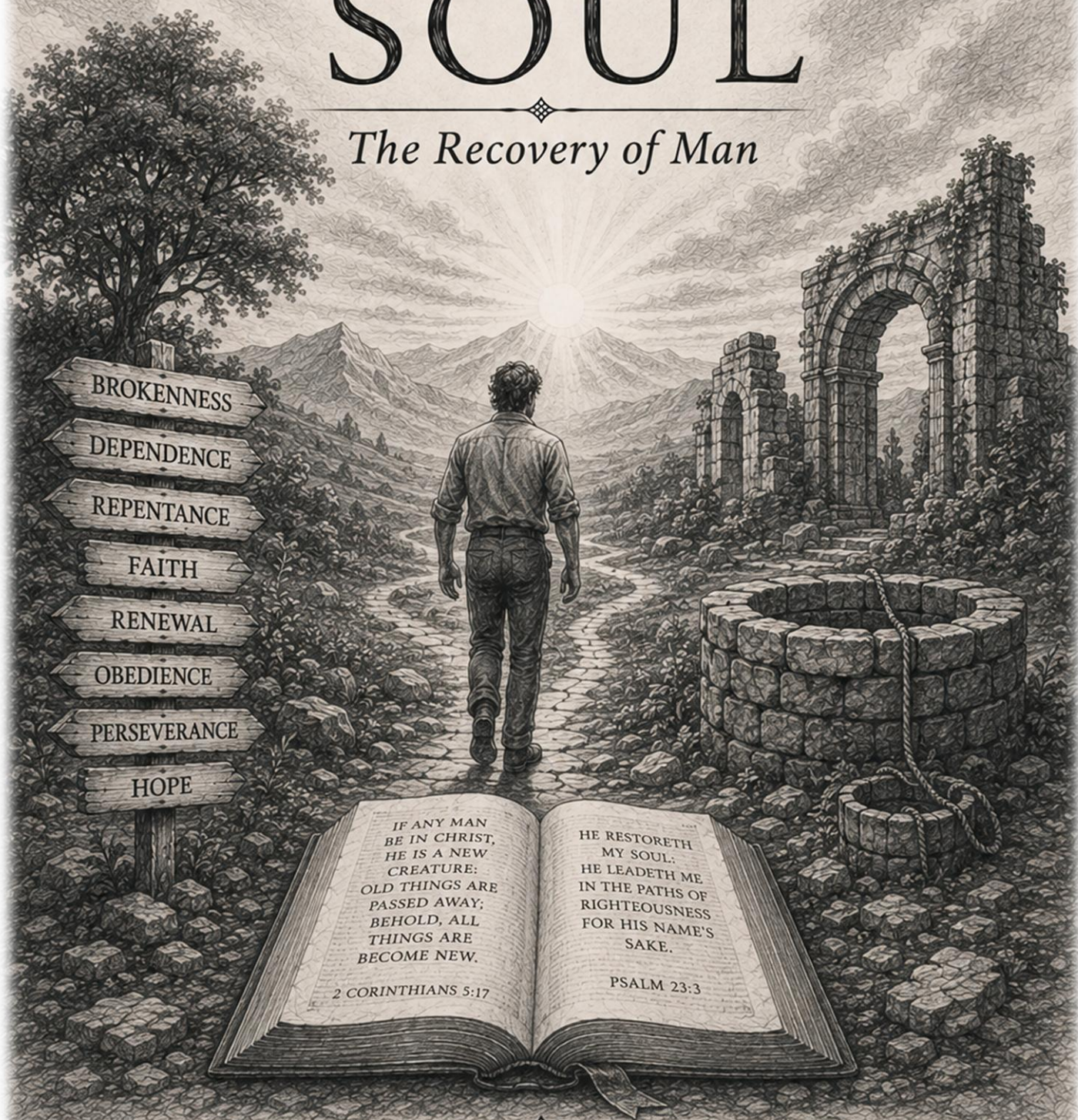


THE ORDERED SOUL SERIES

BOOK 6

THE RECOVERING SOUL

The Recovery of Man



ROBERT WILLOUGHBY

The Recovering Soul

The Recovery of Man

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About *The Ordered Soul Series*

The Ordered Soul Series is a collection of Christian books exploring what it means to be truly human in a world that has become increasingly uncertain about the nature of the human person.

Each book examines a particular question facing the modern soul. Some explore identity, morality, conscience, grace, freedom, suffering, or the search for meaning. Others address the pressures created by contemporary culture and ask how the Christian understanding of humanity speaks into those challenges. Although the subjects differ, every volume is built upon the same conviction: that the deepest questions of human life cannot be answered rightly until we understand who man is before God.

The books are connected by a common vision, but they are not chapters in a single work. Each volume has been written as a complete book in its own right and may be read in whatever order best serves the reader's interests. Together they form a wider conversation about the recovery of the human soul through the truth of Scripture.

Throughout the series, the central concern is not simply the correction of ideas but the restoration of persons. The Bible presents humanity as created by God, disordered by sin, redeemed through Christ, and called into the fullness of life for which it was made. Every volume approaches that reality from a different perspective while remaining faithful to the same biblical foundation.

It is my hope that these books will do more than inform the mind. I hope they will encourage thoughtful reflection, honest self-examination, deeper confidence in Scripture, and above all, a renewed appreciation for the wisdom of God's design for human life.

Whether this is your first encounter with *The Ordered Soul Series* or one of several volumes you have read, my prayer is that these pages will help you see both yourself and your Creator more clearly.

Robert Willoughby

From Diagnosis to Recovery

There comes a point in any honest account of man where diagnosis is no longer enough. It is necessary to ask what man is, what has gone wrong within him, how sin has disordered him, how grace reaches him, and how conscience is awakened again. Yet if the matter ends there, the reader is left with a map of the ruin but not yet a vision of the restoration.

This is the burden of the present volume. *The Recovery of Man* asks what restored humanity looks like when grace is understood as the active mercy of God bringing man back into order. It asks what happens to thought, desire, obedience, bodily life, neighbour-love, work, patience, and hope when Christ begins to recover the human person from within.

The earlier volumes in this series have moved through several necessary questions. *Created Order* asked what man is before God. *The Collapse of Moral Language* considered what happens when truth is renamed and moral speech is severed from reality. *The Nature of Sin* examined the inward ruin by which man turns from God. *The Nature of Grace* considered the mercy by which God begins to restore what sin has damaged. *The Crisis of Conscience* asked how man learns to hear rightly again when conscience has been dulled, confused, accused, or cleansed.

This volume is wider than the earlier books because recovery is not the correction of one faculty only. It is the gathering of the whole person back into order. The previous volumes have examined particular regions of disorder and grace; this volume now asks what happens when those recoveries are seen together in the life of a human being. Mind, will, affections, body, neighbour, work, patience, and hope all belong here because man is not restored in fragments. He is recovered as a whole creature before God.

The book therefore stands on the earlier foundations while moving beyond them. Its question is constructive. If man was created by God, corrupted by sin, reached by grace, and awakened in conscience, what kind of life begins to emerge? What does restored humanity look like in thought, choice, love, bodily life, relationships, labour, endurance, and hope?

The answer must begin with Christ. He is not merely a teacher giving moral instruction to damaged people. He is the true Man, the faithful Son, the image of the invisible God, and the One in whom human nature is seen without rebellion against the Father. If we want to know what man is being restored toward, we must look first to Him.

Christian restoration is easily misunderstood. Some reduce it to moral improvement, as though the gospel were chiefly a programme for producing respectable people. Others reduce it to inward comfort, as though grace existed only to soothe the wounded soul while leaving the person fundamentally unchanged. Scripture presents something deeper. In Christ, man is forgiven, renewed, disciplined, formed, and promised final glory.

That work is both present and unfinished. No Christian becomes fully restored in this life. The mind still battles confusion. The will still resists surrender. The affections still require cleansing. The body still suffers weakness and mortality. Relationships remain marked by misunderstanding, pride, fear, and grief. Yet the incompleteness of the work does not make the work unreal. A seed is not a tree, but it is not nothing. Dawn is not noon, but it is no longer night.

This book will follow the recovery of man through the main regions of human life. It will begin with Christ as the true Man, because every account of restored humanity must be measured by Him. It will then consider recovered identity, the renewed mind, the reordered will, the cleansed affections, the honoured body,

the restored neighbour, redeemed vocation, patient endurance, and the hope of complete restoration.

The aim is not to create a portrait of a flawless religious personality. Such a portrait would be false and discouraging. The recovered man is still a dependent man. He still repents. He still needs mercy. But his life has changed direction. He is no longer content to be explained by his disorder. He is being drawn back into the order for which he was made.

Diagnosis names what is wrong. Christian recovery shows what grace is making whole. Diagnosis can reveal the fracture; recovery shows the bone being set. Diagnosis can expose falsehood; recovery teaches the tongue to speak truth again. The question before us is therefore simple: what does grace restore when Christ begins to put man back in order?

The answer is the subject of this book. Restored humanity is humanity brought back under God. It is man learning again how to think, choose, love, suffer, work, wait, and hope as a creature redeemed in Christ. It is the beginning of a soul put back in order.

The True Man

The recovery of man must begin with Christ. Fallen man is not a reliable measure of his own restoration. He may feel that something is broken within him, but the ache itself cannot define the cure. He may long to be free, fulfilled, and complete, yet those longings can be bent by the very ruin from which he needs to be delivered.

Christ stands at the beginning of Christian recovery because He reveals man as man was meant to be. In Him, humanity is seen in full obedience to God, full fellowship with the Father, full compassion toward the weak, full resistance to evil, and full surrender even unto death. He is the One who saves man, and He is also the One in whom true manhood is perfectly displayed.

The modern world often tries to understand man by looking at his desires. It asks what he wants, what he feels, what he fears, what he resents, and what he believes himself to be. Those things may reveal something about him, but they cannot provide the final account of him. Desire can be disordered. Feeling can be misleading. Fear can become a master. Self-belief can become a prison while promising liberation.

If man is to be understood truthfully, he must be understood in relation to God. He was created by God, for God, under God, and in need of God. To be human is not merely to possess reason, emotion, will, body, and memory. It is to bear creaturely life before the Creator. When that relation is broken, every other part of man begins to lose its proper order.

Christ enters this disorder as the faithful Son. He takes true humanity to Himself without sharing in sin. He lives within the limits of human life without rebelling against the Father. He hungers, weeps, grows weary, suffers, is tempted, and dies; yet in all these things He remains perfectly ordered toward God. His humanity is not an appearance. It is real humanity, lived in perfect faithfulness.

Hebrews 2:9–18

gives the theological centre of this truth. Christ is made a little lower than the angels for the suffering of death. He tastes death for every man. He takes part in flesh and blood. He is made like unto His brethren. He suffers, is tempted, and becomes a merciful and faithful high priest. The recovery of man begins because the Son of God truly becomes man, and in becoming man He carries humanity through obedience, suffering, death, and glory.

Christ's saving work is therefore not detached from human nature. He does not save man by ignoring what man is. He saves man by taking humanity into Himself and bringing it before God in perfect faithfulness. He stands where man has failed, obeys where man has rebelled, suffers where man is bound, and rises where man is powerless.

Here we must be careful. Christ is certainly our example, but He is more than example. If He were only an example, He would show us a height we could not reach. His obedience would expose our disobedience, His purity would reveal the poverty of our love, and His courage would uncover the weakness of our hearts. But Christ is given for us and to us. We are restored as we are joined to Him by grace, formed by His Spirit, and brought under His rule.

His obedience to the Father reveals the dignity of a yielded life. Fallen man often imagines that obedience diminishes freedom and personhood, but Christ shows the opposite. His surrender is not the shrinking of His humanity; it is the perfection of it. He is most truly man because He is wholly turned toward God.

His authority reveals strength without corruption. Human authority is often stained by pride, fear, appetite, and the desire to possess others. Christ possesses all authority, yet He washes feet, receives children, touches lepers, speaks with

the despised, and gives His life for the sheep. His strength does not need to dominate in order to prove itself.

His compassion reveals mercy joined to truth. Much that passes for compassion in a fallen world is afraid of truth. It comforts by denying danger and calls agreement love. Christ draws near to sinners without pretending that sin is harmless. He speaks truth without cruelty. His mercy never requires Him to lie about the condition of those He saves.

His holiness reveals purity without coldness. Among fallen men, the pursuit of holiness can become severe, suspicious, and distant. But in Christ there is no such division. Sinners, sufferers, children, outcasts, and the broken come near to Him. His purity does not repel the penitent; it gives them hope.

His suffering reveals faithfulness under sorrow. The true Man is not spared grief. He weeps at the grave of Lazarus, agonizes in Gethsemane, is betrayed, mocked, scourged, and crucified. Yet His suffering never becomes unbelief. Even in the darkness, He entrusts Himself to the Father.

This has great importance for Christian recovery. Restored humanity does not mean the removal of all weakness, sorrow, conflict, or pain in the present life. If that were the measure, Christ Himself would not be the true Man. The perfection of His humanity is seen not in the absence of suffering but in faithfulness within it.

