

Christ in you is true religion.  
**The Life of God in the Soul of Man**

Galatians 2:20



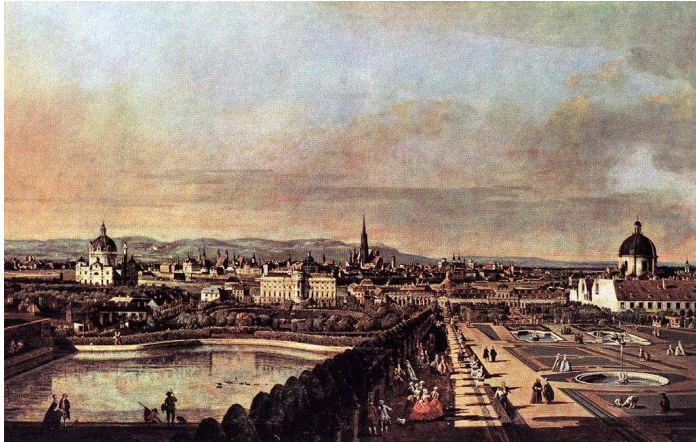
Henry Scougal (b. 1650) assisted by KH (b. 1952)

August 26, 2001

purpose: to show us what a true Christian is, to move us and help us each to be one; especially to prick the lethargic and encourage the despondent, especially the ones who feel they have tried and failed (Col. 1:24-29)

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3. Endeavor to form internal acts of devotion, charity, purity, and humility. ( <b>Cultivate heart godliness.</b> )	
4. Meditate on Him and the scriptures. ( <b>Daily meditate.</b> )	
5. <b>Pray constantly.</b>	



## I. True Religion

A. The occasion of this **message**: advice to a friend. A teacher (Henry Scougal) who dearly loved his student and friend wrote him a “letter.”

B. Mistakes about **religion**; what it is not

1. It is not simply in the **understanding**.
2. It is not simply in **external duties**.
3. It is not simply in the **feelings**.

C. What religion is

“True religion is a union of the **soul** with **God**, a real participation of the **divine** nature (II Pet. 2:3), the very image of God drawn upon the soul, or, in the apostle’s phrase; ‘it is Christ formed within us’ (Gal. 4:19). Briefly, I know not how the nature of religion can be more fully expressed, than by calling it a **divine life**.”

True religion is the **life of God in the soul of man!** It is **Christ in you** (Col. 1:27) and Christ-likeness being formed in man (Rom. 8:29; Gal. 4:19; II Cor. 3:16).

D. What makes up the **divine life**?

1. The root of the divine life is **faith**.
2. The chief branches are
  - a. **love** to God
    - 1) The love of God is a delightful and **affectionate** sense of God,
    - 2) which makes the soul resign and **surrender** itself wholly unto Him,
    - 3) desiring above all things to **please** Him,
    - 4) and delighting in nothing so much as in fellowship and **communion** with Him,
    - 5) and being **ready** to do or suffer any thing for His sake, or at His pleasure. It is a turning toward (in acceptance of) God!
  - b. **charity** to man  
Charity to man includes
    - 1) all the parts of **justice**, which includes all the **duties** we owe to our neighbors, and
    - 2) **resentment** toward any evil that befalls others, as if it happened to ourselves, and
    - 3) **acceptance** of his creaturehood, respecting his person, and embracing him with a **sincere** and **warm** affection.
  - c. **purity**
    - 1) Purity is mastery over the bodily **appetites**;
    - 2) it is such an attitude of mind as make a man despise and **abstain** from all pleasures and delights which are sinful in themselves, or which tend to extinguish or lessen our **relish** of more divine and intellectual pleasures;
    - 3) it also includes a determination to go through all those **hardships** the person may meet with in the performance of his duty. Purity has to do with denying our wrong or lesser desires.

d. **humility**

- 1) Humility includes a deep sense of our own **meanness**,
- 2) with a hearty admission that any good we are or have is by God's **grace**;
- 3) which is always accompanied with a complete **submission** to the will of God,
- 4) and great deadness toward the glory of the **world** and the applause of **men**.

E. Religion is better understood by actions than by words.

'The serious and attentive **study** of Christ's holy life is the best way to get right measures of humility, and all the other parts of **religion**, which I have described.'

1. His love to God
  - a. His diligence in doing God's will
  - b. His patience in bearing it
  - c. His constant devotion
2. His charity to men
3. His purity
4. His humility

When pursuing the life of God in the soul of man, study the life of the only Man who demonstrated it perfectly.



**II. The Advantages of True Religion**

(The excellency and advantage of true religion in general is that "Christ in you" (true religion) is the right **balance**, the vigorous and healthful constitution of the soul.)

