity is good, but exaggerated — that, in order that it should be absolutely good, we must reject from it what is superfluous, what does not fit in with our structure of life. "For otherwise the teaching, which demands too much, which cannot be carried out, is worse than one which demands from men what is possible and in conformity with their strength," think and assert the wise interpreters of Christianity, repeating what was long ago affirmed and still is affirmed, and could not help but be affirmed, in relation to the Christian teaching, by those who, having failed to comprehend the teacher of it, crucified Him — by the Jews. It turns out that before the judgment of the learned of our time, the Jewish law, A tooth for a tooth, and an eye for an eye — the law of just retaliation, which was known to humanity five thousand years ago — is more useful than the law of love which eighteen hundred years ago was preached by Christ in place of this very law of justice. It turns out that everything which has been done by the men who comprehended Christ's teaching in a direct manner and lived in conformity with such a comprehension, everything which all true Christians, all Christian champions, have done, everything which now transforms the world under the guise of socialism and communism — is exaggeration, of which it is not worthwhile to speak. Men who have been educated in Christianity for eighteen centuries have convinced

themselves in the persons of their foremost men, the scholars, that the Christian teaching is a teaching of dogmas, that the vital teaching is a misconception, an exaggeration, which violates the true legitimate demands of morality, which correspond to man's nature, and that the doctrine of justice, which Christ rejected and in the place of which he put his own teaching, is much more profitable for us. The learned consider the commandment of non-resistance to evil an exaggeration and even madness. If it be rejected, it would be much better, they think, without observing that they are not talking of Christ's teaching at all, but of what presents itself to them as such. They do not notice that to say that Christ's commandment about non-resistance to evil is an exaggeration is the same as saying that in the theory of the circle the statement about the equality of the radii of a circle is an exaggeration. And those who say so do precisely what a man, who did not have any conception as to what a circle is, would do if he asserted that the demand that all the points on the circumference should be equally distant from the centre is an exaggeration. To advise that the statement concerning the equality of the radii in a circle be rejected or moderated is the same as not understanding what a circle is. To advise that the commandment about non-resistance to evil in the vital teaching of Christ be rejected or moderated means not to understand the teaching. And those who do so actually do not understand it at all. They do not understand that this teaching is the establishment of a new comprehension of life, which corresponds to the new condition into which men have been entering for these eighteen hundred years, and the determination of the new activity which results from it. They do not believe that Christ wanted to say what he did; or it seems to them that what he said in the Sermon on the Mount and in other passages He said from infatuation, from lack of comprehension, from insufficient development. AUTHOR'S FOOTNOTE: Here, for example,

is a characteristic judgment of the kind in an article of an American periodical, *Arena*, October, 1890. The article is entitled "A New Basis of Church Life." In discussing the significance of the Sermon on the Mount, and especially its non-resistance to evil, the author, who is not obliged, like the ecclesiastic writers, to conceal its meaning, says Christ actually preached complete communism and anarchy; but we must know how to look upon Christ in His historical and psychological significance. "Devout common sense must gradually come to look upon Christ as a philanthropic teacher who, like every enthusiast who ever taught, went to an Utopian extreme of his own philosophy. Every great agitation for the betterment of the world has been led by men, who beheld their own mission with such absorbing intensity, that they could see little else. It is no reproach to Christ to say that he had the typical reformer's temperament; that his precepts cannot be literally accepted, as a complete philosophy of life; and that men are to analyze them, reverently, but, at the same time, in the spirit of ordinary, truth-seeking criticism," and so forth. Christ would have liked to speak well, but He did not know how to express Himself as precisely and clearly as we, in the spirit of criticism, and so we will correct him.

Everything He said about meekness, sacrifice, poverty, the thoughtlessness for the morrow, He said by chance, having been unable to express himself scientifically. [End of Footnote.] "Therefore I say unto you, Take no thought for your life, what ye shall eat, or what ye shall drink; nor yet for your body, what ye shall put on. Is not the life more than meat, and the body than raiment? Behold the fowls of the air: for they sow not, neither do they reap, nor gather into barns; yet your heavenly Father feedeth them. Are ye not much better than they? Which of you by taking thought can add one cubit unto his stature? And why take ye thought for raiment? Consider the lilies of the field, how they grow; they toil not, neither do they spin: And yet I say