The true Man also reveals the proper relation between dependence and dignity. Fallen man often believes that dependence is a form of diminishment. He wants to stand alone because he thinks aloneness proves strength. Christ shows us something better. He prays, gives thanks, obeys, trusts, receives, and commits Himself into the Father's hands. His dependence is not a defect in His humanity. It is part of its perfection.

Restored humanity cannot be understood apart from worship. Man is not finally recovered when he becomes balanced, productive, disciplined, thoughtful, or socially useful. These may be fruits of recovery, but they are not its centre. Man is recovered when he is returned to the worship of the living God. Christ's whole human life is directed toward the Father, and He restores man by bringing him back into that direction.

In Christ, every part of man is brought back under God. His mind is filled with truth. His will is yielded to the Father. His affections are pure. His body is offered in obedience. His neighbour is loved. His work is faithful. His suffering is patient. His hope is sure. The rest of this book will consider these recoveries one by one, but they are first gathered in Him.

The true Man therefore stands before us as the foundation of restoration. Every other vision of recovered humanity must be tested by Him. If our idea of restoration makes man proud, careless about sin, afraid of truth, dismissive of the body, or impatient with suffering, it has lost sight of Christ. God has already given the true picture of restored humanity in His Son.

The recovery of man begins here. Before we look at our identity, our minds, our wills, our affections, our bodies, our neighbours, our work, our patience, or our hope, we look to Christ. In Him, we see humanity without rebellion and mercy without compromise. We see the faithful Son who is not ashamed to call the redeemed His brethren. We see the true Man, and in seeing Him we begin to understand what grace intends to make whole.

The Recovered Identity

Once Christ has been placed before us as the true Man, the next question concerns identity. If man is being recovered in Christ, then what is being recovered at the level of the self? What does a person become when he is no longer trying to invent himself, defend himself, excuse himself, or define himself by the fragments of his own disorder?

Identity has become one of the great burdens of the modern soul. Man is continually told to discover who he is by looking inward, naming his desires, expressing his feelings, asserting his will, and refusing every limit that appears to restrain him. He is taught to treat the self as raw material, something to be designed, declared, and displayed. The result is not peace. It is exhaustion.

A self that must constantly create itself must also constantly justify itself. It must gather evidence for its own reality, seek recognition from others, and resent its dependence upon that recognition. Such a self may appear bold on the surface, but beneath the surface it is fragile because it has no foundation deeper than its own assertion.

The Christian account begins elsewhere. Man does not become real by declaring himself to be real. He does not gain dignity by refusing the God who gave him dignity in the first place. Man receives himself before he understands himself. His identity is not first an achievement but a gift.

Created Order asked what man is before God. This chapter moves one step further. The question now is how that created identity is healed after sin has fractured it. Created identity must become recovered identity.

Sin does more than lead man into wrong actions. It distorts the way he knows himself. The sinner hides, performs, accuses, compares, excuses, and fears exposure. He tries to become more than a creature because he is ashamed of

being a fallen one. He tries to be self-made because he no longer trusts the Maker.

The gospel therefore does more than forgive isolated acts. It restores the person to truth. In Christ, man is brought back into the knowledge of who he is before God. He learns that he is not his sin, though he must confess it. He is not his pain, though he must not pretend it has not marked him. He is not his achievement, though he may be called to fruitful labour. He is not the verdict of others, though he must live responsibly among them.

Recovered identity begins with belonging. The Christian does not stand before God as a solitary self trying to persuade heaven that he is worth receiving. He stands in Christ. He is accepted in the Beloved, reconciled by grace, adopted into sonship, and gathered into a people. His deepest identity is received from above.

Paul writes:

2 Corinthians 5:17–21

Therefore if any man live in Christ, he is a new creature; old things are passed away; behold, all things are become new, And receiveth all the things of God, who hath reconciled us to himself by Jesus Christ, and hath given to us the ministry of reconciliation:

To wit, that God is in Christ, reconciling the world unto himself, not imputing their trespasses unto them; and hath committed unto us the word of reconciliation. Now then we are ambassadors for Christ, as though God did beseech you by us; we pray you in Christ's stead, be ye reconciled to God. For he hath made him to be sin for us, who knew no sin; that we might be made the righteousness of God in him.

The words “in Christ” are decisive. Paul does not describe newness as a heightened sense of self. The new creature exists because reconciliation has

taken place. Man is brought back to God through Christ, and in that reconciliation a new identity begins.

This recovered identity does not deny what sin has done. The old things that pass away are real old things. The trespasses that are not imputed are real trespasses. Grace does not heal man by asking him to live inside a fiction. It heals him by bringing him into a deeper truth than the truth of his ruin.

That is one of the hardest things for guilty people to believe. A man may trust the verdict of shame more readily than the word of grace. Shame can feel honest because it tells him something true about his unworthiness, but shame becomes a false master when it refuses to hear what God has done in Christ.

The man recovered by grace has not forgotten his sin. His sin no longer has the right to name him. He can confess without being destroyed because his confession is made before the God who reconciles. He can repent without despair because repentance is no longer a journey into self-hatred but a return to the Father.

Christian identity is secure without being proud. There is no room for spiritual vanity in a man reconciled by mercy. He did not rescue himself from the old creation. He was made new because God was in Christ, reconciling. Everything is received, and what is received by grace cannot be used as a trophy for the self.

The first recovered name is creature. That confession is not humiliating. It is liberating. A creature does not have to be the source of his own life. He does not have to be infinite, self-sustaining, all-knowing, or sovereign. He can receive limits without treating them as insults. He can rest in dependence because dependence is not a flaw in creaturely life. It is the truth of it.

The next name is son. In Christ, belonging is not merely functional. God does not recover man as one might repair a tool and return it to service. He brings

him into the household. Sonship means that the recovered person is not merely tolerated by God but received in love. This does not make obedience unnecessary. It gives obedience a new atmosphere.

He is also servant. This may seem to conflict with sonship, but in Christ the two belong together. The one who belongs to God is freed from slavery to sin in order to serve righteousness. Service is not degradation when the Master is good. A life without holy obligation does not become free. It becomes directionless.

He is also brother. Reconciliation does not leave man isolated. The recovered person is brought into fellowship with others who have received the same mercy. This challenges pride and despair alike. Pride wants private superiority. Despair wants private misery. Brotherhood interrupts both.

Finally, he is witness. Reconciliation gives him a message beyond himself. Paul says that God has committed to us the word of reconciliation and that we are ambassadors for Christ. The recovered man is not restored merely so that he may enjoy private peace. He is restored so that his life may speak.

These names do not imprison him. They release him from the impossible task of inventing himself. Creature, son, servant, brother, witness: each name places him before God and among others in truth. Each name gives shape to a life no longer built on self-assertion.

This begins to touch ordinary life. A man who knows who he is before God can stop performing omniscience. He can say, "I do not know." He can stop performing innocence. He can say, "I was wrong." He can stop performing strength. He can say, "I need help." He can stop performing superiority. He can honour another without feeling diminished.

Recovered identity also changes how a man lives with his past. He does not need to revise it dishonestly. He does not need to pretend that the old life was

harmless, nor does he need to remain chained to it. He can look back with grief where grief is proper, gratitude where mercy is evident, and sobriety where lessons must be remembered. But he does not look back as a man who belongs to the old life. He looks back as one who has been brought into Christ.

The same is true of his future. He no longer needs to secure himself by controlling every outcome. His identity is not waiting somewhere ahead of him, dependent upon success, recognition, wealth, influence, or the perfect arrangement of circumstances. His future matters, but it does not have to bear the weight of giving him a self. That has already been given in Christ.

Until man knows who he is before God, the rest of his life remains unstable. The mind will use truth to defend the self. The will will choose according to fear or pride. The affections will attach themselves desperately to things that cannot save. The neighbour will become a mirror, a rival, or a tool. Work will become the stage on which the self tries to prove its worth.

When identity is recovered in Christ, the whole person begins to stand differently. The soul no longer has to clutch at every passing thing in order to know that it exists. It has been named by grace. It has been reconciled to God. It has been placed in Christ. From that place, the long work of restoration can begin.

The recovered man does not ask the world to tell him who he is. He does not ask appetite to name him, shame to govern him, success to justify him, or memory to imprison him. He receives his life from God in Christ. And because his identity is received, it can become peaceful, truthful, obedient, and whole.

The Renewed Mind

Once identity begins to be recovered in Christ, the next region of restoration is the mind. A man who has been reconciled to God must learn to see again. He must learn how to think under truth rather than beneath the pressure of appetite, fear, pride, distraction, or the spirit of the age.

The mind is one of the chief places where disorder takes hold, and one of the first places where grace begins to teach a man a new way of living. Man does not only sin by doing wrong things. He also becomes darkened in understanding. He misreads God, himself, others, and the world. He calls small things ultimate and eternal things remote. He sees temptation vividly and holiness dimly.

A man cannot walk rightly if he cannot see rightly. He cannot choose well if his judgment has been trained by falsehood. He cannot love properly if his imagination has been filled with distorted pictures of good and evil. The mind is not the whole man, but when the mind is disordered, every other part of the person is affected.

Romans 12:1–2

I beseech you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, that ye present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable unto God, which is your reasonable service. And be not conformed to this world; but be ye transformed by the renewing of your mind, that ye may prove what that good, and acceptable, and perfect will of God is.

Paul places the renewed mind inside the larger offering of the whole person to God. He begins with the mercies of God and calls the brethren to present their bodies as a living sacrifice. The mind is renewed within a life being offered. Thought is restored as part of worship.

That connection matters. The fallen mind often wants to stand above truth as judge, as though God, Scripture, creation, conscience, and moral order were materials for man to assess from a neutral height. But man is never neutral. His thinking is always being shaped by some authority, some love, some fear, or some vision of the good. He is either being conformed to the world or transformed by the renewing of his mind.

The world does not usually conform the mind by open command alone. It forms thought through repetition, atmosphere, approval, entertainment, anxiety, and habit. It teaches a man what to notice. It trains him in what to fear. It gives him words for his desires and excuses for his sins. By the time a man speaks, he may simply be repeating what has already captured his attention.

This helps explain why modern man can feel highly informed and yet deeply unwise. Information has multiplied, but wisdom has not multiplied with it. A man may know the latest argument, scandal, theory, outrage, opinion, and crisis, yet be unable to discern what is good, acceptable, and perfect before God. His mind may be crowded without being renewed.

Renewal is therefore more than learning Christian information. It includes information, because truth matters and ignorance does not sanctify anyone. But a renewed mind is not merely a mind with religious content added to it. It is a mind being trained to perceive reality under God. It learns proportion, attention, humility, and discernment. It learns that the loudest thing is not necessarily the truest thing, and the most immediate thing is not necessarily the most important.

Sin damages perception. The sinner does not simply make bad choices after seeing clearly. Often he chooses badly because he sees badly first. Evil appears desirable. Obedience appears burdensome. God appears severe. The self appears sovereign. The neighbour appears useful or threatening. Mercy appears unnecessary until life begins to break.

In this condition, the mind becomes skilled at self-defence. It can justify what the conscience has already warned against. It can assemble arguments for disobedience. It can magnify the faults of others while minimizing its own. It can turn preference into principle and resentment into righteousness. If the heart wants sin badly enough, the mind will often find a way to make sin look reasonable.

Grace begins to loosen confidence in these old evasions. The mind learns to ask whether a thought is true, not merely whether it is useful. It asks whether a judgment is righteous, not merely whether it is satisfying. It asks whether a desire is ordered toward God, not merely whether it feels sincere.

Such renewal requires humility. A proud mind cannot be renewed because it will not be taught. It may gather knowledge, but it gathers knowledge as possession rather than correction. It may study Scripture, but even Scripture can be used by pride as material for superiority. The renewed mind comes before God as a learner. It is willing to be corrected because it has begun to understand that correction is mercy.

Humility also slows the mind down. Much false thinking comes from haste. A man reacts before he has understood. He answers before he has listened. He judges before he has prayed. He repeats before he has examined. The modern world rewards this speed because reaction keeps the mind constantly moving and constantly available to manipulation. Grace teaches a different pace before God.

This does not make a man timid or unable to judge. Scripture does not call man into fog. It calls him into discernment. But discernment is not the same as instant opinion. Discernment weighs things before God. It seeks the difference between appearance and reality. It knows that a thing may be emotionally

powerful and still false, culturally accepted and still corrupting, personally costly and still righteous.

Attention also has to be recovered. It is one of the most neglected moral powers of the soul. What a man repeatedly gives his attention to will shape what he loves, fears, remembers, and becomes. A distracted man is not merely inefficient; he is vulnerable to being formed by whatever most frequently interrupts him.

This is a serious matter in an age of endless interruption. The mind is summoned from one concern to another, from one image to another, from one alarm to another. It becomes accustomed to fragments. It learns to skim rather than behold, to react rather than consider, to consume rather than contemplate. Even when silence comes, the mind may no longer know what to do with it.

A recovered man must learn the discipline of attention because truth often requires stillness. Scripture must be read with attention. Prayer requires attention. Love requires attention. Repentance requires attention. The neighbour cannot be rightly seen by a mind that is always elsewhere. God's works cannot be received by a mind trained only for noise.

