Integrity & Honor in 1905: Larned's "Gentlemen & Gentlewomen": Self-Mastery & Manners; Van Dyke's "The Meaning of Manhood": Is Man Better than Sheep! Mt 12:12

25. Further, the power of biblical doctrines will enable you to manage your passions and desires while anticipating these future blessings through fantasy and imagination.

26. And finally, the development of good manners provides the cultural and social graces that enable the two sexes to associate with each other with mutual respect.

27. The end result is a generation of individuals who possess an honor code by which they manage and control their passions and desires, a mental attitude that is subservient to an internal governor that produces an individual with personal integrity manifest by a lifestyle of demonstrable honor.

28. The importance of integrity and honor is addressed by Joseph Nelson Larned in his book, *A Primer of Right and Wrong*, published in 1902 by Houghton, Mifflin & Co.:

> **Larned, J. N. "Gentlemen and Gentlewomen—the Ideal of Character and Culture." In *Self Culture for Young People: Morals, Manners, Business and Civics*. Andrew Sloan Draper, editor-in-chief. (Saint Louis: Twentieth Century Self Culture Association, 1905), 5:124-26:**
>
> The ideal character must be that of one who never forgets his natural fellowship with all mankind; who sees himself reflected and feels himself repeated in every human being, to such a degree that he is instructed by all that is good and warned by all that is evil in his kind, and that, in every communication or dealing with another, he thinks of himself as being changed in place with that other, in order to do as he may feel that he ought to be done by. On this outline of a Golden Chart of character, traced by the Golden Rule of Conduct, we will note a little of what is needed for filling it out. (pp. 124-25)
>
> First, and before all, self-mastery—the established dominion of reason and the consciousness of right, over impulses of passion and desire. Plainly, there is nothing that can merit the name of character in a man which does not rest on this. So far as it lacks in him, he remains but an animal, and the measure of his manhood is the measure of his rational and moral self-control. Such control is very easy to hold when won and very hard to recover when lost. Nature, as inexorable as she is generous, makes it so by the strain of habit which she puts upon our lives. She offers our habits to us as the penalties of self-indulgence and self-neglect, or as rewards of self-command; we may take them as we choose. The cultivated character is that for which the wise choice is made, so that it is served through life by habits and trained with conscientious care.
>
> Self-mastery permits no carelessness, and he who attains will be studious to know what is right, as well as willing and anxious to do it. He will follow no beaten paths of conduct which careless custom has worn smooth, but will find the lines of right for himself, by his own thoughtful survey.
>
> Of necessity he will be truthful, for nearly all rectitude is comprehended actually in that. To be true (in one's self and towards all others) is to be in all ways honest, in all ways honorable, in all ways faithful, in all ways sincere, in all ways just. (p. 125)
>
> The subject of manner, or manners, is one to be considered as of great importance, but not too great. For manner may be an expression of character, or it may be a disguise. It may be the well-cultivated manifestation of kindly and genial feelings, outflowing in the speech, the gesture, the bearing and demeanor that will represent them most pleasingly, in the most finely expressive way. These are the good manners that we can cultivate as a growth upon the substance of a good character, to be from it and of it, perfecting it, and giving us the ideal we seek. (p. 126-26)
>
> But there are manners of another make, fashioned by art like a costume, that can be worn outwardly upon a character which inwardly they do not fit. They are made up of phrases and attitudes and looks, the product of conventions and rules. Within limits, the art of polite demeanor which such manners represent has a value that we must not despise; but the tendency in most circles to esteem them beyond their worth is very strong. They seem to be all that is needed to realize the ideal of culture in many minds.

For our nobler ideal we demand all the graces of manner that art can perfect, and all the fine observances that reason and good taste can approve, but only for the beautiful finish of a character that would be noble and impressive, even if it had them not.