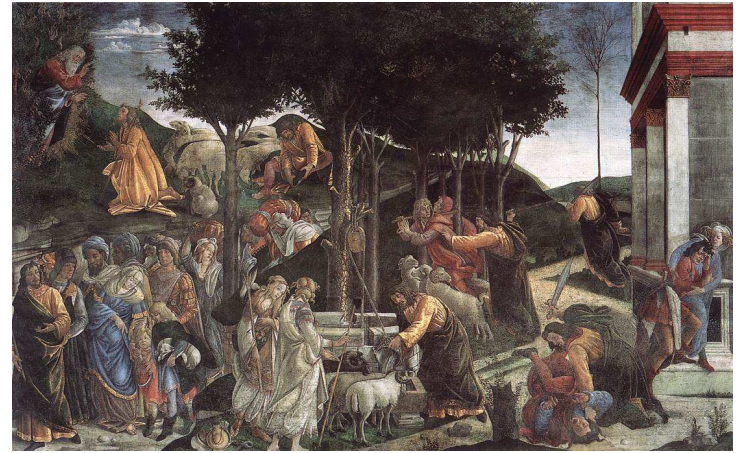
A. The excellency and advantages of loving God.

1. "The true way to improve and ennoble our souls, is, by fixing our love on the divine **perfections**, that we may have them always before us, and derive an impression of them on ourselves, and 'beholding with open face, as in a glass, the glory of the Lord, [we may be changed] into the same image, from glory to glory'" (II Cor. 3:18).
2. As loving God advances and elevates the soul; so it is only in loving God that a soul can be made truly **happy**.
3. Perfect love is a kind of self-dereliction; thus, one who loves is quite **undone**, unless he meets with **reciprocal** affection.

How happy are those who have placed their love on Him who can **never** be absent from them! They need but open their eyes, and they shall everywhere behold the signs of His presence and glory, and talk with Him whom their soul loves, and this makes the darkest **prison** or wildest **desert** not only livable, but delightful to them.

4. Loving God makes us partake of **infinite** happiness.

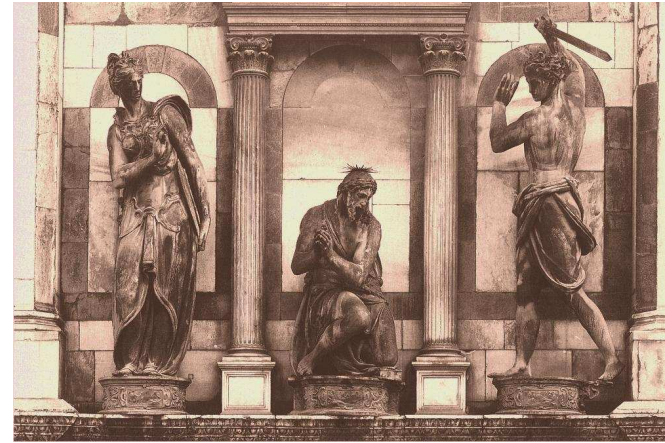
5. He who loves God finds sweetness in every dispensation.
  6. The duties of religion become delightful to one who loves God.
- B. The excellency and advantages of charity (loving others).
1. What can be more noble and generous than a heart enlarged to embrace the whole world?
  2. To have my heart possessed with the greatest kindness and affection towards all men in the world would make me partake in all the happiness of others.
- C. The excellency and advantages of purity.
1. There is no slavery so base as that whereby a man becomes a drudge to his own lusts, or victory so glorious as that victory which is obtained over them.
  2. “Over-doing it” and lack of control, and all inordinate lusts, are so much enemies to the health of the body, and the interests of this present life, that a little thinking might cause any rational man to stop them just for that reason.
- D. The excellency and advantages of humility.
1. Humility keeps men from dwelling on trifles, or admiring themselves because of some petty attainments.
  2. The proud and arrogant person is a trouble to all that converse with him, but most of all unto himself: every thing is enough to vex him, but scarce any thing sufficient to content and please him.



### III. The Despondent Thoughts of Some (newly) Awakened to a Right Sense of Things.

- A. When I reflect on my highest attainments, I have reason to suspect, that they are all done “in the flesh,” the fruit of self-love acting under several disguises; and this principle is so powerful, and so deeply rooted in me, that I can never hope to be delivered from the dominion of it. (I am tempted to think this or some other discouraging thought.)
- B. Let us encourage ourselves with those mighty aids God has given us in this spiritual warfare.
1. Let us be strong in the Lord, and the power of His might.
  2. He has committed the care of our souls to no lesser person than the eternal Son of His love.
  3. He has sent out His Holy Spirit, whose sweet but powerful breathings are still moving up and down in the world, to quicken and revive the souls of men.
  4. Sin and corruption are but usurpers, and though they have long ruled, yet “from the beginning it was not so.”
  5. We still have so much reason left that we ought to be wholly devoted to Him from whom we have our being.
  6. The Church throughout the world is daily interceding with God for the success of all such endeavors.