The mind also has an appetite. A man cannot continually fill his thoughts with vanity, accusation, fantasy, outrage, impurity, envy, and fear, then wonder why peace and holiness seem distant. Like every appetite, the mind can be trained toward health or corruption. What enters repeatedly begins to dwell. What dwells begins to govern.

This does not require ignorance of the world. Christ does not recover man by making him naive. Rather, the renewed mind learns to encounter the world without being inwardly shaped by its disorder. It can know what is happening without surrendering the throne of thought to anxiety, fascination, or outrage.

Moral proportion is another fruit of renewal. Fallen thought often exaggerates the immediate and diminishes the eternal. It can turn inconvenience into tragedy and holiness into an optional refinement. It can treat reputation as life and secret sin as manageable. It can be deeply troubled by social embarrassment and strangely calm about spiritual decay.

Under grace, the mind begins to weigh things differently. The approval of God becomes heavier than the approval of man. The health of the soul becomes more serious than the comfort of the moment. Truth becomes more precious than the relief of self-deception. Eternal things begin to press upon the present, not as an escape from earthly life, but as the light by which earthly life is properly understood.

A mind taught by grace can also become more truthful about the self. When a man knows that his life is held in Christ, he no longer needs to use thought as an instrument of constant self-protection. He can think honestly about his weaknesses. He can admit contradiction within himself. He can examine motives without collapsing into despair. He can receive rebuke without treating it as annihilation.

This is a great freedom. The unrecovered mind often lives defensively. It edits memory, softens guilt, amplifies offence, and arranges the evidence so that the self remains justified. But grace makes truth survivable. The man who is reconciled to God does not need false innocence. He can confess and live.

This does not happen all at once. Many Christians continue to discover how much of their thinking has been shaped by old fears, old sins, old injuries, and old loyalties. Some thoughts have become familiar because they have lived in the mind for years. Some falsehoods feel like instinct because they were learned early and repeated often. Renewal may therefore involve a long obedience in which the mind is brought again and again before the truth of God.

A man may have to learn that not every thought deserves agreement. Some thoughts are temptations. Some are accusations. Some are echoes of shame. Some are habits of suspicion. Some are inherited from the crowd. Some arise from weariness or fear. The renewed mind learns to test thoughts rather than enthrone them. It learns that sincerity is not the same as truth.

Scripture matters deeply here because it gives man a word from outside himself. Fallen man needs such a word because he is too easily enclosed within his own distortions. The mind cannot renew itself simply by thinking harder from the same old centre. It must be addressed, corrected, enlarged, and illumined by the word of God.

Yet even here the purpose is not mere accumulation of verses. A man may know many passages and still use them to avoid obedience. The renewed mind receives Scripture as light, not as ornament. It reads in order to be brought under truth. It allows Scripture to question assumptions, expose evasions, reorder loves, and give language to faith.

The renewed mind is not certain because it has mastered all mysteries. It is certain where God has spoken and humble where God has not given full knowledge. It can stand firmly without pretending to know everything. It can say, "This is true," and also say, "I do not yet understand." In a confused age, both forms of speech are necessary.

As perception is restored, life itself begins to appear differently. The self is seen as creature and redeemed sinner. The neighbour is seen as a person before God. The body is seen as vessel rather than idol. Work is seen as stewardship rather than self-salvation. Suffering is seen as trial rather than meaninglessness. Hope is seen as anchor rather than wish. The man is not made omniscient. He is made teachable under truth.

This is why Paul connects the renewed mind with proving the will of God. The mind is not renewed for private contemplation alone. It is renewed for discernment in life. A man begins to ask what obedience looks like here, with these duties, these temptations, these limits, these relationships, these sorrows, and these opportunities. He learns that the will of God is not an abstract puzzle for the curious, but the path of faithfulness for the redeemed.

The phrase “good, and acceptable, and perfect” reminds us that the will of God is not hostile to human recovery. Fallen man often suspects God’s will because he thinks God’s rule will diminish him. But the renewed mind begins to learn that God’s will is the place of life. The commandments that once seemed like restriction begin to appear as order. The truth that once felt severe begins to appear as mercy. The surrender that once seemed frightening begins to appear as freedom.

Obedience will not always feel easy. The renewed mind may see the goodness of God’s will while the flesh still resists it. A man may know the truth and still have to fight old desires. He may understand what is right and still tremble before the cost. Renewal gives light, but light must then govern the will, and the will must be strengthened by grace. This is why the next chapter must consider the reordered will.

For now, we must see that the recovery of man cannot proceed while the mind remains conformed to the world. If identity is recovered but thought remains captive, the Christian will live divided. He will confess Christ with his mouth while judging life by the assumptions of the old order. He will speak of grace while still thinking in the categories of fear, pride, resentment, vanity, and self-rule.

A recovered man therefore asks God not only to forgive what he has done, but to renew how he sees. He asks for deliverance from false judgments, vain

imaginations, crooked assumptions, and restless distraction. He seeks a mind that can attend to what is true, weigh what is good, reject what corrupts, and receive what God has spoken.

In Christ, the mind is returned to its proper service. It is given back to truth. It is taught to behold, discern, remember, test, and obey. The recovered man begins to see again, and because he sees again, he can begin to walk differently.

The Reordered Will

If the renewed mind learns to see again, the reordered will must learn to yield again. Truth may enter the understanding, but the human person is not restored until truth begins to govern choice. A man may know what is right and still resist it. He may see the path clearly and still refuse to walk in it. He may agree with God in doctrine while withholding himself in practice.

The will is one of the deepest places where the disorder of sin becomes visible. Sin does not only confuse the mind or stain the conscience. It bends the will away from God. It teaches man to say, “I will,” in defiance rather than obedience. It turns choice into self-assertion and makes surrender appear like death.

For that reason, the recovery of man must include the healing of the will. A man is not restored merely because he has learned better language, clearer doctrine, or more accurate moral categories. He must be brought to the point where the truth he sees becomes the truth he obeys. Restoration moves from perception into surrender.

The modern world often speaks of freedom as the absence of restraint. To be free, in this view, is to choose without limit, define oneself without interference, and follow desire wherever it leads. Yet a will without holy order becomes captive to whatever desire is strongest in the moment. Appetite gives commands. Fear gives commands. Pride gives commands. Resentment gives commands. The will may still use the language of choice, but it is often choosing under pressure from things it does not understand and cannot control.

Christian recovery exposes this false freedom. It shows man that the will is healed by being returned to God. The proper condition of the human will is glad obedience. Man is not less human when he yields to his Maker. He is less human when he is ruled by the disorder that separates him from his Maker.

Philippians 2:12–13

12 Wherefore, my beloved, as ye have always obeyed, not as in my presence only, but now much more in my absence, work out your own salvation with fear and trembling; For it is God which worketh in you both to will and to do of his good pleasure.

Paul holds together two truths that must never be separated. The believer is called to obedience. He is to work out his own salvation with fear and trembling. The Christian life is therefore active. Grace does not leave a man motionless while God acts around him. It summons him into obedience, watchfulness, repentance, and faithfulness.

Yet the deeper ground of that obedience is immediately given: “For it is God which worketh in you both to will and to do of his good pleasure.” The restored will does not begin in unaided human strength. God works within the believer, not only in the doing, but in the willing. He enters the deep place where man chooses, resists, delays, fears, and longs.

This is a great mercy. If God only forgave past disobedience but left the will unchanged, man would remain trapped in the same inward rebellion. He would be pardoned but not recovered. But grace goes deeper. It works within the will itself, teaching the soul to desire what it once resisted and to obey the One it once avoided.

The reordered will is not simply a stronger will. Many men have strong wills and remain deeply disordered. A strong will can serve pride, cruelty, ambition, bitterness, lust, or self-righteousness. Strength alone does not sanctify the will. The real question is what the will is ordered toward.

A will may be disciplined and yet unconverted. It may overcome certain outward sins while remaining governed by self-glory. It may appear noble because it can deny lesser pleasures in pursuit of greater ambitions. But if the

will remains centred upon the self, its discipline may only become a more refined form of rebellion.

The recovered will is different because it is brought under God. It learns obedience as the proper shape of freedom. It begins to understand that God's commandments are not enemies of human life. They are the order in which human life becomes truthful. The will is not crushed by this order. It is rescued from the chaos of self-rule.

This recovery often begins painfully because the old will does not surrender easily. Man may love the idea of restoration while resisting the actual places where restoration must occur. He may want peace without relinquishing control. He may want holiness without losing a cherished sin. He may want forgiveness without confession, comfort without obedience, and assurance without surrender.

Here the will is tested. The truth of a man's desire for God is often revealed not in what he admires, but in what he obeys when obedience costs him. It is easy to praise righteousness in general. It is harder to obey righteousness when it requires apology, restraint, sacrifice, honesty, purity, patience, or the abandonment of a secret indulgence.

Repentance is therefore essential to the reordered will. It is not merely regret in the emotions or agreement in the mind. It is a turning. It is the will ceasing to defend the old direction and beginning to move toward God. A man may feel sorrow over sin and still cling to it. He may admit that something is wrong and still make provision for it. Repentance becomes real when the will stops negotiating with disobedience.

This turning is not always dramatic. Sometimes it is quiet, repeated, and hidden. A man chooses not to speak the cruel word. He refuses the old image, the old resentment, the old lie. He tells the truth where concealment would have

protected him. He forgives again when bitterness offers him the familiar comfort of grievance. These small choices matter because they reveal the direction of the will.

The recovered will also learns the difference between desire and command. Fallen man often treats desire as though it carries authority simply because it is felt strongly. “I want” becomes “I must.” “I feel” becomes “I am entitled.” “I fear” becomes “I cannot obey.” But desire is not lord. A desire may be intense and still disordered. A fear may be powerful and still unworthy of obedience.

At this point Christ, the true Man, becomes central again. In Gethsemane, we see the human will brought into perfect submission under unimaginable weight.

Luke 22:39–46

And he came out, and went, as he was accustomed, to the mount of Olives; and his disciples followed him. And when he was at the place, he said unto them, Pray that ye enter not into temptation. And he was withdrawn from them about a stone's cast, and kneeled down and prayed, Saying, Father, if thou be willing, remove this cup from me; nevertheless, not my will, but thine be done. And there appeared an angel unto him from heaven, strengthening him. And being in an agony, he prayed more earnestly; and he sweat as it were great drops of blood falling down to the ground. And when he rose up from prayer, and was come to his disciples, he found them sleeping; for they were filled with sorrow; And he said unto them, Why sleep ye? rise and pray, lest ye enter into temptation.

Here the submission of Christ is not cold, mechanical, or untouched by suffering. He is in agony. He prays earnestly. The cup is not treated lightly. Yet the human will of Christ is perfectly yielded to the Father: “nevertheless not my will, but thine, be done.” This is not the destruction of His humanity. It is the perfection of human obedience.

Gethsemane corrects many false ideas about surrender. Surrender to God does not always feel easy. It may involve trembling, tears, agony, and the need for strengthening. A man may obey while still feeling the weight of what obedience costs. The presence of anguish does not mean the absence of faith. In Christ, we see obedience under pressure, trust in sorrow, and surrender without rebellion.

The recovered will is formed in that pattern. It learns to bring reluctance before God rather than hiding it. It learns to pray honestly without making honesty an excuse for disobedience. It learns that the Father's will may be costly and still good. Obedience does not require the soul to pretend the cup is light. It requires the soul to entrust itself to the Father who gives the cup.

Many Christians are troubled by the presence of inner resistance. They assume that if they were truly restored, obedience would always feel natural and immediate. They are discouraged when old desires continue to speak, when fear remains strong, or when surrender must be repeated again and again. But the recovery of the will is often a long work. Grace does not always remove conflict at once; often it teaches the will to obey within conflict.

There is a kind of obedience that begins before the feelings have caught up. A man may choose forgiveness while still feeling the ache of injury. He may choose truth while still fearing the consequence. He may choose purity while temptation remains present. He may choose prayer while the heart feels dry. These choices are not hypocrisy when they are made before God. They may be the very place where the will is being reordered.

A yielded will must also learn holy resistance. Surrender to God always involves resistance to whatever opposes God. A will yielded to the Father cannot remain equally available to every appetite, influence, and impulse. There must be a holy refusal within the Christian life. A man must learn to say no because he is beginning to love life rightly.

This refusal must reach the inner permissions by which sin survives. Many sins continue because the will keeps a small door open. It imagines circumstances under which disobedience might be excused. It stores up resentment for future use. It allows fantasy to prepare what action has not yet performed. It keeps the language of obedience while quietly preserving an exception.

The reordered will begins to close these hidden permissions. It stops planning for failure as though failure were inevitable. It stops calling weakness by names that make surrender unnecessary. It stops confusing temptation with consent. It learns that the first act of obedience may be to remove provision for the old life.

Resistance, however, must not become self-reliance. The Christian who resists sin in his own strength will soon become proud if he succeeds and despairing if he fails. The will must be active, but it must be active in dependence. Paul's words remain central: God works in you both to will and to do. The recovered man fights, but he fights as one upheld. He obeys, but he obeys as one supplied by grace.