Those who realize our ideal in some sufficient degree we will class as gentlemen and gentlewomen, and to give them the highest rank, with the highest title, that exists in any society, or that can exist. (p. 126)

29. The biblical rationale for integrity and honor, character and culture is found in the premise that man is more than mere clay but rather a creature fashioned by God with the intent of enabling him to share His eternal perfection. This rationale is stated in an article that appears in the book edited by William H. Sallmon, *The Culture of Christian Manhood*, and published early in the twentieth century by the F. H. Revell & Co.:

Van Dyke, Henry. "The Meaning of Manhood." In *Self Culture for Young People*. Andrew Sloan Draper, editor-in-chief, 5:172-73; 175-81:

"How much, then, is man better than a sheep!"—Matt. 12:12

On the lips of Christ these noble words were an exclamation. He knew, as no one else has ever know, "what was in man." But to us who repeat them they often seem like a question. How much, after all, is a man better than a sheep? (p. 172)

It is evident that the answer to this question must depend upon our general view of life. Suppose that we take a materialistic view of life. Looking at the world from this standpoint, we shall see it a great mass of matter, curiously regulated by laws which have results but no purposes, and agitated into various modes of motion by a secret force whose origin is, and forever must be, unknown. Life, in man as in other animals, is but one form of force. Rising through many subtle gradations, from the first tremor that passes through the gastric nerve of a jellyfish to the most delicate vibration of gray matter in the brain, it is really the same from the beginning to the end—physical in its birth among the kindred forces of heat and electricity, physical in its death in cold ashes and dust. The only difference between man and the other animals is a difference of degree. The ape takes its place in our ancestral tree, and the sheep becomes our distant cousin.

If, then, we accept this view of life, what answer can we give to the question. How much is a man better than a sheep? We must say: He is a little better, but not much. (p. 173)

Undoubtedly it is true that Christ came to reveal God to man. But undoubtedly it is just as true that He came to reveal man to himself. He called Himself the Son of God, but He called Himself also the Son of man. His nature was truly Divine, but His nature was no less truly human. He died for man. And what is the meaning of that sacrifice, if it is not to teach us that God counts no price too great to pay for the redemption of the human soul? This gospel of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ contains the highest, grandest, most ennobling doctrine of humanity that ever has been proclaimed on earth. It is the only doctrine from which we can learn to think of ourselves and our-fellow-men as we ought to think. I ask you to consider for a little while the teachings of Jesus Christ in regard to what it means to be a man.

Suppose, then, that we come to Him with this question: How much is a man better than a sheep? He will tell us that a man is infinitely better, because he is a child of God, because he is capable of fellowship with God, and because he is made for an immortal life.

Think, first of all, of the meaning of manhood in the light of the truth that man is the offspring and likeness of God. This was not a new doctrine first proclaimed by Christ. It was clearly taught in the magnificent imagery of the Book of Genesis. The chief design of that great picture of the beginnings is to show that a personal Creator is the source and author of all things that are made. But next to that, and of equal importance, is the design to show that man is incalculably superior to all the other works of God–that the distance between him and the lower animals is not a difference in degree, but a difference in kind. Yes, the difference is so great that we must use a new word to describe the origin of humanity, and if we speak of the stars and the earth, the trees and the flowers, the fishes, the birds, and the beasts, as "the works" of God, when man appears we must find a nobler name and say, "This is more than God's work; he is God's child." (p. 175)

Our human consciousness confirms this testimony and answers to it. We know that there is something in us which raises us infinitely above the things that we see and hear and touch, and the creatures that appear to spend their brief life in the automatic workings of sense and instinct. These powers of reason and affection and conscience, and above all this wonderful power of free will, the faculty of swift, sovereign, voluntary choice, belonging to a higher being.

Christ spoke to man, not as a product of nature, but as the child of God. He took it for granted that we are different from plants and animals, and that we are conscious of the difference. "Consider the lilies," Jesus says to us; "the lilies cannot consider themselves; they know not what they are, not what their life means; but you know and you can draw the lesson of their lower beauty into your higher life. Regard the birds of the air; they are dumb and unconscious dependents upon the divine bounty, but you are conscious objects of divine care. Are you not of more value than many sparrows? He is always appealing to reason, to conscience, to the power of choice between good and evil, to the noble and godlike faculties in man. (p. 176)