

Notes, Questions & Prayer Requests

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INTERNATIONAL SABBATH SCHOOL QUARTERLY

LESSON 1

ON
RELIGIOUS LIBERTY

FOR
SENIOR CLASSES

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The Author of Liberty

INTRODUCTION

No attempt has been made in this series of lessons to treat the subject exhaustively. This would be an impossibility in so small a compass. The subject of religious liberty is a great subject, we might say, an almost inexhaustible one. Neither has any attempt been made to make an application of even all the principles brought out to the present-day movements, and bring matters, so to speak, "up to date."

The idea has been rather to set forth clearly the principles themselves from a Bible standpoint, thus giving the student a good foundation upon which to build. The application of a principle is not difficult after the principle itself is once thoroughly understood.

The student will find it highly profitable and greatly to his advantage during the study of these lessons to read the work by Elder A. T. Jones entitled "The Rights of the People; or Civil Government and Religion." This is "Civil Government and Religion" revised and much enlarged.

NOTE — Let the texts in bold-faced type be committed to memory, and as many more as time will permit.

1. What was Christ's mission to this world? Luke 4:18; Isaiah 61:1
2. What will make men free? **John 8:31, 32.**
3. In what condition, therefore, are those who know not the truth ?

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Ans.—In bondage; the servants, or slaves of sin. Verses 33, 34;
2 Peter 2:19

4. How many of the human family, in their natural condition, are slaves of sin? Romans 3:23.
5. Since Satan is the author of sin (John 8:44), whom do men serve while practicing sin? Romans 6:16; 1 John 3 :8.
6. What was the salvation Christ brought to this world? Matthew 1:21
7. Since sin is of Satan, and Christ came to save men from sin, from whose dominion did He come to free them ?
8. In what does all sin originate? 1 John 2:15-17; Romans 7:7.
(See note 1)
9. What is covetousness, or selfishness ?
Ans.—The love of self to the disregard of the rights of others.
10. Since selfishness is the root of all sin, and Christ came to save men from sin, what really was His mission ?
Ans.—To save in2a from the inordinate love of self, and enable them to recognize and respect the rights of others.
11. What are the rights of others ?
Ans.—The same as our own. **(See note 2)**
12. By what scriptures is this clearly shown? **Leviticus 19:18; Matthew 7:12**
13. How does God estimate a man's religion ? **James 1:27; 1 John 4:20; Matthew 25:40 (See note 3.)**
14. What, then, must men have taken from their hearts before they will recognize the equal rights of their fellow-men?
Ans.—Selfishness.
15. Who alone can cleanse the heart from selfishness, or sin ?
Acts 4:12; John 1:9.

16. Who alone, then, can give men real freedom? John 8:36.
17. If all men would recognize the equal rights of their fellow-men, would there not be perfect and universal liberty on earth ?
18. Could there be any tyranny or persecution under such circumstances ?
19. Therefore, to whom alone must we look for genuine, universal, and lasting liberty?

NOTES

1. **THE** inordinate love for that which we may think will be of profit and pleasure to us is the cause of all the trouble there is in the world. But this is simply covetousness, and covetousness, therefore, is that which lies at the bottom of every sin. Before any other of the ten commandments can be broken, the tenth must first be transgressed. Covetousness is simply *selfishness, or a desire to gratify and please self, regardless of the rights of others. This was the cause of Satan's fall in heaven (Isa. 14 : 13, 14), and man's on earth (Gen. 3 :4-6). And this is the ruling spirit of the Papacy, or man of sin. 2 Thess. 2 : 3, 4. It is that which rules sinful men everywhere.*
2. **THE** rights of all men are equal. One man has no more inherent or natural rights than another. The framers of the Declaration of Independence enunciated a great truth when they said, "We hold these truths to be self-evident, that all men are created equal, and are endowed by their Creator with certain inalienable rights, among which are life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness." And Christ also set forth this same principle of equality to govern in His church, when He said, "Be not ye called rabbi; for one is your Master, even Christ; and all ye are brethren." Matt. 23 : 8.

3. **IT** is not so much by the number or length of prayers offered, or by the amount of religious ceremonies performed, that God estimates our religion, as by the way we treat our fellow-men. They are His creatures, beings whom He has made in His image. Gen. 1 : 27. We are to see the workmanship of God in each human being, and recognize and treat each individual as God's property. The soul of every other person is as precious in the sight of the Lord as is our own; for the same price has been paid for its redemption as for ours. Therefore, when we mistrust our fellow-men, and look down upon them, we are doing despite to God. It is a principle clearly laid down in the Bible that as we treat others God will treat us. Matt. 6 :14, 15; 7:1, 2.