



Seven Deadly Sins and the Blind Mind

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“Because thou sayest, I am rich, and increased with goods, and have need of nothing; and knowest not that thou art wretched, and miserable, and poor, and blind, and naked:” Revelation 3:17

“The Laodicean message must be proclaimed with power; for now it is especially applicable. Now, more than ever before, are seen pride, worldly ambition, self-exaltation, double-dealing, hypocrisy, and deception. Many are speaking great swelling words of vanity, saying, “I am rich, and increased with goods, and have need of nothing.” Yet they are miserable, and poor, and blind, and naked” (*RH Sept. 25, 1900*). *S.D.A. Bible Commentary Vol. 7 PG. 962*

“What greater deception can come upon human minds than a confidence that they are right when they are all wrong! The message of the True Witness finds the people of God in a sad deception, **yet honest in that deception. They know not that their condition is deplorable in the sight of God.** While those addressed are flattering themselves that they are in an exalted spiritual condition, the message of the True Witness breaks their security by the startling denunciation of their true condition of spiritual blindness, poverty, and wretchedness. The testimony, so cutting and severe, cannot be a mistake, for it is the True Witness who speaks, and His testimony must be correct.

“It is difficult for those who feel secure in their attainments, and who believe themselves to be rich in spiritual knowledge, to receive the message which declares that they are deceived and in need of **every spiritual grace. The unsanctified heart is “deceitful above all things, and desperately wicked.”** I was shown that many are flattering themselves that they are good Christians, who have not a ray of light from Jesus. They have not a living experience for themselves in the divine life. They need a deep and thorough work of self-abasement before God before they will feel their true need of earnest, persevering effort to secure the precious graces of the Spirit.” *3 Testimonies pg. 252, 253.*

Surely the condition described in the quotes above has to be the most pitiful and horrible to ever happen to a human being. Of late in my meditation I have been reviewing the past of my Christian experience and have been seeing that through so many years that I was a Advent church member, and even during times when I ‘felt’ I was close to the Lord, especially in times when I felt I was ‘really spiritual’, I was under fatal deception. If I would have died during those times there is no way I could have been saved. Like the Pharisees, I would have ‘no way entered the Kingdom of God’.

I began to ask the Lord—how could I have read my Bible, SS Lessons, (even taught them), read the Spirit of Prophecy, sang the grand old hymns, had very ‘holy’ feelings, and yet not been converted? What prevented me from seeing that self had never died but was active and mixed with everything that I did? How could I have thought myself fit to ‘work for God’ when my heart contained only brambles and thorns—no ‘fruit of the Spirit’? Thinking to be representing Jesus, I was an effective tool in the hands and under the control of Satan! Selfishness motivated every act. “...whosoever sinneth hath not seen him, neither known him.” 1. John 3:6

Through much meditation and prayer, aspects of these questions have begun to come through to me and I wish to share them with those who may be bound in the same deadly darkness.

I realize that the 'religious activities' of my past life were no different than 'saying the rosary'; I mean that it was 'Holy Works' to read the SS Lesson each day, so one could put up their hand when the teacher asked; "Who studied?" Reading the SOP, especially the Testimonies, allowed me to see how terrible all the rest of the congregation was—(So and so ought to read this!) I sang hymns and loved it because I loved to sing (I could sing popular songs with the same enthusiasm.) I read the Bible as a way of obtaining merit. There was no power in it to change me, because Jesus and the Holy Spirit were on the outside, trying to get through to me, trying to enter a heart that was like a desolate wilderness but had never been surrendered. God NEVER forces His way in, but the Devil sure does! Without the light of the Spirit, no human can really 'see' the things of God in the scriptures.

This 'works for merit' way of the unconverted life is really all the unconverted heart can come up with. Sadly it is unable to see that its works are only 'whiting on a sepulcher'. The attending church, studying lessons and 'morning watch', ritual prayers, and even giving are all actually done as works of merit that help the unconverted heart to feel secure in its lost condition. After all—I am a true Christian—I do all these things. Now if this unconverted one were confronted by this, he would hotly deny it—they are 'honest in their deception'.

Remember that until the Laodecian has repented and surrendered all—throwing open the door to Jesus and the work of the Holy Spirit is going on in his heart, he can experience nothing BUT hypocrisy.

"Brethren, we need to be melted over. We need to be re-soldered... When we are re-soldered we are in touch with the Holy Spirit. If we cannot be re-soldered we might just as well stop where we are. We must reach a higher standard spiritually." *Other Manuscripts Volume Seventeen pg: 55,56*

Without that 're-soldering', which consists of the Holy Spirit taking our minds apart piece by piece and re-assembling them after the heavenly mold, we can have only a veneer of religion over us. Inside, self remains untouched, malignant and virulent. Often we experience a deep religious interest and are moved spiritually. We take this as evidence that we are true Christians and 'in need of nothing' when it is just the Holy Spirit trying to woo us to surrender to Jesus. We think we have Jesus when He is still outside pleading to come in.