unto you, That even Solomon in all his glory was not arrayed like one of these. Wherefore, if God so clothe the grass of the field, which to day is, and to morrow is cast into the oven, shall he not much more clothe you, O ye of little faith? Therefore take no thought, saying, What shall we eat? or, What shall we drink? or, Wherewithal shall we be clothed? (For after all these things do the Gentiles seek:) for your heavenly Father knoweth that ye have need of all these things. But seek ye first the kingdom of God, and his righteousness; and all these things shall be added unto you. Sufficient unto the day is the evil thereof.” (Matthew 6: 25-34). “Sell that ye have, and give alms; provide yourselves bags which wax not old, a treasure in the heavens that faileth not, where no thief approacheth, neither moth corrupteth. For where your treasure is, there will your heart be also.” (Luke 12: 33-34). Deny thyself, take up thy cross daily, and follow me. My meat is to do the will of Him that sent me, and to do His work. Not my will be done, but Thine; not what I want, but what Thou wantest, and not as I want, but as Thou wantest. The life is in this, not to do one’s will, but the will of God. All these propositions seem to men who are standing on a lower life-conception to be an expression of an ecstatic transport, which has no direct applicability to life. And yet these propositions just as strictly result from the Christian conception of life as the tenet about giving up one’s labor for the common good, about sacrificing one’s life in the defence of one’s country, results from the social conception. Just as a man of the social life-conception says to a savage, “Come to your senses, bethink yourself! The life of your personality cannot be the true life, because it is wretched and transitory. Only the life of the aggregate and of the sequence of personalities, of the tribe, the family, the race, the state, is continued and lives, and so a man must sacrifice his personality for the life of the family, the state.” Precisely the same the Christian teaching says to a man of

the aggregate, of the social conception of life. “Repent, μετανοεῖτε, that is, bethink yourselves, or else you will perish. Remember that this carnal, personal life, which originated today and will be destroyed tomorrow, cannot be made secure in any way, that no external measures, no arrangement of it, can add firmness and rationality to it. Bethink yourselves and understand that the life which you live is not the true life: the life of the family, the life of society, the life of the state will not save you from ruin.” The true, rational life is possible for man only in proportion as he can be a participant, not in the family or the state, but in the source of life, the Father; in proportion as he can blend his life with the life of the Father. Such indubitably is the Christian life-comprehension, which may be seen in every utterance of the Gospel. It is possible not to share this life-conception; it is possible to reject it; it is possible to prove its inexactness and irregularity; but it is impossible to judge of the teaching, without having first grasped the life-conception from which it results; still less possible is it to judge about a subject of a higher order from a lower point of view, to judge of the tower by looking at the foundation. But it is precisely this that the learned men of our time are doing. They do so because they abide in an error, which is like the one of the churchmen, the belief that they are in possession of such methods of the study of the subject that, as soon as these methods, called scientific, are used, there can be no longer any doubt as to the correctness of the comprehension of the subject under advisement. It is this possession of an instrument of cognition, which they deem infallible, that serves as the chief obstacle in the comprehension of the Christian teaching by unbelievers and so-called scientific men, by whose opinion the vast majority of unbelievers, the so-called cultured men, are guided. From this imaginary comprehension of theirs arise all the errors of the scientific men in respect to the Christian teaching, and especially

two strange misconceptions which more than any other impede the correct comprehension of it. One of these misconceptions is this, that the Christian vital teaching is impracticable, and so is either entirely unobligatory, that is, need not be taken for a guide, or else must be modified and moderated to such an extent as to make it practicable in our society. Another misunderstanding is this, that the Christian teaching of love of God, and so the service of Him, is an obscure, mystical demand, which has no definite object of love, and so must give way to a more precise and comprehensible teaching about loving men and serving humanity. The first misconception about the impracticality of the teaching consists in this, that the men of the social comprehension of life, being unable to comprehend the method by means of which the Christian teaching guides men, and taking the Christian indications of perfection to be rules which determine life, think and say that it is impossible to follow Christ's teaching, because a complete fulfilment of this teaching destroys life. "If a man fulfilled what was preached by Christ, he would destroy his life; and if all men should fulfil it, the whole human race would come to an end," they say. "If we care not for the morrow, for what we shall eat and drink and be clothed in; if we do not defend our lives; if we do not resist evil with force; if we give our lives for our friends, and observe absolute chastity, no man, nor the whole human race, can exist," they think and say. And they are quite correct, if we take the indications of perfection, as given by Christ, for rules, which every man is obliged to carry out, just as in the social teaching everybody is obliged to carry out the rule about paying the taxes, about taking part in court, etcetera. The misconception consists in this, that Christ's teaching guides men in a different way from the way those teachings guide which are based on a lower life-conception. The teachings of the social life-conception guide only by demanding a precise execution of the rules or laws. Christ's teaching