This dependence changes the atmosphere of obedience. A man does not come to God merely after he has obeyed, as though prayer were the reward of victory. He comes to God in order to obey. He brings weakness before the command. He asks for strength before the temptation. He seeks mercy after the fall. He knows that without grace, even his best resolve is fragile.

The reordered will becomes visible in ordinary duties. The will often imagines that surrender to God must appear in large dramatic moments, while it neglects the small places where self-rule continues. But most of life is ordinary, and the will is revealed there: how a man speaks when tired, how he uses money when unseen, how he responds to interruption, how he handles appetite, how he keeps promises, and how he receives correction.

This makes the chapter deeply practical. We are not only speaking about heroic sacrifice or public holiness. The question is the direction of the person in the actual conditions of life. A recovered will begins to bring the whole day under God. It no longer treats obedience as an occasional religious act. It seeks to live before God in the hidden and the visible, the great and the small.

Such recovery also helps a man after failure. The unrecovered will often responds to failure by hiding, excusing, collapsing, or despairing. The reordered will learns to return. It confesses without performance. It receives forgiveness without treating forgiveness lightly. It rises again, not because failure was small, but because grace is greater.

No believer's will is perfectly ordered in this life. Even sincere obedience remains mixed with weakness. There will be moments of delay, evasion, cowardice, pride, and compromise. The question is not whether a man can claim perfect surrender, but whether he is learning to return more quickly, yield more deeply, and obey more truthfully.

The freedom that emerges is the peace of belonging to the right Master. It is the freedom to obey without constant bargaining, to serve without feeling diminished, to confess without being destroyed, to resist without despairing, and to surrender without losing the self. The false self is being put to death so that the true life may appear.

The recovered man therefore prays for more than guidance. Guidance shows him the way, but he also needs a will made ready to walk in it. He prays for strength to obey what he already knows. He prays for deliverance from cherished resistance. He prays for courage where fear has ruled him, humility where pride has defended him, purity where appetite has governed him, and perseverance where weariness has weakened him.

As the will is reordered, the whole person begins to change. The renewed mind no longer remains trapped in theory. The recovered identity no longer remains a doctrine only spoken. The man begins to move differently through life. He makes decisions under God. He resists old masters. He accepts holy limits. He chooses costly truth. He surrenders the cherished exception.

This chapter must not leave the impression that the Christian life is a grim exercise of force. There is struggle, but struggle is not the whole story. As the will is healed, obedience can become increasingly willing. What once felt only like denial may begin to feel like life. What once seemed like loss may begin to reveal itself as freedom. The man who once obeyed only because he feared consequence may begin to obey because he loves the Father.

The recovery of the will is one of the clearest signs that grace is not sentimental. Grace does not merely comfort the rebel while leaving rebellion untouched. Grace enters the stronghold of the will and begins to bring it back to God. It teaches the soul to yield, choose, resist, return, and obey.

The renewed mind sees the truth. The reordered will begins to walk in it. This is the movement of restoration. Man is not recovered by sight alone. He must be brought into obedience. In Christ, the will that once curved inward upon itself is drawn outward and upward toward the Father. It learns again the holy words by which humanity is made whole: “not my will, but thine, be done.”

The Cleansed Affections

If the renewed mind learns to see truth and the reordered will learns to obey truth, the affections must learn to love truth. Man is not restored only by clearer thought or stronger obedience. He must be recovered in the region of love, desire, grief, joy, fear, anger, pity, and longing. The heart must be taught to feel the proper weight of things again.

Sin disorders love. It teaches man to love what damages him and resent what heals him. Evil becomes attractive, holiness severe, mercy unnecessary, truth offensive, and self-rule desirable. A man may know enough to speak rightly and possess enough will to restrain himself outwardly, yet remain inwardly attached to what God calls him to forsake.

The heart cannot be treated as a private chamber where desire remains untouched while the mind and will are disciplined. What a man loves will eventually shape what he notices, excuses, pursues, and defends. The affections are not ornamental. They are directional. They bend the life toward what the soul treasures.

Scripture therefore places love at the centre of obedience. When Jesus is asked which is the great commandment in the law, He does not answer with a detached rule or an abstract principle. He speaks of love rightly ordered before God and neighbour.

Matthew 22:34–39

34 Then one of them, a lawyer, tempting him, asked, saying, Master, which is the great commandment in the law? Jesus said unto him, Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy mind. This is the first and great commandment.

38 And the second is like unto it; Thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself. On these two commandments hang all the law and the prophets.

Christ does not allow love to remain vague. Love has an order. God is to be loved with all the heart, soul, and mind. The neighbour is to be loved as oneself. All the law and the prophets hang upon this ordering of love. Man is not made whole by loving intensely alone. He is made whole as love is returned to its proper object, measure, and direction.

Fallen affection may be powerful, sincere, and emotionally convincing, yet still be wrongly ordered. A longing may feel deep and still draw the soul away from God. Anger may feel righteous and still be mixed with pride. Pity may feel compassionate and still be afraid of truth. Grief may be real and still harden into bitterness. Joy may be natural and still become possessive when it refuses to give thanks.

The problem is not that man feels too much. Often he feels wrongly, narrowly, or selfishly. His affections gather around the self and treat God, neighbour, body, work, and world according to whether they serve the self's desires. The heart cannot simply be trusted because it is sincere. Sincerity tells us that something is truly felt. It does not tell us whether the feeling is rightly ordered.

Cleansing begins when love is brought back before God. The first commandment is first for a reason. If God is not loved supremely, every other love is exposed to distortion. Love of neighbour becomes sentiment or possession. Love of self becomes vanity or despair. Love of creation becomes idolatry. Love of truth becomes pride. Love of peace becomes cowardice. The heart needs a highest love because lesser loves cannot govern themselves.

To love God with all the heart does not mean that every emotion is immediately pure, constant, or strong. Many Christians are troubled because their affections lag behind their convictions. They believe God is good, yet feel cold. They know holiness is beautiful, yet feel drawn toward lesser things. They confess

Christ as Lord, yet find old attachments still alive within them. This struggle does not prove that recovery is absent. It reveals where recovery is still needed.

Loves become deeply rooted, so the cleansing of the affections is often slow. A man may have trained his heart for years to take comfort in resentment, fantasy, control, appetite, attention, or self-pity. These loves do not vanish merely because the mind now sees more clearly. They must be starved, corrected, confessed, and replaced. Grace does not only tell the heart to stop loving wrongly. It begins to teach the heart to love rightly.

Worship is essential here. In worship, the heart is repeatedly turned toward God as the highest good. It is drawn out of the narrow orbit of self. It learns to adore what is holy, receive what is merciful, and give thanks for what it did not create. Worship does not cleanse the affections because man performs a religious act. It cleanses them because the soul is brought again before the One it was made to love.

The heart restored by grace also begins to love truth. This is not always natural to fallen man. Truth can wound pride, expose sin, challenge desire, and disturb false peace. A disordered heart may prefer flattering falsehood to healing truth. It may resent the very word that would deliver it. But as the affections are cleansed, truth becomes less threatening because it is no longer seen as an enemy of life. The recovered man begins to want the light, even when the light reveals what still needs to be healed.

This is closely connected to repentance. A man will not truly repent of what he still cherishes. He may regret the consequences. He may dislike the guilt. He may wish to be free from the shame. But repentance deepens when the heart begins to grieve sin because sin is sin. Cleansed affection does not only fear judgment. It mourns the offence against God, the damage done to the soul, and the harm done to others.

Yet the cleansed heart is not grim. Grace also restores joy. Fallen joy is often possessive. It clutches at created goods as though they must save the soul from emptiness. Christian joy learns gratitude. It receives good things as gifts rather than gods. It can delight without worshipping the delight. It can give thanks without demanding that the gift become permanent, ultimate, or sufficient in itself.

Anger must also be touched by grace. Anger is not always sinful, but in fallen man it easily becomes a servant of pride. It protects the ego, feeds resentment, rehearses injury, and calls vengeance justice. A recovered heart learns to be angry at what dishonours God and harms the neighbour, while distrusting the self's appetite for vindication. Cleansed anger is governed by holiness and charity. It does not need to become cruel in order to be serious.

Pity also needs truth. In a confused age, compassion is often detached from truth. It wants to relieve pain immediately, even if the relief leaves the deeper wound untouched. Christ shows a better mercy. He draws near to the broken, but He does not bless the bondage that keeps them broken. The recovered heart learns compassion that is tender enough to come close and truthful enough to call a person toward life.

Fear must be reordered as well. Fallen fear makes the soul small. It bows before opinion, loss, pain, rejection, uncertainty, and death. It teaches the heart to treat temporal threats as ultimate powers. The fear of the Lord begins to heal all lesser fears by placing them under God. The recovered man may still tremble, but he is learning what deserves his deepest reverence.

The affections also reveal themselves in relation to the neighbour. It is possible to treat people correctly while not yet loving them rightly. A man may be polite but indifferent, helpful but proud, generous but controlling, truthful but harsh. The second commandment reaches deeper. To love the neighbour as oneself is

to receive him as a person before God, not merely as an interruption, rival, audience, burden, or tool.

This will be developed more fully when we consider the restored neighbour, but it belongs here because the way we love others reveals the state of the heart. Cleansed affection begins to free a man from using people to secure himself. He can rejoice in another's good without envy. He can grieve another's pain without making it about himself. He can correct without contempt and serve without needing applause.

The same cleansing changes how man loves himself. Scripture does not call man to self-hatred. It assumes a proper care for the self when it commands love of neighbour as oneself. But fallen self-love is easily corrupted into self-worship, self-protection, or self-loathing. These are closer than they appear because each keeps the self at the centre. Recovered self-love is quieter. It receives the self as a creature under God: neither idol nor refuse, but redeemed and accountable.

This matters greatly for spiritual health. Some men mistake self-contempt for humility. Others mistake self-affirmation for healing. The cleansed heart learns another way. It can confess sin without despising God's workmanship. It can receive mercy without becoming proud. It can accept limits without resentment. It can seek growth without making the self the final object of devotion.

The affections are cleansed through truth, worship, repentance, obedience, suffering, and the steady work of grace. Sometimes God loosens a disordered love by exposing its emptiness. Sometimes He does so by removing what the soul had begun to worship. Sometimes He does so by giving a better affection, a deeper love, a truer joy. The process can be painful because the heart often clings to what has harmed it.

Patience is needed in the recovery of the heart. A man may be discouraged when he discovers that his feelings remain mixed. He may love God truly and still find coldness within. He may forgive sincerely and still feel echoes of pain. He may reject envy and still feel its movement. He may desire purity and still feel old attractions. The presence of conflict does not cancel the work of grace. It shows the battlefield upon which grace is working.

So the recovered man learns to bring his affections before God honestly. He does not pretend to love what he hates or hate what he still loves. He confesses the disorder and asks to be taught. He prays not only for right conduct, but for right desire. He asks God to make holiness beautiful, sin bitter, mercy precious, truth welcome, and Christ dearer than all lesser loves.

As the affections are cleansed, the person becomes less divided. The mind sees what is true, the will begins to obey what is true, and the heart begins to love what is true. This is a deepening of recovery. Obedience becomes less merely external. Worship becomes less merely formal. Repentance becomes less merely fearful. Love becomes less possessive and more charitable.

The recovered heart is not a heart without feeling. It is a heart learning to feel before God. It grieves what should be grieved, rejoices in what should be received with thanks, fears what should be feared, hates what destroys, loves what is good, and rests in the God who alone can bear the full weight of the soul's desire.

The cleansing of the affections is therefore central to the recovery of man. A man may think truly and choose rightly, yet still need his loves healed. Christ does not restore humanity by leaving the heart untouched. He brings love back into order. He teaches the soul to love God first, the neighbour rightly, the self humbly, and the world gratefully. Where that work begins, the human person becomes warmer, truer, freer, and more whole.

The Honoured Body

The recovery of man must include the body. If the mind is renewed, the will reordered, and the affections cleansed, the body cannot be left outside the work of restoration. Man is not a soul temporarily trapped in flesh. He is an embodied creature. His bodily life belongs to the truth of what he is before God.

Fallen man often becomes confused about the body. At times he worships it, treating strength, beauty, pleasure, appetite, and appearance as though they carried ultimate meaning. At other times he despises it, treating weakness, limitation, ageing, sickness, and mortality as interruptions to real life rather than part of man's present condition. In both errors, the body is not received truthfully.

Scripture gives a better account. The body is created by God, marked by the fall, claimed by Christ, indwelt by the Spirit, offered in obedience, and destined for resurrection. It is a vessel of creaturely life, and in Christ it becomes part of the whole person being recovered.

Paul writes:

1 Corinthians 6:19–20

What! know ye not that your body is the temple of the Holy Ghost which is in you, which ye have of God, and ye are not your own? For ye are bought with a price; therefore glorify God in your body, and in your spirit, which are God's.

These words are plain and searching. The body is not morally neutral territory where man may live as though God has no claim. The Christian is not his own. He has been bought with a price. Therefore the body, no less than the spirit, is to glorify God.