One of the best examples of the 'works for merit' mentality, is found in the type of 'Sabbath Keeping' displayed in these Laodecian lives. There is a rush and bustle as the Sabbath is coming on and then at the last minute the TV is turned off—many times with grumbling on the part of some of the family. "Kids, put your toys away—it's Sabbath!"

Through the week people get up early to get to work at 7, or 8 Am. but somehow it's so hard to get off to Sabbath School at 9:30. A big row in the SS class shows that the members are 'participating', then there's Church and a big meal afterwards with a good helping of the tasty faults of pastor and members. "My, I'm sleepy—I'm going for a nap—wake me at sundown." Then the big countdown—10-9-8-7-6... Happy New Year? No—End of the Sabbath! Turn on the TV! Rush out to MacDonald's—We've been buckled down to so much 'religion' all day and now we need some excitement! What movies are playing at the cinema (or the Academy)? You can tell a true Sabbath keeper from a 'works merit' one by when he is honestly the happiest—Friday sundown, or Saturday sundown. Friends—who are we fooling?? Only our poor lost selves—we can't fool God.

I want to invite you to take a look with me inside the workings of the 'Blind Mind'—what do we find there when we put on eyesalve and see with the eyes of the Spirit. (Remember—that unless the Holy Spirit shows you—you will never see what YOU REALLY are! Plead with Him to show you before it is too late!) Inside we find:

THE SEVEN DEADLY SINS

Why are these sins so deadly? Any one of them in the heart will effectively quench the guidance of the Holy Spirit thus putting out our eyes, leaving us blind; and as long as it is cherished it will counteract all the efforts of God for the salvation of our souls. It also never abides singly but spreads and gives birth to all the others.

1. PRIDE

"I saw that God hates pride, and that all the proud, and all that do wickedly, shall be stubble, and the day that cometh shall burn them up. I saw that the third angel's message must yet work like leaven upon many hearts that profess to believe it, and purge away their pride, selfishness, covetousness, and love of the world." T#2 (original) pg: 19

This is such a sneaky and all pervasive element—usually others can see it in us and we can see it in others but never, without the eyesalve, will we see or admit it in ourselves. It is the basic element of human nature—no unconverted one is so low that he doesn't have a helping of this in his heart. This is what caused Lucifer, the greatest of the angelic host—to corrupt himself and fall into rebellion. This is what 'forbade him' from truly repenting and returning to God's service when he still had a chance.

This is what 'forbids' us from saying "Forgive me—I've been rotten to you!" or "You know, I am wrong about that—you had it right all along." It is a tyrant that prevents us from showing true love and compassion and really coming close to others; holding us in icy aloofness from genuine unselfish agape love to family and brethren.

It makes us always give an excuse even when we do apologize, and let's us always feel it was the other person's fault. We smother genuine expressions of kindness and compassion rather than stoop from our little ego platform of pride.

It gets in the way of repentance and surrender to God—as we have to admit we are wrong before we can be forgiven, we have to admit we are sinners before we can have a Savior. We have to see that not only are we no good at all without Christ, but that nothing we've ever done is good and nothing we can ever do will make us one speck better—except fall on our faces and give it all to Jesus. "There is none good, but God!"

The terrible theory that 'man is basically good' and our misdeeds (They won't say the 'S' word) are only because we are victims in some way, will cause the loss of countless souls. It is the devil's best lie and has been proven wrong over and over again as 'underprivileged' people are put into nice environments and promptly destroy them. The Bible exposes this lie—"Let favour be showed to the wicked, [yet] will he not learn righteousness: in the land of uprightness will he deal unjustly, and will not behold the majesty of the LORD." Isaiah 26:10 Also Christ perfected a sinless character in a bad environment—forever silencing the 'It's not my fault' adherents.

The "I'm just as good as the next guy (And better than most)" concept is rampant in groups and organizations—it too, is denounced in the Bible; "...but they measuring themselves by themselves, and comparing themselves among themselves, are not wise." 2. Corinthians 10:12

Oh, Brothers and sisters, plead with the Father to show you the Son by the Holy Spirit—once the soul catches a view of the unsurpassed loveliness of Christ and the marvelous character of God, then pride is shattered and self falls as dead before the sight.