guides men by indicating to them that infinite perfection of the Father in heaven, toward which it is proper for each man to strive voluntarily, no matter at what stage of perfection he may be. The misconception of people who judge about the Christian teaching from the social point of view consists in this, that they, assuming that the perfection pointed out by Christ may be attained completely, ask themselves (even as they question themselves, assuming that the social laws will be fulfilled) what will happen when all this shall be fulfilled. This assumption is false, because the perfection pointed out by Christ is infinite and can never be attained; and Christ gives His teaching with this in view, that complete perfection will never be attained, but that the striving toward complete, infinite perfection will constantly increase the good of men, and that this good can, therefore, be increased infinitely. Christ does not teach angels, but men, who live an animal life, who are moved by it. And it is to this animal force of motion that Christ seems to apply a new, a different force of the consciousness of divine perfection, and with this He directs the motion of life along the resultant of two forces. To assume that human life will go in the direction indicated by Christ is the same as assuming that a boatman, in crossing a rapid river and directing his boat almost against the current, will move in that direction. Christ recognizes the existence of both sides of the parallelogram, of both the eternal, indestructible forces, of which man's life is composed — the force of the animal nature and the force of the consciousness of a filial relation to God. Without saying anything of the animal force, which, asserting itself, always remains equal to itself and exists outside of man's power, Christ speaks only of the divine force, calling man to recognize it in the highest degree, to free it as much as possible from what is retarding it, and to bring it to the highest degree of tension. In this liberation and increase of the force does

man's true life, according to Christ's teaching, consist. The true life, according to the previous conditions, consisted in the execution of rules, of the law; according to Christ's teaching, it consists in the greatest approach to the divine perfection, as pointed out to every man and inwardly felt by him, in a greater and ever greater approach toward blending our will with the will of God, a blending toward which a man strives, and which would be a destruction of life as we know it. Divine perfection is the asymptote of the human life, toward which it always tends and approaches, and which can be attained by it only at infinity. The Christian teaching seems to exclude the possibility of life only when men take the indication of the ideal to be a rule. It is only then that the demands put forth by Christ's teaching appear to be destructive of life. Without these demands the true life would be impossible. "Too much should not be demanded," people generally say, in discussing the demands of the Christian teaching. "It is impossible to demand that we should not care for the future, as it says in the Gospel; all that we should do is not to care too much. It is impossible to give everything to the poor; but we should give a certain, definite part to them. It is not necessary to strive after chastity; but debauchery should be avoided. We must not leave our wives and children; but we should not be too much attached to them," and so forth. But to speak in this manner is the same as telling a man who is crossing a rapid river, and who is directing his course against the current, that it is impossible to cross the river by going against the current, but that to cross it he should row in the direction he wishes to go. Christ's teaching differs from previous teachings in that it guides men, not by external rules, but by the internal consciousness of the possibility of attaining divine perfection. And in man's soul there are not moderated rules of justice and of philanthropy, but the ideal of the complete, infinite, divine perfection. Only the striving after this

perfection deflects the direction of man's life from the animal condition toward the divine, to the extent to which this is possible in this life. In order to land where you wish, you must direct your course much higher up. To lower the demands of the ideal means not only to diminish the possibility of perfection, but to destroy the ideal itself. The ideal which operates upon people is not an invented one, but one which is borne in the soul of every man. Only this ideal of the complete, infinite perfection acts upon people and moves them to activity. A moderated perfection loses its power to act upon men's souls. Christ's teaching only then has force, when it demands full perfection, that is, the blending of God's essence, which abides in the soul of every man, with the will of God — the union of the son and the Father. Only this liberation of the son of God, who lives in every man, from the animal, and his approximation to the Father form life according to Christ's teaching. The existence of the animal in man, of nothing but the animal, is not the human life. Life according to the will of God alone is also not the human life. The human life is the resultant from the animal and the divine lives, and the more this resultant approaches the divine life, the more there is of life. Life, according to the Christian teaching, is a motion toward divine perfection. No condition, according to this teaching, can be higher or lower than another. Every condition, according to this teaching, is only a certain step, indifferent in itself, toward the unattainable perfection, and so in itself forms neither a greater nor a lesser degree of life. The increase of life, according to this teaching, is only an acceleration of motion toward perfection, and so the motion toward perfection of the publican Zacchæus, of the harlot, of the robber on the cross, forms a higher degree of life than the immovable righteousness of the Pharisee. And so there can be no obligatory rules for this teaching. A man who stands on a lower step, in moving toward perfection, lives more morally and better, and better performs the