This immediately challenges the modern claim that the body belongs to the self as private property. The world often speaks as though the body were simply material placed under personal sovereignty. I may display it, alter it, gratify it, ignore it, indulge it, or define it as I please. But Paul does not allow the Christian to speak that way. “Ye are not your own” reaches into the body as well as the spirit. Redemption lays claim to the whole person.

That claim is not hostile to bodily life. God claims the body because He made it and has redeemed it. The command to glorify God in the body is not a rejection of embodiment but its restoration to proper order. The body is honoured most truly when it is brought under the Lord who knows what it is for.

This guards against false spirituality. Some have imagined that the body is a lesser thing, while the soul alone is the true concern of God. Such thinking can sound devout, but it is not Christian enough. The Son of God took flesh. He was born, hungered, slept, touched, wept, suffered, bled, died, and rose bodily. The incarnation will not let us treat the body as incidental to redemption.

Christ’s bodily life sanctifies our understanding of embodied humanity. He did not save man by appearing to be human from a safe distance. He entered the world in flesh and blood. He bore pain in His nerves, weariness in His limbs, hunger in His stomach, tears in His eyes, wounds in His hands and feet. The body matters because the Word was made flesh.

Bodily weakness, then, is not a sign that humanity has become meaningless. Christ’s own body knew suffering. The true Man was not untouched by pain, exhaustion, or death. The Christian should not measure restored humanity by constant strength, health, attractiveness, or energy. Present recovery does not abolish bodily limitation. It teaches man to live within the body before God.

The body brings humility because it reminds man that he is not self-sustaining. He must eat, sleep, breathe, rest, age, and die. He cannot exist by command of

his own will. He is dependent at every moment upon gifts he did not create. The body resists the illusion of autonomy. It tells man, every day, that he is creature.

Fallen man often resents this. He wants the body to serve his ambitions without interruption. He treats tiredness as an insult, ageing as an enemy, sickness as humiliation, and death as an outrage against the self. Yet the recovered man learns to receive bodily limitation without pretending that limitation is meaningless. He does not call death good, but he does learn that weakness can humble pride and teach dependence.

The body also requires discipline. To honour the body is not to indulge every appetite that speaks through it. Hunger, sexual desire, comfort, rest, pleasure, and physical impulse are not evil in themselves, but they must be governed. A body without discipline becomes a master. A body under harsh contempt becomes an enemy. The recovered man must learn stewardship rather than indulgence or hatred.

Such stewardship touches ordinary life. How a man eats, rests, works, speaks, looks, touches, and uses his strength matters before God. The body is the place where obedience becomes visible. A man may claim inward devotion, but the body reveals what the will has actually permitted. Hands serve or grasp. Eyes honour or consume. The tongue blesses or wounds. Feet walk toward duty or away from it.

This is especially clear in relation to sexual holiness. The body is not a disposable instrument of desire. It belongs to God. Sexual sin is not merely private pleasure wrongly managed; it is disorder within a body meant for holiness. In an age that treats desire as identity and consent as the whole measure of righteousness, the Christian must recover the deeper truth that the body has a divine purpose. It is not available for every longing that passes through it.

Yet bodily holiness cannot be reduced to sexual restraint alone. The body is also honoured through mercy, labour, presence, tenderness, endurance, and service. The hand that feeds the hungry, the arm that carries the weak, the feet that visit the lonely, the mouth that speaks comfort, the shoulder that bears another's grief these too are bodily acts of obedience. The body is not only the place where sin must be resisted. It is also the place where love becomes practical.

This gives dignity to hidden and ordinary service. Much of Christian faithfulness is bodily before it is noticed by anyone. Rising early to pray, working honestly when tired, caring for children, tending the sick, preparing food, kneeling beside a bed, embracing the sorrowful, sitting patiently with the lonely these are not lesser forms of spirituality. They are the life of the body offered to God.

The honoured body also changes how man relates to suffering. Bodily pain can be frightening because it exposes vulnerability. It reminds man that his plans are fragile and his strength temporary. Some suffering can be relieved and should be relieved where mercy allows. Christianity does not require a man to romanticize pain. Christ healed the sick and had compassion on bodily suffering.

Even when suffering remains, the body is not abandoned by God. The Christian may groan, but he groans with hope. His present body is subject to weakness and death, yet it is not destined for disposal. The hope of resurrection means that God's final answer to bodily corruption is not escape from embodiment, but redeemed embodiment.

Paul writes elsewhere of the body's future redemption:

Romans 8:22–23

For we know that the whole creation groaneth and travaileth in pain together until now. And not only they, but ourselves also, which have the first fruits of the Spirit, even we ourselves groan within ourselves, waiting for the adoption, to wit, the redemption of our body.

The Christian body still groans. Faith does not remove all weakness. The Spirit does not make man immune to decay. Yet the groaning is not hopeless. The body that suffers now is waiting for redemption. God does not intend merely to save the soul and discard the body. He intends the redemption of the whole person.

Resurrection hope protects man from vanity and despair. Vanity treats the present body as ultimate and tries to extract from it an impossible permanence. Despair treats bodily frailty as the final word. Hope teaches another way. The body is precious because God made it and Christ claims it. Its present weakness is temporary because God will raise it in glory.

This changes how we see ageing. The world often treats ageing as defeat because it worships youth, beauty, and visible power. The recovered man may still feel the losses of age honestly, but he does not need to interpret them as the loss of personhood. Wrinkles, weakness, slowness, and dependence do not erase dignity. A body moving toward death can still belong to God, glorify God, and wait for resurrection.

The same is true of disability and sickness. Human worth is not measured by bodily capacity. A person does not become less human because the body is limited, wounded, dependent, or visibly weak. If man is made by God and claimed in Christ, dignity does not rise and fall with strength. The honoured body includes the suffering body, the dependent body, the ageing body, and the body that can no longer do what it once did.

This corrects a culture that often values bodies by usefulness, attractiveness, or performance. The Christian must learn to see the body as a visible place where unseen truths are displayed. Dependence can display humility. Weakness can display patience. Service can display love. Suffering can display hope. The body becomes one of the places where restored humanity is seen.

The recovered man therefore asks how his body may glorify God. He does not ask only how it may please him, impress others, avoid pain, or extend his control. He asks how his eyes, hands, mouth, strength, sexuality, appetite, rest, and labour may be brought under Christ. This is not a narrow question. It touches the whole manner in which he lives.

Such recovery will not be complete in this life. The body remains mortal. It will still hunger, tire, ache, age, and die unless the Lord returns first. But even now, the body can be reclaimed from vanity and despair. It can be offered. It can be disciplined. It can serve. It can suffer faithfully. It can become an instrument of love rather than self-rule.

The recovery of the body also prepares us to think rightly about the neighbour. For if my body is not disposable, neither is his. If my body belongs before God, so does hers. If weakness does not remove my dignity, it does not remove the dignity of another. The honoured body teaches us that persons must never be reduced to use, appearance, productivity, desire, or burden.

In Christ, the body is received as created, humbled as mortal, disciplined as accountable, offered as worship, and promised resurrection. The recovered man does not despise the body, nor does he ask the body to become his god. He glorifies God in his body and in his spirit, which are God's.

The Restored Neighbour

The recovery of man cannot remain private. If identity is recovered, the mind renewed, the will reordered, the affections cleansed, and the body honoured, then the way a man sees his neighbour must also change. Restored humanity becomes visible in relationship. A man may speak much of truth, grace, conscience, and holiness, but if he continues to use, despise, envy, flatter, fear, or discard other people, his recovery remains deeply incomplete.

Sin disorders the way man sees others. It does not only turn him away from God; it turns him against his neighbour. The other person becomes a rival, an audience, an interruption, a possession, a threat, a tool, or a burden. Even kindness can become self-serving when it is used to secure approval, control outcomes, or maintain an image of goodness. Fallen man does not merely need better manners. He needs his vision of the neighbour restored.

That restoration begins by receiving the other person before God. The neighbour is not merely someone who enters my story. He has his own life before the Creator. He is made by God, known by God, accountable to God, and in need of mercy. He cannot be reduced to his usefulness, his agreement, his injury, or his difference. To recover the neighbour is to let him become more than what he is to me.

Love of neighbour therefore stands close to love of God. Christ does not allow devotion to God to become an escape from human obligation. The man who claims to love God while hardening himself against his neighbour has not understood the shape of restored life. Love of God orders the heart upward, and from that order the neighbour can be loved truthfully rather than possessively.

The parable of the good Samaritan gives this truth its concrete force.

Luke 10:26–38

And, behold, a certain lawyer stood up, and tempted him, saying, Master, what shall I do to inherit eternal life? He said unto him, What is written in the law? How readest thou? And he answering, said, Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy strength, and with all thy mind; and thy neighbor as thyself. And he said unto him, Thou hast answered right; this do, and thou shalt live. But he, willing to justify himself, said unto Jesus, And who is my neighbor? And Jesus answering, said, A certain man went down from Jerusalem to Jericho, and fell among thieves, who stripped him of his raiment and wounded him, and departed, leaving him half dead. And by chance, there came down a certain priest that way; and when he saw him, he passed by on the other side of the way. And likewise a Levite, when he was at the place, came and looked upon him, and passed by on the other side of the way; for they desired in their hearts that it might not be known that they had seen him. But a certain Samaritan, as he journeyed, came where he was; and when he saw him, he had compassion on him. And went to him, and bound up his wounds, pouring in oil and wine, and set him on his own beast, and brought him to an inn, and took care of him. And on the morrow, when he departed, he took money, and gave to the host, and said unto him, Take care of him, and whatsoever thou spendest more, when I come again, I will repay thee. Who now of these three, thinkest thou, was neighbor unto him who fell among the thieves? And he said, He who showed mercy on him. Then said Jesus unto him, Go and do likewise.

The lawyer asks, “And who is my neighbour?” Luke tells us that he asks this because he is willing to justify himself. That detail is important. The question is not innocent curiosity. It is an attempt to define obligation narrowly enough that the self may remain justified. Fallen man often does this. He wants love to be clearly bounded, manageable, and selective. He wants to know where mercy may stop.

Christ answers by turning the question outward. The issue is not how narrowly a man may define neighbour, but whether he will become neighbour to the one before him in need. The priest and the Levite see the wounded man and pass by. The Samaritan sees him and has compassion. His mercy is not a sentiment left

inside the heart. It moves through the body, the purse, the journey, and the inconvenience of care.

Here is restored humanity in action. The neighbour is recovered when compassion becomes movement, when sight becomes responsibility, and when mercy interrupts self-protection. The Samaritan does not ask whether the wounded man will be useful to him. He does not ask whether mercy will be socially convenient. He sees a man in need and moves toward him.

Many failures of love begin before action. They begin in how we see. We see the difficult person as a nuisance, the weak person as a drain, the successful person as a threat, the wounded person as a problem, the enemy as a category, the stranger as an inconvenience. Once the mind has reduced the person, the will can justify distance.

Christ teaches His people to see differently. The neighbour is not first a problem to manage. He is a person to be regarded before God. This does not make every relationship simple, safe, or without boundaries. Love does not require blindness. Some people must be resisted, corrected, or kept at a distance because love must also be truthful. But even necessary boundaries should not become contempt.

That distinction matters. The restored man is not sentimental about people. He knows that sin can make relationships dangerous, manipulative, unjust, or corrupting. He does not confuse love with permission. He does not imagine that mercy requires him to call evil good. Yet he must also guard against the heart's desire to turn discernment into dismissal. It is possible to be rightly cautious and wrongly cold.

The restored neighbour also requires freedom from comparison. Much relational disorder comes from measuring the self against others. Another person's success becomes accusation. Another person's weakness becomes opportunity for

superiority. Another person's suffering becomes an uncomfortable demand. Another person's difference becomes a threat to control. The self remains at the centre, using others as mirrors.

In Christ, this begins to change. The recovered man does not need the neighbour to make him feel secure. His identity has been received from God. Because of that, he can rejoice without envy, serve without resentment, correct without contempt, and receive help without humiliation. He can stand beside another person rather than always standing above or beneath him.

This is especially important within the church. The church is not a gathering of self-made individuals who happen to share religious interests. It is a body of people reconciled by grace, called to bear with one another, forgive one another, admonish one another, and love one another. The very people who test patience may be the people through whom God exposes the remaining disorder of the heart.

Fellowship is therefore more than comfort. It is formation. To live among others is to have pride exposed, selfishness interrupted, impatience tested, and love made practical. A man may imagine himself mature while alone, but the neighbour reveals the truth. The presence of another person brings hidden things to the surface: irritation, envy, fear, superiority, defensiveness, tenderness, mercy, and courage.

Private devotion cannot be the whole measure of restored humanity. Prayer matters deeply, but the man who prays must also learn how to speak to his wife, honour his children, forgive his brother, keep faith with his friend, tell truth to his client, show mercy to the stranger, and refuse cruelty toward his enemy. The life hidden before God must become visible among people.

