

# The Two Principles

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**T**HERE are two principles in the world by which human conduct is sought to be controlled,—love, and force.

Love is the principle by which God works. The Bible tells us that “God is love,” and consequently, “love is of God.” Love is the highest principle of conduct that can exist.

Force is a lower and altogether different principle. Force is employed by the enemies of God in seeking to make people act contrary to God’s will.

Love acts upon the individual from within; force is applied to him from without. Love leads; force drives.

Everything that God does is prompted by love. He cannot act from any other motive, for he “is love.” And God wants all his creatures to act from the same motive, and so to be like Him.

## **John 3**

<sup>16</sup> God so loved the world, that He gave His only-begotten Son, that whosoever believes on Him might not perish, but have everlasting life.

And Christ so loved the race that had fallen through Adam’s sin, that he willingly left all that he had in heaven, to live a life of humility and suffering here, and finally to die upon the cross for man’s redemption.

As love moved God and his Son to do such wonderful deeds in serving us, so the Lord wants love to move us in doing high and noble deeds to serve Him.

God wants people to love Him, and to love all that is pure and right and just. In this way, by planting this love in our

hearts, He seeks to control our actions so that our lives will be upright. This way of controlling people does not in the least interfere with their personal freedom.

But force, on the other hand, does interfere with personal freedom. It would not be effective if it did not. Force takes no account of the will or belief or the love of the person on whom it is brought to bear. It secures certain results touching the outward conduct of people, and this is all that it can do.

Force is necessary in this world; but for what and for whom is it necessary? It cannot make any person do right, nor is it necessary for good people.

Love makes a person do right; and it is love in the heart that makes a person good. We know from the Bible that this must be so; and we can know it also from our own experience and the experience of others.

The Bible says:

**1 John 5**

<sup>3</sup> This is the love of God, that we keep His commandments.

And also:

**Romans 13**

<sup>10</sup> Love is the fulfilling of the law.

The one who keeps the commandments of God—who fulfills the law—does right. He is a good person. And also, since “God is love,” he who has love ruling in his heart has God there, and therefore has the goodness of God.

Force is necessary to restrain evil-doers. A good person does not do the things that an evil-doer needs to be restrained from doing. He chooses to do right, not because there is a law against wrong doing, but because he loves what is right.

Is a good person then without any law? No, indeed; he has the perfect law of God written in his heart. This is what gives

him a love for the right. The law of man cannot be written in the heart and cannot give any person a love for the right. So the law of God is very much more effective to prevent wrong doing any an individual, if he will only receive it, than the law of man possibly can be.

A person may keep the laws which are made by Congress and the legislatures, and yet not be a good person.

For instance, he may not do any work on Sunday, because he is afraid that if he does he will be arrested and sent to jail, or punished with a fine. Or he may consider that it is good policy not to work on Sunday, in order to stand well with the people in the community. Is such a person any better for not working on Sunday? Certainly not.

And it would be the same if it were the seventh day—the Bible Sabbath—instead of Sunday. If he does not keep the Sabbath because he loves it,—because the love of God is in his heart,—it is of no benefit to him to go through the form of keeping it. He is not a good man, in the true sense of the word, and to refrain from work does not make him any better.

Even the one who truly keeps the Sabbath does not become good by doing it, but he keeps it because he has become good already, by opening his heart to the love of God.

Force cannot make any person do right, however fully he may yield to it; because it cannot touch the heart, which is the fountainhead of all our actions. If the fountain head is not sweet, the stream will not be sweet.

It may be walled in or dammed up or restrained in any other way; but its condition of purity or impurity will not be changed by any such means.

Force is to preserve rights. In doing this, its use is in harmony with the ordinance of God. But all along through the history of the world, from the time of Abel down to the end of

the nineteenth century, some men have been using force to try to make them do right: or, rather, to make them do what these men thought was right. They have been using force to try to make people better, and so to secure their salvation instead of their destruction by the final judgments of God against sin. It is this that has caused the religious persecutions that have stained with blood so many of the pages of history.

In securing the preservation of rights, force is entirely proper; but in securing moral or right action it has no proper place; but the arch-enemy of God and man uses force—not to make men moral, for he hates morality; but to make them conform to some standard of morality which he himself has set up in opposition to God, and palmed off upon the world. And all who employ or advocate force to make people do right are really working in harmony with him.

Even if force were used to make people conform to the true standard of morality,—the law of God,—it would be contrary to God, for it is not God's way. And the person upon whom it was used, instead of becoming better, would learn to hate instead of to love that law,—because he would see in it only an instrument of slavery to himself.