teaching, than a man who stands on a much higher stage of morality, but who does not move toward perfection. In this sense the lost sheep is dearer to the Father than one which is not lost. The prodigal son, the lost coin which is found again, are dearer than those which were not lost. The fulfilment of the teaching consists in the motion from oneself toward God. It is evident that for such a fulfilment of the teaching there can be no definite laws and rules. All degrees of perfection and all degrees of imperfection are equal before this teaching; no fulfilment of the laws constitutes a fulfilment of the teaching; and so, for this teaching there are, and there can be, no rules and no laws. From this radical distinction of Christ's teaching as compared with previous teachings, which are based on the social conception of life, there results the difference between the social and the Christian commandments. The social commandments are for the most part positive, prescribing certain acts, justifying men, giving them righteousness. But the Christian commandments (the commandment of love is not a commandment in the strict sense of the word, but an expression of the very essence of the teaching) — the five commandments of the Sermon on the Mount — are all negative, and they all show only what men may not do at a certain stage of human development. These commandments are, as it were, signals on the infinite road to perfection, toward which humanity walks, signals of that stage of perfection which is possible at a given period of the development of humanity. In the Sermon on the Mount Christ has expressed the eternal ideal toward which it is proper for men to tend, and that degree of its attainment which can be reached even in our time. The ideal consists in having no ill-will against any one, in calling forth no ill-will, in loving all; but the commandment, below which, in the attainment of this ideal, it is absolutely possible not to descend, consists in not offending any one with a word. And this forms the first

commandment. The ideal is complete chastity, even in thought; the commandment which points out the degree of attainment, below which, in the attainment of this ideal, it is absolutely possible not to descend, is the purity of the marital life, the abstaining from fornication. And this forms the second commandment. The ideal is not to care for the future, to live only in the present; the commandment which points out the degree of the attainment, below which it is absolutely possible not to descend is not to swear, not to promise anything to men. And this is the third commandment. The ideal is never, under any condition, to make use of violence; the commandment which points out the degree below which it is absolutely possible not to descend is not to repay evil with evil, but to suffer insult, to give up one's cloak. And this is the fourth commandment. The ideal is to love our enemies, who hate us; the commandment which points out the degree of the attainment, below which it is possible not to descend, is to do no evil to our enemies, to speak well of them, to make no distinction between them and our fellow citizens. All these commandments are indications of what we are fully able not to do on the path of striving after perfection, of what we ought to work over now, of what we must by degrees transfer into the sphere of habit, into the sphere of the unconscious. But these commandments fail to form a teaching, and do not exhaust it, and form only one of the endless steps in the approximation toward perfection. After these commandments there must and will follow higher and higher ones on the path to perfection, which is indicated by the teaching. And so it is the peculiarity of the Christian teaching that it makes higher demands than those which are expressed in these commandments, but under no condition minimizes the demands, either of the ideal itself, or of these commandments, as is done by people who judge the teaching of Christianity free from the standpoint of the social conception of life. Such is one misconception of the