Speech is one of the first places where love or contempt appears. A man can wound with accuracy, flatter with selfishness, joke with cruelty, correct with

pride, or remain silent when truth is required. The tongue often reveals whether the neighbour is being honoured or used. Recovered speech seeks truth with charity. It does not treat honesty as a licence for harshness or kindness as permission for falsehood.

This does not mean every word must be soft. Some words must be firm because love sometimes confronts. Christ Himself speaks words that wound pride in order to heal the soul. But restored speech does not enjoy the wound. It does not use truth as a weapon of self-exaltation. It seeks the good of the one addressed, even when the good requires rebuke.

Forgiveness is another mark of the restored neighbour. Fallen man often clings to injury because resentment gives him a sense of moral power. The injured self becomes judge, prosecutor, and historian. It rehearses the offence, keeps the wound alive, and fears that forgiveness will make the wrong disappear. But Christian forgiveness does not say that evil was harmless. It entrusts judgment to God and refuses to let the wrong become lord over the heart.

Forgiveness may not always restore the same closeness. Trust can be damaged, and wisdom may require changed boundaries. Yet forgiveness releases the neighbour from the place of absolute enemy. It refuses the secret pleasure of hatred. It remembers that the forgiven man has no right to become merciless. He may still need justice, truth, and prudence, but he must not enthrone bitterness.

The restored neighbour also includes the enemy. Here Christian recovery becomes visibly unlike the world. Fallen man can love those who love him, honour those who benefit him, and show kindness where kindness is returned. Christ calls His people further. The enemy must not be treated as though hatred were now a virtue. He remains a person before God, even when he opposes, wounds, or misunderstands.

This does not make evil small. It makes God large. To love the enemy is not to pretend that enmity does not exist. It is to refuse the corruption of the soul by hatred. It is to pray where the flesh wants only to curse, to seek good where vengeance would feel sweet, and to remember that judgment belongs finally to God. Such love is impossible without grace because it strikes at the deepest instincts of fallen self-protection.

Much of neighbour-love is hidden. It may appear in patience with the difficult, attention to the lonely, quiet generosity, restraint in speech, prayer for those who will never know, or practical help given without performance. The Samaritan's mercy was costly and concrete. It did not exist for display. It existed because a wounded man lay in the road.

Love cannot remain only an idea. The neighbour has a body, wounds, needs, fears, limits, and burdens. To love him requires time, patience, listening, money, presence, and sometimes interruption. The restored man does not use spirituality to float above these demands. He understands that love of neighbour often arrives disguised as inconvenience.

Yet the recovered man must also remember that he is not the saviour of his neighbour. Some people turn service into self-importance. They need to be needed and call that love. They carry burdens God did not give them and then resent others for being heavy. True love serves under God. It does not try to replace God.

This gives humility to mercy. A man can help without controlling. He can care without possessing. He can speak truth without imagining that he can force repentance. He can bear another's burden without pretending he can carry another's soul. The restored neighbour is loved best when he is loved before God, not absorbed into the self's need to rescue, manage, or be admired.

The recovery of neighbour-love therefore requires both compassion and humility. Compassion moves toward the person in need. Humility remembers that the person belongs first to God. Together they protect love from coldness on one side and control on the other. The restored man learns to be present without making himself central.

This work remains unfinished in every Christian. The neighbour continues to expose what is not yet healed. Irritation reveals impatience. Envy reveals insecurity. Contempt reveals pride. Fear reveals misplaced dependence upon human approval. Avoidance reveals selfishness. These discoveries can be painful, but they are also merciful. God often uses the neighbour to show a man where recovery must go next.

The question is whether the man will listen. He may use doctrine to excuse lovelessness. He may use discernment to hide contempt. He may use busyness to avoid mercy. He may use wounds to justify permanent hardness. But the restored man cannot remain content with these evasions. Christ keeps bringing him back to the road where the wounded man lies.

The parable ends with command: “Go, and do thou likewise.” This is where the restored neighbour becomes practical. The man recovered in Christ is not asked merely to admire mercy, define mercy, or speak about mercy. He is called to show mercy. His theology must eventually take the shape of movement toward the person whom love requires him to see.

In the recovery of man, the neighbour is no longer a mirror for the self, a tool for ambition, a rival for importance, or a burden to be avoided. He is a person before God. He may be wounded, difficult, guilty, strange, close, hostile, or hidden from public notice. Yet he stands within the command of love.

The restored man learns to see him, and seeing him, to move toward mercy. He does not love perfectly. He still needs correction, patience, and repentance. But

his life has begun to turn outward. Grace has not only reconciled him to God; it is teaching him how to stand among others. In Christ, the neighbour is recovered, and human life begins to take the shape of love.

The Redeemed Vocation

The recovery of man must also reach his work. Man was not made only to think, feel, choose, worship, and relate. He was made to bear responsibility in the world before God. His labour, duties, gifts, and daily obligations belong to the shape of his humanity. If these remain untouched by grace, then restoration has not yet reached one of the most ordinary places where life is actually lived.

Work is easily disordered because it sits close to the question of worth. Fallen man often turns labour into a stage upon which the self must prove its value. He may work for pride, control, applause, wealth, escape, domination, or fear of failure. He may use work to hide from the soul, avoid the home, silence guilt, or secure admiration. What was meant to be stewardship becomes a form of self-salvation.

Yet the answer is not to despise work. Labour itself is not the enemy. Duty is not a curse in its essence. Responsibility is not an interruption to spiritual life. Before sin entered the world, man was placed in the garden to dress it and keep it. Work belongs to created life. Sin corrupts it, burdens it, and fills it with thorns, but it does not make faithful labour meaningless.

The recovered man therefore has to learn a new relationship to vocation. He must neither worship his work nor treat it as spiritually irrelevant. His labour is not his saviour, but it is one of the places where obedience becomes visible. Work becomes redeemed when it is brought back under God as stewardship, service, discipline, and love.

Colossians 3:22–24

Servants, obey in all things your masters according to the flesh; not with eye-service, as men-pleasers; but in singleness of heart, fearing God; And whatsoever ye do, do it heartily, as to the Lord, and not unto men; Knowing that of the Lord ye shall receive the reward of the inheritance; for ye serve the Lord Christ.

The immediate setting concerns servants and masters, but the principle reaches deeply into the Christian understanding of labour. Paul places ordinary work before the Lord. The believer is not to work merely when watched, nor merely to please men, nor merely to secure earthly reward. He is to work heartily, as to the Lord. Beneath the visible duty stands the unseen Master.

This transforms the meaning of work. The same outward task may be done in a different spirit because it is done before God. Labour is no longer measured only by status, salary, recognition, or human approval. A task may be humble and still holy. It may be unseen and still received by God. It may be repetitive and still become part of faithful obedience.

The modern imagination often struggles here. Many people have been trained to think of meaningful work only in terms of personal fulfilment, self-expression, visible success, or public influence. When work does not provide these things, it is treated as failure or imprisonment. But much of life is made of ordinary duties that do not flatter the self. The recovered man learns that faithfulness is not made small because it is hidden.

Not all work can be baptised by sincerity. Some labour serves evil. Some industries feed corruption. Some practices require dishonesty, exploitation, vanity, or harm. A Christian cannot redeem wicked work by doing it earnestly. Vocation must come under moral judgment. The question is not only whether a man works hard, but whether his work can be offered to God.

Where work can be offered, diligence matters. Careless work dishonours the God before whom it is done. Laziness is not made spiritual by calling it contentment. Neglect is not humility. If a task belongs to a man's duty, then faithfulness requires attention, effort, and care.

At the same time, diligence must remain ordered. Work becomes an idol when it carries the weight of identity, salvation, or ultimate security. A man may begin by wanting to do well and end by needing work to tell him who he is. He may call it responsibility while becoming enslaved to ambition. He may call it excellence while neglecting prayer, family, rest, mercy, and the health of the soul.

Redeemed vocation holds these things together. A man works because he is responsible before God. He does not work in order to become God. He seeks excellence because God is worthy of careful service, while refusing to make excellence a throne for pride. He accepts duty without allowing duty to become an excuse for lovelessness.

The practical consequences are immediate. The recovered man should become more honest in his work. He does not need to manipulate appearances, exaggerate achievements, hide failures, or serve only when watched. Paul's warning against "eyeservice" reaches every age. It exposes the kind of labour that performs for human approval while lacking inward integrity.

To work "as to the Lord" means that the unseen parts matter. The email written with care, the promise kept when inconvenient, the accounts handled honestly, the weakness admitted rather than concealed, the customer treated fairly, the employee protected from exploitation, the colleague honoured rather than undermined — these are not separate from spiritual life. They are places where vocation is being redeemed.

Ambition also has to be tested. Ambition itself is not always evil. A desire to build, improve, lead, create, provide, and bear greater responsibility can be good when brought under God. But ambition becomes dangerous when it ceases to be stewardship and becomes self-exaltation. The recovered man must ask what his ambition serves. Does it seek fruitfulness before God, or does it seek a larger stage for the self?

That question must be asked honestly because ambition often dresses itself in noble language. A man may speak of impact while craving recognition. He may speak of provision while feeding greed. He may speak of leadership while seeking control. He may speak of excellence while despising those who cannot keep pace. Work easily conceals pride beneath usefulness.

Failure looks different when vocation is redeemed. If work has become identity, failure becomes a kind of death. Criticism becomes unbearable. Lost opportunity becomes humiliation. The success of another becomes accusation. But when vocation is received as stewardship, failure can be faced more truthfully. It may still hurt. It may still require repentance, learning, or change. But it does not have the authority to name the man.

This gives freedom to work well without being destroyed by imperfection. The recovered man can take responsibility without pretending omnipotence. He can learn from mistakes without collapsing into shame. He can accept limits without resentment. He can be diligent without believing that every outcome rests upon him. He works before God, and therefore he can leave what belongs to God in God's hands.

Vocation also includes the work of the home. Modern discussions of work often narrow attention to paid employment, public achievement, or visible career. But much of the world's necessary faithfulness is domestic, hidden, repetitive, and unpaid. Cooking, cleaning, caring, teaching, repairing, nursing, listening,

managing small duties, and bearing family responsibilities are not lesser forms of vocation. They are places where love takes bodily and practical form.

A recovered vision of work must honour this. The mother caring for children, the husband quietly providing, the adult child tending an ageing parent, the neighbour helping without notice, the retired person praying and serving in hidden ways — these lives may not be celebrated by the market, but they are seen by God. A task is not made holy by being impressive. It is made holy by being offered faithfully.

Humility is therefore woven into redeemed vocation. The fallen self wants visible significance. It grows restless when no one sees, thanks, praises, or promotes. But Christ forms a different spirit. The recovered man can do hidden good because he is not living entirely from human recognition. He can serve in small places because he knows that the Lord sees.

This does not make human recognition wrong. Encouragement is good. Honour may be rightly given. Faithful labour may deserve fair reward. But the recovered man does not make recognition the oxygen of obedience. If praise comes, he receives it with gratitude and caution. If praise does not come, he continues before God.

Rest also belongs to vocation. A disordered worker may despise rest because he fears what silence will reveal, or because he believes everything depends upon him. Another may misuse rest as escape, drifting into laziness and calling it recovery. The Christian understanding of work requires both labour and rest because man is a creature. He must work faithfully, and he must also accept that he is not the sustainer of the world.

Rest is an act of trust when it is received before God. It says that man's life is not upheld by endless productivity. It allows the body to acknowledge its limits, the mind to become quiet, and the soul to remember that God remains God

when man stops working. This is not an argument for idleness. It is an argument against the pride that cannot lay down its tools.

Vocation may also change form. Illness, age, unemployment, bereavement, disability, or family obligation may alter what a man can do. If his worth has been fastened to productivity, such seasons will feel like the loss of personhood. But if vocation is stewardship before God, then the form of faithfulness may change without the person becoming useless.

A bedridden believer may still pray. An ageing man may still bless, counsel, endure, and give thanks. A person without paid employment may still serve in hidden ways. A parent at home may be doing work of immense moral weight. A man in weakness may glorify God by patience where he once glorified God by strength. Vocation is not abolished when productivity is reduced. It is reshaped by providence.

Work can also become a place where recovery is tested rather than avoided. Some people use work to escape the deeper questions of the soul. They stay busy enough that they never have to face pride, fear, loneliness, guilt, or disordered desire. But redeemed work does not hide the soul from God. It becomes one of the places where the soul is trained. Duty teaches patience. Responsibility exposes selfishness. Collaboration reveals pride. Failure teaches humility. Service forms love.

The recovered man therefore asks different questions about his labour. He does not ask only, “Does this advance me?” or “Does this fulfil me?” He asks, “Can this be offered to God? Does this serve truth? Does this bless my neighbour? Does this cultivate faithfulness? Does this keep my soul in order, or does it require me to become false?” These questions bring vocation under discipleship. Integrity is one of the clearest marks of redeemed vocation. A man may be gifted, productive, and admired, yet unrecovered in his work if he must become

dishonest to succeed. Integrity means the inner and outer life are being brought together before God. The man does not become one person in worship and another in business, one person in public and another in secret dealings. His work begins to bear the same truth as his confession.