7. Heavenly hosts above are desirous to see the **divine** life thriving and prevailing in this world.
- C. We must do what we **can**, and then **depend** on the divine assistance. A farmer cannot simply pray in a good harvest; he must plant, cultivate, wait, and reap.



#### IV. Directions Outlining our Responsibilities in Seeing Christ Formed in Us

1. Shun all manner of **evil**, (**Eschew evil**, especially companionship.)
  - a. Know what things are **sinful**,
    - 1) not by **comparing** to what those around us say, but
    - 2) by **contemplating** the Word, and by then turning away from the sin it reveals.
  - b. Consider the evils sinning will **dump** on us.
    - 1) Consider the fearfulness of **offending** that infinite Being on whom we hang and depend every moment, who needs but to withdraw His mercies to make us miserable, or His assistance to make us nothing.
    - 2) Remember the shortness and **uncertainty** of our lives.
    - 3) Represent to yourself the **terrors** of that dreadful day.
    - 4) Consider the **eternal** punishment of the damned souls.
  - c. Keep a constant **watch** over yourself.
  - d. Examine your **actions**.
  - e. Restrain yourself in many **lawful** things.
  - f. Strive to put yourself out of love with the **world**.

2. Do those **outward** actions that are **commanded**. (**Fulfill** obligations.)
  - a. Attend His **services**.
  - b. Listen to His **Word**.
  - c. Speak reverently of His **name**.
  - d. Praise His **goodness**.
  - e. Exhort others to serve and **obey** Him.
  - f. Do not omit any occasion of doing your **neighbors** good.
  - g. Study a modest and humble **deportment**.
3. Endeavor to form **internal** acts of devotion, charity, etc. (**Cultivate** love.)
  - a. Lift up your heart toward God primarily by **thinking** about Him.
  - b. If you cannot say that you love Him above all things, at this time, at least, acknowledge that it is your **duty** to love Him above all things.
  - c. Lament the **dishonor** done unto Him by foolish and sinful men.
  - d. Applaud the **praises** that are given Him by that blessed and glorious company above, the heavenly hosts.
  - e. Resign and yield yourself up unto Him a thousand times, to be governed by His **laws**.
  - f. Tell Him that you are convinced that His will is always **just** and **good**.
4. Contemplate **Him** and **truth**.
  - a. To enhance the divine life in general, contemplate true doctrine, including
    - 1) **the creation**
    - 2) **man and his nature**
    - 3) **heaven**
    - 4) **(the) incarnation**
    - 5) **(the) crucifixion**
    - 6) **sanctification**
    - 7) **intercession**
    - 8) **His daily ministry of grace**

- b. To beget love for God, contemplate the excellency of His **divine** nature and His **love** toward us. He loves you whether or not you feel it!
  - 1) Picture the clearest **notion** that you can of a Being, infinite in power, in wisdom, and goodness, the author and fountain of all perfection.
  - 2) Meditate on His **goodness** and **love**.
    - a) He gave you your **being**, and, by preserving you in it, renews the **donation** every moment.
    - b) He has testified His affection to you by **suffering** as well as by doing.
    - c) Keep a register in your mind of all the **blessings** and **deliverances** you have met with.
- c. To beget charity,
  - 1) remember that all men are **“near relations”** to God.
    - a) God laid the **designs** of man’s happiness before the foundations of the world; i.e., **union** with Him!
    - b) Since every soul is dearer unto Him than all the material world, and He did not account the blood of His Son too great a price for their Redemption, so ought we to have **charity** toward all men.
  - 2) Remember that all men carry His **image** upon them. The most sin-diseased soul has **sparkles** of the divine image, and ought to be **pitied**, not detested.
- d. To beget purity,
  - 1) consider the **dignity** of your nature. What a shameful and unworthy thing it is for so noble and divine a creature as the soul of man to be **sunk** in **brutish** lust, and so to lose the relish of spiritual **pleasures**.
  - 2) Meditate often on the joys of **heaven**. Represent to your thoughts the **joys** that are at God’s right hand.
- e. To beget humility,
  - 1) consider your failings.

The thoughts that pass in our heart in the best and most serious days of our lives, being exposed unto public view, would render us either **hateful** or **ridiculous**.

- 2) Consider God's **perfection** in His purity and goodness.

That humility which comes from a view of our own sinfulness and misery is more turbulent and boisterous than in viewing His **attributes**.

goal: the life of God in the soul of man gushing through that man's life (Jn. 7:37-39); the fulness of God!

plan: this booklet summarizes one

schedule: meditate, pray through this booklet this week!

- a. on behalf of yourself
- b. on behalf of someone else.
- c. on behalf of the pastor or your teacher