scientific men concerning the meaning and significance of Christ's teaching; the other, which flows from the same source, consists in the substitution of the love and service of men, of humanity, for the Christian demand for loving God and serving Him. The Christian teaching of loving God and serving Him, and (only in consequence of this love and this service) of the love and service of our neighbor, appears obscure, mystical, and arbitrary to the men of science, and they completely exclude the demand of love of God and of serving Him, assuming that the teaching about this love of men, of humanity, is much more intelligible and firm and better grounded. The men of science teach theoretically that the good and sensible life is only the life of serving the whole of humanity, and in this alone do they see the meaning of the Christian teaching; to this teaching do they reduce the Christian teaching; for this their teaching do they seek a confirmation in the Christian teaching, assuming that their teaching and the Christian teaching are one and the same. This opinion is quite faulty. The Christian teaching, and that of the positivists, communists, and all the preachers of a universal brotherhood of men, which is based on the profitableness of such a brotherhood, have nothing in common among themselves, and differ from one another more especially in this, that the Christian teaching has firm, clear foundations in the human soul, while the teaching of the love of humanity is only a theoretical deduction from analogy. The teaching of the love of humanity alone has for its basis the social conception of life. The essence of the social conception of life consists in the transference of the meaning of our personal lives into the life of the aggregate of personalities — the tribe, the family, the race, the state. This transference has taken place easily and naturally in its first forms, in the transference of the meaning of life from the personality to the tribe, the family. But the transference to the race or nation is more difficult and demands a

special education for it; and the transference of the consciousness to the state forms the limit of such a transference. It is natural for any one to love himself, and every person loves himself without any special incitement; to love my tribe, which supports and defends me, to love my wife, the joy and helpmate of my life, my children, the pleasure and hope of my life, and my parents, who have given me life and an education, is natural: and this kind of love, though far from being as strong as the love of self, is met with quite frequently. To love one's race, one's nation, for the sake of oneself, of one's pride, though not so natural, is still to be met with. The love of one's nation, which is of the same race, tongue, and faith with one, is still possible, though this sentiment is far from being as strong as the love of self, or even of family and race; but the love of a country, like Turkey, Germany, England, Austria, Russia, is almost an impossible thing, and, in spite of the intensified education in this direction, is only assumed and does not exist in reality. With this aggregate there ends for man the possibility of transferring his consciousness and of experiencing in this fiction any immediate sensation. But the positivists and all the preachers of a scientific brotherhood, who do not take into consideration the weakening of the sentiment in proportion as the subject is widened, continue the discussion theoretically along the same direction: "If," they say, "it was more advantageous for the personality to transfer its consciousness to the tribe, the family, and then to the nation, the state, it will be still more advantageous to transfer the consciousness to the whole aggregate of humanity, and for all to live for humanity, just as individuals live for the family, the state." Theoretically it really comes out that way. Since the consciousness and the love of personality are transferred to the family, from the family to the race, the nation, the state, it would be quite logical for men, to save themselves from struggle and,

calamities, which are due to the division of humanity into nations and states, most naturally to transfer their love to humanity. This would seem to be the most logical thing, and this is theoretically advocated by men, who do not observe that love is a sentiment which one may have, but cannot preach, and that, besides, for love there must be an object, whereas humanity is not an object, but only a fiction. The tribe, the family, even the state, are not invented by men, but were formed naturally like a swarm of bees or ants, and actually exist. A man who loves his family for the sake of his animal personality, knows whom he loves: Anna, Mary, John, Peter, and so forth. A man who loves a race and is proud of it, knows that he loves the whole race of the Guelphs, or all the Ghibellines; he who loves the state knows that he loves France as far as the Rhine and the Pyrenees, and its capital, Paris, and its history, and so forth. But what does a man love, when he loves humanity? There is the state, the nation; there is the abstract conception — man; but there is not, and there cannot be, a real conception of humanity. Humanity? Where is the limit of humanity? Where does it end and where does it begin? Does humanity stop short of a savage, an idiot, an alcoholic, an insane person? If we are going to draw a line of demarcation for humanity, so as to exclude the lower representatives of the human race, where are we going to draw it? Are we going to exclude the negroes, as the Americans do, and the Hindus, as some English do, and the Jews, as some do? But if we are going to include all men without exception, why include men only, and not the higher animals, many of whom stand higher than the lower representatives of the human race? We do not know humanity as an external object — we do not know its limits. Humanity is a fiction, and it cannot be loved. It would indeed be very convenient, if men could love humanity just as they love the family; it would be very convenient, as the communists talk of doing, to substitute the communal for