Such integrity will sometimes cost him. To work as unto the Lord may mean refusing opportunities that require compromise. It may mean telling the truth when concealment would be easier. It may mean treating people justly when exploitation would be profitable. It may mean accepting slower progress rather than gaining advantage through falsehood. Redeemed vocation is not always rewarded by the world because the world often rewards what God condemns.

Yet the Christian has a deeper reward in view. Paul reminds the believer that “of the Lord ye shall receive the reward of the inheritance: for ye serve the Lord Christ.” This does not make earthly work irrelevant. It makes it accountable to eternity. The smallest duty can be placed before the Lord. The hidden sacrifice is not lost. The faithful labour that no one noticed is not forgotten.

This hope frees the recovered man from despair in unnoticed work. He may labour for years in places where gratitude is thin and results are slow. He may do what is right without seeing immediate fruit. He may serve people who never understand the cost. But if he serves the Lord Christ, his work is not finally measured by human applause. The Lord sees, weighs, purifies, and remembers.

The recovery of vocation therefore places work back into the order of worship. A man works because he belongs to God. He rests because he belongs to God. He serves because his neighbour belongs before God. He pursues excellence because God is worthy. He refuses dishonesty because truth matters. He receives hidden duties because faithfulness does not need a stage in order to be real.

In Christ, work is redeemed from vanity and despair. It no longer has to save the man, name the man, or justify the man. Those burdens are too heavy for labour to carry. Instead, work can become what it was meant to be: a field of stewardship, service, discipline, creativity, provision, and love before God.

The recovered man still faces thorns. Work remains tiring, frustrating, and sometimes unjust. Duties can feel heavy. Results can disappoint. Yet even among the thorns, labour may be offered. The man put back in order does not need his work to become his god. He needs it to become faithful. Where that begins to happen, vocation is recovered, and ordinary life becomes one more place where Christ restores man.

The Patient Man

The recovery of man must include his relationship to time. A man may have his mind renewed, his will reordered, his affections cleansed, his body honoured, his neighbour restored, and his work redeemed, yet still remain deeply troubled by delay. He may know what is true and still resent how slowly truth becomes visible. He may desire holiness and still grow bitter because growth is not immediate. He may pray, labour, repent, forgive, and endure, yet still struggle with the fact that God does not submit His timing to man's urgency.

Patience is therefore not a minor virtue added to the Christian life after the greater matters have been settled. It touches the soul's deepest demand for control. Fallen man does not only want the wrong things. He wants even right things on his own terms, in his own order, and according to his own schedule. He wants relief now, vindication now, maturity now, healing now, clarity now, fruit now. He may call this longing, but beneath it there can be a hidden refusal to live as a creature under God.

Time humbles man because time reminds him that he is not sovereign. He cannot command the seed to become a tree by force of impatience. He cannot make grief finish its work by despising it. He cannot force another person to mature by the violence of his frustration. He cannot turn prayer into a lever by which God's providence is moved at human speed. Time becomes one of the places where man discovers whether he trusts God, or only trusts outcomes when they arrive quickly enough.

The modern world trains the soul against patience. Messages are instant, purchases are instant, opinions are instant, outrage is instant, and distraction is always available. The mind becomes accustomed to immediacy, and then ordinary faithfulness begins to feel intolerably slow. Waiting feels like failure. Silence feels like abandonment. Process feels like obstruction. The soul

becomes restless not only because life is difficult, but because it has been trained to expect life without delay.

Scripture speaks differently. Christ says:

Luke 21:15–18

And ye shall be betrayed both by parents, and brethren, and kinsfolk, and friends; and some of you shall they cause to be put to death. And ye shall be hated of all the world for my name's sake. But there shall not a hair of your head perish. In your patience possess ye your souls.

These words are spoken in the shadow of betrayal, hatred, and suffering. Christ does not present patience as a pleasant quality for settled days. He speaks of patience when life is under pressure, when relationships wound, when the world opposes, and when the future appears threatened. The command is not merely to survive the passing of time, but to possess the soul within it.

“In your patience possess ye your souls.” This is a searching phrase. The impatient man does not truly possess his soul because his soul is being seized by whatever has most recently disturbed him. Anger seizes it. Fear seizes it. Desire seizes it. Delay seizes it. Another person’s words seize it. The man may still appear active and decisive, but inwardly he is being dragged from one master to another.

Patience begins to reverse this disorder. It teaches the soul to remain before God while the pressure continues. It creates space between the wound and the word, between desire and obedience, between provocation and response, between silence and accusation. That space is not empty. It is the place where grace can govern what impulse would otherwise command.

Many sins happen because man cannot endure that space. He feels anger and speaks. He feels appetite and takes. He feels fear and hides. He feels shame and

lies. He feels frustration and wounds. The patient man is not without these movements, but he is learning not to hand himself over to them immediately. The soul need not obey every urgency that rises within it.

This makes patience a form of recovered strength. It is not passivity. It is not the refusal to act when action is required. There are times when obedience must be swift, truth must be spoken, evil must be resisted, and mercy must move without delay. But even decisive action must come from a soul governed by God rather than driven by panic, pride, vengeance, or fear. Patience does not make a man inactive. It makes him less easily possessed.

The patient man is being recovered from the illusion that slowness means absence. God often works slowly, at least as man measures slowness. The child becomes an adult by years, not by demand. Character is formed through repeated obedience, not one strong emotion. Repentance deepens through return, confession, correction, and renewed surrender. Trust grows through seasons where the promise is held before the fulfilment is seen.

This is hard for the soul that wants visible proof. A man may begin to think that nothing is happening because everything is not happening quickly. But much of God's work is like root growth beneath the soil. The visible surface may appear unchanged while hidden strength is being formed. Patience is willing to let God work beneath the surface without constantly accusing Him of delay.

Repentance especially requires this patience. Some sins are deeply rooted, and some recoveries are slow. A man may expect that confession should immediately remove every old impulse, fear, attachment, and habit. When the struggle remains, he may conclude that nothing real has happened. But recovery often proceeds through repeated return. The impatient man either demands instant perfection or gives up. The patient man keeps coming back to God.

This must not become patience with sin in the sense of making peace with it. The recovered man must not excuse disobedience by calling it process. Yet he must also understand that growth may involve many battles. He returns, confesses, resists, seeks help, removes provision, and continues. Patience keeps repentance from collapsing into despair while still refusing to make a home for sin.

Other people also place the soul under time. The neighbour rarely changes at the speed our pride prefers. People misunderstand, disappoint, repeat themselves, mature slowly, and expose our limits. Without patience, love becomes sharp and conditional. A man may call his impatience discernment, but often it is simply frustration that others have not become easier to love.

Love may still need to confront, warn, rebuke, or step back. Patience does not remove boundaries or correction. But the patient man learns that another person's slowness is not always permission for contempt. He remembers how patient God has been with him. He becomes slower to write people off, slower to interpret weakness as malice, and slower to turn irritation into judgment.

Vocation places the same pressure on the soul. Much faithful work is slow work. Seeds are planted long before harvest. Duties are repeated long before their meaning is visible. A man may labour honestly and still see little immediate fruit. He may serve people who do not thank him, build things that take years, correct problems that return, and carry responsibilities that no one notices. Patience allows work to remain faithful when applause and quick results are absent.

The body, too, moves through time in ways man cannot fully control. It tires, ages, weakens, heals slowly, and sometimes does not heal in this life. A man may resent the body because it refuses to keep pace with his ambitions. He may treat ageing as an insult, illness as humiliation, and dependence as defeat. The

patient man learns to inhabit the body truthfully, not because weakness is good in itself, but because even weakness can be lived before God.

Here patience becomes very concrete. It is found in the man who keeps praying when prayer feels dry. It is found in the woman who cares for a failing body without surrendering to bitterness. It is found in the parent who repeats the same instruction with love. It is found in the believer who resists an old temptation for the thousandth time. It is found in the worker who does what is right when no result is visible. It is found in the injured person who forgives by obedience before the emotions have fully settled.

The patient man also learns to wait for vindication. Fallen man wants to be seen, understood, defended, and proven right. When he is falsely judged or overlooked, he wants immediate correction. There are times when truth should be spoken and justice should be pursued. But there are also times when the soul must entrust its name to God. Not every misunderstanding can be answered without the soul becoming enslaved to self-defence.

This is one of the hardest recoveries because reputation sits close to identity. A man who still needs others to secure his self will find patience almost impossible under accusation. But recovered identity gives him another place to stand. He can seek truth without needing to control every verdict. He can endure being unseen because he is seen by God.

Desire also speaks in the language of urgency. It says that fulfilment must come now, that denial is unbearable, that waiting will destroy joy. But many desires become clearer when they are made to wait. Some are purified. Some are exposed as false. Some are shown to be weaker than they sounded. Time becomes a test by which the soul learns whether desire is leading toward God or away from Him.

This is especially important where the body and affections meet. Appetite, comfort, sexuality, anger, and fear often press for immediate obedience. The patient man learns that not every demand of the body or heart must be answered at once. He can endure hunger without being ruled by it, tiredness without cruelty, attraction without consent, anger without vengeance, and fear without surrender.

Patience gathers the earlier recoveries by placing them under time. The renewed mind must keep seeing when answers are delayed. The reordered will must keep yielding when obedience stretches on. The cleansed affections must keep loving when love is costly. The honoured body must keep serving while weak. The restored neighbour must keep being loved through slowness and difficulty. Redeemed vocation must continue when results are hidden.

Yet patience is more than endurance of delay. It is also the recovery of trust. The patient man does not know every reason for the wait. He does not see every hidden work of providence. He does not pretend that delay is painless. But he is learning that time belongs to God. The same Lord who commands obedience also governs the seasons in which obedience must be lived.

This gives patience its dignity. It is the soul refusing to be ruled by immediacy. It is man learning again that he is a creature, not the lord of the clock. It is the quiet strength to remain faithful when nothing appears to move. It is the ability to suffer without letting suffering become sovereign, to wait without letting waiting become despair, and to act without being driven by panic.

The patient man may still groan. He may still ask, seek, knock, weep, and long for relief. Scripture does not require him to pretend that waiting is easy. But he brings his longing before God rather than turning longing into accusation. He brings his frustration before God rather than letting frustration become cruelty.

He brings his unanswered questions before God rather than allowing them to harden into unbelief.

Patience opens naturally into hope. A man cannot hope without waiting.

Christian hope lives between promise and fulfilment, between what has begun and what has not yet appeared. The impatient soul demands possession now.

The hopeful soul can live faithfully in the interval because it knows that the interval is not empty. God is present in the waiting, and God will not lose what He has promised.

The recovery of man therefore requires the recovery of time. Man must be delivered from the tyranny of the immediate, from the rage of delay, from the demand that God explain Himself according to human urgency. He must learn to live in seasons, to accept process, to continue in obedience, and to possess his soul while the work remains unfinished.

In Christ, patience is not empty waiting. It is faithful endurance beneath the eye of the Father. The patient man continues, returns, forgives, labours, suffers, hopes, and waits. He is not yet complete, but he is no longer mastered by immediacy. His soul is learning to live under God's time.

The Hope of Complete Recovery

The recovered man must learn to live unfinished. This is one of the hardest parts of the Christian life because grace has truly begun its work, yet the work is not complete. A man may be genuinely reconciled to God and still find confusion in his mind, resistance in his will, disorder in his affections, weakness in his body, selfishness in his relationships, vanity in his work, and impatience in his suffering. He is no longer what he was, but he is not yet what he shall be.

This unfinishedness can trouble the soul deeply. Some respond by pretending. They speak as though struggle has vanished, as though maturity were already complete, as though the Christian life had lifted them beyond ordinary weakness. Others respond by despairing. They see the remaining disorder and conclude that grace must not be real. Both responses are false. Pretence denies what remains wounded. Despair denies what Christ has begun.

Christian hope teaches another way. It allows the believer to live truthfully inside incompleteness. He does not need to exaggerate his progress in order to honour grace. He does not need to deny his progress in order to remain humble. He can confess that real recovery has begun while also confessing that much remains to be healed. Hope gives him the courage to say both.

John writes:

1 John 3:1–3

1 Behold, what manner of love the Father hath bestowed upon us, that we should be called the sons of God; therefore the world knoweth us not, because it knew him not. Beloved, now are we the sons of God, and it doth not yet appear what we shall be; but we know that, when he shall appear, we shall be like him; for we shall see him as he is. And every man that hath this hope in him purifieth himself, even as he is pure.

These words hold the whole tension together. “Now are we the sons of God.” The identity is already given. The believer is not waiting to discover whether God will receive him if he performs well enough. Sonship has been bestowed by the love of the Father. Yet John also says, “it doth not yet appear what we shall be.” Something real has been given, and something greater remains to be revealed.

This is the Christian condition. The believer lives between gift and fullness. He has been named, but not yet glorified. He has been reconciled, but not yet made wholly free from struggle. He has been given the Spirit, but still groans. This tension is not evidence that the gospel has failed. It is the present shape of redemption in a fallen world.