the competitive tendency of human activity, and the universal for the individual, so that every man may be for all, and all for every man, only there are no motives whatever for it. The positivists, the communists, and all the preachers of the scientific brotherhood preach the widening of that love which men have for themselves and for their families and for the state, so as to embrace all humanity, forgetting that the love which they advocate is the personal love, which, by spreading out thinner, could extend to the family; which, by spreading out still thinner, could extend to the natural country of birth, which completely vanishes as soon as it reaches an artificial state, as Austria, Turkey, England, and which we are not even able to imagine, when we come to humanity, an entirely mystical subject. "Man loves himself (his animal life), loves his family, loves even his country. Why should he not love also humanity? How nice that would be! By the way, this is precisely what Christianity teaches." Thus think the preachers of the positivist, communistic, socialistic brotherhoods. It would indeed be very nice, but it cannot be, because love which is based on the personal and the social conception of life cannot go beyond the state. The error of judgment consists in this, that the social life-conception, on which is based the love of family and of country, is built on the love of personality, and that this love, being transferred from the personality to the family, the race, the nationality, the state, keeps growing weaker and weaker, and in the state reaches its extreme limit, beyond which it cannot go. The necessity for widening the sphere of love is incontestable; but at the same time this very necessity for its widening in reality destroys the possibility of love and proves the insufficiency of the personal, the human love. And here the preachers of the positivist, communistic, socialistic brotherhoods, to succor the human love, which has proved insufficient, propose the Christian love — in its consequences alone, and not in its

foundations: they propose the love of humanity alone, without the love of God. But there can be no such love. There exists no motive for it. Christian love results only from the Christian conception of life, according to which the meaning of life consists in the love of God and in serving Him. By a natural progression, from the love of self to the love of family, of the race, of the nation, of the state, the social conception of life has brought men to the consciousness of the necessity for a love of humanity, which has no limits and blends with everything in existence — to something which evokes no sensations in man; it has brought them to a contradiction, which cannot be solved by the social conception of life. Only the Christian teaching in all its significance, by giving a new meaning to life, solves it. Christianity recognizes the love of self, and of the family, and of the nation, and of humanity — not only of humanity, but of everything living, of everything in existence; it recognizes the necessity for an endless widening of the sphere of love; but the object of this love it does not find outside of self, or in the aggregate of personalities — in the family, the race, the state, humanity, in the whole external world, but in oneself, in one's personality — which, however, is a divine personality, the essence of which is the same love, to the necessity of widening which the animal personality was brought, in saving itself from the consciousness of its perdition. The difference between the Christian teaching and what preceded it is this, that the preceding social teaching said: "Live contrary to your nature (meaning only the animal nature), subordinate it to the external law of the family, the society, the state;" but Christianity says: "Live in accordance with your nature (meaning the divine nature), subordinating it to nothing — neither to your own, nor to anybody else's animal nature — and you will attain what you are striving after by subordinating your external nature to external laws." The Christian teaching takes man back to the primitive

consciousness of self, not of self — the animal, but of self — God, the divine spark, of self — the son of God, of just such a God as the Father himself, but included in an animal integument. And the recognition of self as this son of God, whose chief quality is love, satisfies also all those demands for the widening of the sphere of love, to which the man of the social conception of life was brought. There, with a greater and ever greater widening of the sphere of love for the salvation of the personality, love was a necessity and was applied to certain objects — self, the family, society, humanity; with the Christian conception of life, love is not a necessity and is not adapted to anything, but is an essential quality of man's soul. Man does not love because it is advantageous for him to love this man or these men, but because love is the essence of his soul — because he cannot help loving. The Christian teaching consists in pointing out to man that the essence of his soul is love, that his good is derived not from the fact that he will love this or that man, but from the fact that he will love the beginning of everything, God, whom he recognizes in himself through love, and so will love everybody and everything. In this does the fundamental difference between the Christian teaching and the teaching of the positivists and of all the theorists of the non-Christian universal brotherhood consist. Such are the two chief misconceptions concerning the Christian teaching, from which originate the majority of the false opinions in regard to it. One is, that, like the preceding teachings, Christ's teaching inculcates rules, which men are obliged to follow, and that these rules are impracticable; the other is, that the whole significance of Christianity consists in the teaching about the advantageous cohabitation of humanity, as one family, for which, without mentioning the love of God, it is necessary only to follow the rule of love toward humanity. The false opinion of the scientific men, that the teaching of the supernatural forms the essence of the Christian teaching,

and that Christ's vital teaching is impracticable, together with the misconception which arises from this false opinion, forms the second cause why Christianity is not understood by the men of our time.