The end of recovery is likeness to Christ: “we shall be like him; for we shall see him as he is.” This does not mean the creature becomes divine, nor that personal creaturely life is erased. It means that redeemed humanity will finally be conformed to the Son. The mind will no longer misread God. The will will no longer resist obedience. The affections will no longer love falsely. The body will no longer groan under corruption. The whole person will be made whole in the presence of Christ.

Unfinished people are easily tempted to false measures. They may measure themselves by yesterday’s failure, by another person’s maturity, by a season of dryness, by a recurring temptation, by bodily weakness, or by the visible slowness of change. Christian hope teaches them to measure the life of faith by the faithfulness of Christ. The work is not finished, but it is not abandoned.

The unfinished man must therefore learn to be honest without becoming hopeless. He may still need to confess the same sin more often than he wishes. He may still feel old fears moving within him. He may still discover pride after years of doctrine, impatience after years of service, coldness after many prayers,

and weakness where he expected strength. These discoveries are painful, but they need not destroy him. They show where grace is still going.

This is important for the conscience. Some believers are tempted to measure the reality of grace by the absence of struggle. They imagine that if Christ were truly restoring them, they would no longer feel temptation, weakness, dryness, or inward conflict. When those things remain, they question whether they belong to God at all. But Scripture allows us to speak of real sonship and unfinished transformation in the same breath.

Hope gives the conscience room to breathe. The believer can say, “This sin is real, and so is the mercy of God.” He can say, “This weakness remains, and Christ has not abandoned me.” He can say, “I am not yet whole, and I am not outside grace.” This is not excuse-making. It is truthful living before God.

The same hope also protects against complacency. John says, “every man that hath this hope in him purifieth himself, even as he is pure.” The promise of final likeness does not make present holiness unnecessary. It makes present holiness meaningful. The man who truly hopes to see Christ does not make peace with what Christ came to destroy. Future restoration reaches backward into the present and calls the life into purity.

Hope is not the same as optimism. Optimism expects improvement because it wants life to turn out well. Christian hope rests upon the promise of God. It may continue when circumstances do not improve, when the body weakens, when the church disappoints, when prayers seem unanswered, and when the soul remains aware of its poverty. Its strength does not depend upon visible progress being constant. It depends upon the faithfulness of the One who has promised completion.

Paul gives this assurance:

Romans 8:28–30

And we know that all things work together for good to them that love God, to them who are the called according to his purpose.

For him whom he did foreknow, he also did predestinate to be conformed to his own image, that he might be the firstborn among many brethren. Moreover, him whom he did predestinate, him he also called; and him whom he called, him he also sanctified; and him whom he sanctified, him he also glorified.

Here again the end is conformity to the Son. God's purpose is not merely that man should be relieved, improved, or morally adjusted. His purpose is that the redeemed should be conformed to the image of His Son. The recovery of man reaches from calling to justification to glory. It begins in mercy and ends in likeness.

The word "glorified" stands at the far horizon of the Christian life. It tells us that recovery will not always remain partial. The believer will not always live with divided affections, resistant obedience, bodily decay, and imperfect love. What is begun in grace will be completed in glory. The soul put back in order will finally be whole.

This future changes how the Christian lives with present incompleteness. He no longer needs to hide unfinished places as though they were proof against grace. He can bring them into prayer, confession, fellowship, and obedience. He can ask for help without losing his identity. He can receive correction without believing the whole work has failed. He can admit weakness because his confidence is not built on the appearance of completeness.

That is a very practical mercy. A man can sit with his Bible and admit that his mind is distracted. He can kneel in prayer and admit that his heart feels cold. He can apologise again for a failure he thought he had outgrown. He can seek help

for an old bondage without pretending that maturity should have made help unnecessary. He can stand beside the grave and grieve without thinking grief is unbelief. Hope gives him permission to be truthful.

It also gives him courage to continue. The unfinished Christian may be weary of slow growth. He may wonder whether the long obedience is worth it. He may feel the humiliation of repeated repentance. He may see little fruit from faithful labour. But no faithful movement toward Christ is wasted. God is not measuring the work by the impatience of the creature.

This way of seeing also changes how the Christian regards the church. The people of God are unfinished people. This does not excuse sin, falsehood, cruelty, or negligence. But it does explain why the church can be both a place of real grace and real difficulty. The same Christ who is patient with me is restoring others who are also incomplete. Hope makes correction possible without contempt, and patience possible without denial.

The world must be seen with the same clarity. Fallen society cannot complete the recovery of man by politics, education, technology, therapy, economics, or cultural progress. These may do limited good in their proper place, but they cannot raise the dead or conform man to Christ. Final recovery belongs to God. This keeps the Christian from both worldly utopianism and bitter withdrawal.

Death is faced differently as well. Death remains an enemy. Christianity does not ask man to pretend otherwise. Death tears, wounds, separates, and humbles. But in Christ, death is not the final interpretation of man. The body that returns to dust is not forgotten by God. The resurrection of Christ is the pledge that redeemed humanity will not end in decay.

The recovery of man would be incomplete if it ended only in better conduct before death. If Christ only made man more truthful, obedient, loving, patient, and useful until the grave swallowed him, restoration would remain unfinished.

The gospel promises more. It promises the redemption of the body, likeness to Christ, and the final removal of all that now divides, corrupts, and wounds.

Christian hope is therefore bodily, personal, moral, and relational. It is bodily because the body awaits redemption. It is personal because the redeemed person will not be erased. It is moral because sin will be no more. It is relational because the people of God will be gathered in perfected communion before the Lord. Nothing essential to human recovery is left outside the promise.

This hope should make the recovered man steady. He does not need to demand heaven from the present world. He can receive present gifts gratefully without asking them to bear eternal weight. He can endure present losses honestly without believing they are ultimate. He can labour for good without imagining that his labour must complete the kingdom by human strength. He can wait because the end is held by God.

It should also make him pure. John's connection remains searching: the man who has this hope purifies himself. He does not want to become comfortable with what will have no place in the presence of Christ. He does not want to carry cherished darkness toward the light. The hope of seeing Him awakens a desire to be made ready.

This desire remains grounded in grace. A man does not purify himself in order to earn sonship. John has already said, "now are we the sons of God."

Purification grows from belonging. The son desires the family likeness because he has been received into the Father's love. Holiness is not a desperate attempt to become accepted. It is the fitting movement of a life already claimed by God.

Complete recovery also protects the Christian from making an idol of present progress. Growth is good, but growth is not the Saviour. Spiritual maturity is desirable, but even maturity remains dependent. The recovered man must not

turn his own recovery into a new form of self-regard. He is not called to stare endlessly at his improvement. He is called to look to Christ.

Here is one of the great freedoms of Christian hope. The believer can pursue holiness without becoming obsessed with his own spiritual image. He can examine himself without living inside himself. He can confess failure without being swallowed by failure. He can give thanks for progress without worshipping progress. His eyes are lifted beyond his own condition to the One who will make all things whole.

The recovered man therefore lives as one whose future has already begun to govern his present. He is a son now, though glory has not yet appeared. He is being restored now, though much remains incomplete. He is called to purity now, because one day he shall see Christ as He is. His hope is not vague optimism. It is anchored in the promise of God.

This brings the book to its final threshold. Each recovery we have considered is real, yet none is complete in itself. The mind, will, affections, body, neighbour, vocation, and patience all point beyond their present healing to the day when the whole man will be made whole. Christ has come. Christ restores. Christ will appear.

The recovery of man is therefore not merely present improvement but promised completion. The work that now feels partial, contested, slow, and often hidden will be revealed in fullness. The unfinished man will not always remain unfinished. When Christ appears, the man put back in order will finally be like Him, for he shall see Him as He is.

A Man Put Back in Order

The recovery of man is the recovery of order. This is not the cold order of machinery, nor the shallow order of outward respectability, but the living order of a creature returned to God. Man was not made to be scattered among competing masters. He was not made to be ruled by appetite, fear, pride, shame, resentment, or the endless labour of self-invention. He was made to live before God, and in Christ that life begins to be restored.

This restoration is honest from the beginning. It does not ask man to pretend that sin was light, that damage was small, or that the wounds of the soul can be dismissed with religious language. Christian recovery begins with truth. Man is created, fallen, guilty, wounded, responsible, and unable to make himself whole. Yet truth does not end with ruin. In Christ, man is reached by mercy, reconciled to God, and drawn into the long work of being restored.

That work touches the whole person. The mind must learn to see under truth. The will must learn to yield under God. The affections must learn to love in proper order. The body must be honoured as belonging to the Lord. The neighbour must be received as a person before God. Work must be redeemed from vanity and brought back into faithful service. Time itself must be lived under God's rule, so that the soul is no longer mastered by immediacy. Hope must hold the unfinished man steady until Christ completes what grace has begun.

This is why recovery cannot be reduced to moral improvement. A well-behaved disorder is still disorder if the soul remains curved inward upon itself. Nor can recovery be reduced to inward comfort. A soothed soul may still be captive if it has not been brought back into obedience, truth, love, and worship. Christ restores man more deeply than this. He does not merely make the old self easier to live with. He begins to put the person back in order.

The recovered man is not a flawless man. If we imagine restoration as perfection in the present life, we will become either dishonest or discouraged. The man being restored still needs forgiveness. He still discovers confusion, resistance, false loves, bodily weakness, relational selfishness, vanity in work, and impatience under delay. But these things no longer possess the same authority over him. They are not his peace. They are not his home. They are the remains of a disorder from which Christ is delivering him.

This means the direction of the life matters. The recovered man is no longer content to be explained by his fallenness. He does not make an identity out of his sin, his pain, his desires, his achievements, his wounds, or the verdicts of others. He receives his life from God in Christ. He learns to stand as creature, son, servant, brother, and witness. His selfhood is no longer an anxious construction. It is a gift being brought into truth.

Such a man begins to move through ordinary life differently. He can say, "I was wrong," without being destroyed. He can say, "I do not know," without pretending omniscience. He can ask for help without losing dignity. He can receive correction without treating it as annihilation. He can serve in hidden places without needing applause. He can rest because the world is not upheld by his labour. He can wait because time belongs to God.

This is where the recovery of man becomes visible. It appears in the thought that refuses falsehood, the will that yields when obedience costs, the affection that learns to love what is holy, the body offered in service, the word spoken with truth and charity, the mercy shown to the wounded, the duty fulfilled when no one sees, the temptation resisted for the thousandth time, the apology made without excuse, the grief carried without despair, and the prayer continued in dryness.

None of these things is spectacular in the eyes of the world. Much of restoration is quiet. It happens in the hidden places where the soul is trained by grace: in repeated repentance, ordinary obedience, restrained speech, patient service, bodily weakness, disappointed hopes, delayed answers, difficult neighbours, and faithful work. Yet these hidden places matter because they are the places where man is actually being returned to God.

The world often looks for recovered humanity in strength, self-expression, influence, success, emotional certainty, or visible transformation. Scripture teaches us to look first to Christ. He is the true Man. In Him, humanity is not scattered but whole. His mind is filled with truth. His will is yielded to the Father. His affections are pure. His body is offered in obedience. His neighbour is loved. His work is faithful. His suffering is patient. His hope is sure. Every fragment of human recovery is first gathered in Him.

The man restored in Christ is therefore not asked to invent a new humanity. He is being brought into the humanity already revealed in the Son. This saves him from both pride and despair. Pride is silenced because he is not the author of his own restoration. Despair is answered because the work does not rest upon his strength. The same Lord who begins the recovery is the Lord who will complete it.

That completion is not yet visible in fullness. The Christian remains unfinished. His mind does not yet see without distortion. His will does not yet obey without resistance. His affections do not yet love without mixture. His body still groans. His relationships still require mercy. His work still meets thorns. His patience is still tested by time. Yet this unfinishedness is not failure. It is the present condition of a redeemed creature being carried toward glory.

The hope of complete recovery keeps the soul steady. The Christian does not need to demand heaven from the present world, nor pretend that the present

struggle is the final word. He can give thanks for the work already begun and still long for the day when the work will be complete. He can be honest about what remains wounded because he is confident in the One who heals. He can pursue holiness without making progress his saviour. He can wait because the end is held by Christ.

Until that day, the recovered man walks as one being put back in order. He thinks, but he thinks under truth. He chooses, but he chooses before God. He loves, but he learns to love according to holiness. He lives in the body, but the body belongs to Christ. He stands among neighbours, but he stands there as one who has received mercy. He works, but he serves the Lord. He suffers, but he suffers with hope. He waits, but he waits beneath the eye of the Father.

This is restored humanity in its present form: unfinished, dependent, repentant, and truly changed. The recovery may be slow. It may pass through grief, discipline, correction, and long patience. Much of it may remain hidden from the world. But where Christ is restoring man, the old disorder has lost its final claim. A new order has begun.

The soul put back in order is not the soul made proud of itself. It is the soul returned to God. It is man learning again how to be man: created by the Father, redeemed by the Son, renewed by the Spirit, and carried toward the day when grace will be complete.

The recovery of man begins with Christ, continues in Christ, and will be completed in Christ. He is the true Man, the restoring Lord, and the final hope of all redeemed humanity. In Him, man is not merely forgiven. He is made whole.