2. JEALOUSY AND ENVY

The child of pride, the 'Image of Jealousy' is what has undermined God's professed people from ancient times beginning with Cain, who was jealous of his brother and slew him. Take a look at this bit of insight; "Warnings have been given me that the publishing house upon the Pacific coast should not, in thought, word, or deed, depreciate the office at Battle Creek, neither should the publishing house at Battle Creek look with envy and jealousy upon the instrumentalities the Lord has established upon the Pacific Coast...**But the image of jealousy was long ago set up, and has provoked to jealousy, which has grieved the Spirit of God.**" PH150 pg. 21

We see here that envy and jealousy is what has eaten out the foundation of God's organization—just as it has all through history.

Satan after his heart was lifted up in pride—began to look around at others with contempt, and his burning eyes of jealousy rested upon Michael—the Son of God who stood near Lucifer in the heavenly throne room. The Son was taken into close communion with the Father and Lucifer wasn't—'It's not fair!

I'm just as good as He is! I'll show Him, I won't be pushed around. They better give me my rightful dues or they'll be sorry!"

"How dare the committee give that place to that person—it's rightfully my place—everyone knows that, I'm not going to let them treat me this way!"

"I've been organist here for 10 years and here they put this youngster in MY place! They'll be sorry!"

"It's my job to do that—you got no business intruding on what's mine!"

If you ever feel that someone else is getting a better deal than you, or that you are not appreciated as you ought to be—Flee to the Lord—the Dragon of Jealousy has its teeth into your soul and will pull you down to destruction!

"But those whose hearts are lifted up in pride, who are self-righteous, full of envy, jealousy, and evil surmising, are enfeebling their capacity for receiving from God that which will make them what he would have them to be. They are clouding the mirror, darkening the vision, marring the vessel, so that it contains less and less God's blessing." *Advent Review and Sabbath Herald 07-10-94*

When the true humility of Christ abides in the heart, it is impossible for envy or jealousy to live there. Don't fool yourself by calling it nice names such as 'standing up for your rights' it is still jealousy and it is still deadly!

3. RESENTMENT AND SELF PITY

Here is another in the progeny of Pride, and twin sister to Jealousy; it manifests itself in many devious ways. It gives smiling compliments to someone who has done a good work but inside it is saying, "Sure you did a good job—if I'd had the breaks you had—I could do that too." Or "Your relative is on the board—no wonder you were chosen." It can never with honest heart, compliment someone or be happy for something good happening to others—it always adds its own lament—"Oh poor me, if it wasn't for this or that—I'd do that too." Or "Well sure you were able to do this—but poor me—I've always had to work hard—I never got any breaks—I have never had time to cultivate my skills or you'd really see something!"

This also leads one to belittle and condemn the works of others; "That isn't all that good—why I could do better than that if I ever had the chance, but poor me—I've had it so hard!"

If a person shares a wonderful spiritual experience with the resentful, self-pity person, you get the icy return, "Oh good for you. I guess now you think you're on a higher level than the rest of us." Or "Well myself, I'm just human, not a saint like you."

If something is being done by someone—the resentful one will try to intrude himself into it in some way and if he can't he'll distance himself and even attack or seek to hinder the work of others.

Tales of woe automatically fly to the lips of these people no matter what the circumstances. They tend to attract genuine caring people, who get along great with them for a while—but there is a limit and if a person just wants to wallow in self-pity, even the most compassionate person has to draw the line somewhere. Then the self-pity slave has another sad tale of neglect to add to his list, another person "who did him dirty."

The self-pity person never seems to recall all the kindnesses shown him but only the slights, the neglects, the abuses. No matter how much he is helped or how much he is given—it is never enough.

When caught in a sin, these folks always make an excuse; "Well he had it coming to him." or "If he hadn't been so ____, I'd never had done that. How could I help it?" He sees his lot as heavier than most people and feels that others owe it to him to coddle and pamper him to make up for his 'cruel past suffering'. Often children are raised to think that somehow they are to be pitied above all others and this carries over into their adult life—a sad crippling blindness, that can see with a magnifying glass every wrong done them, but never sees the truth that they are no worse off than the next guy. "There hath no temptation taken you but such as is common to man:" 1 Corinthians 10:13

"We need to beware of self-pity. Never indulge the feeling that you are not esteemed as you should be, that your efforts are not appreciated, that your work is too difficult. Let the memory of what Christ has

endured for us silence every murmuring thought. We are treated better than was our Lord. "Seekest thou great things for thyself? seek them not" (Jeremiah 45:5). *Ministry of Healing 476 (1905)*.

A person who is easily offended is one evidence that this self-pity attitude is present. "They shouldn't have said this, or that to me!" "Why, she never even spoke to me!" Remember what the Bible says; "Great peace have they which love thy law: and nothing shall offend them." Psalms 119:165. If we truly are born again and are among those who 'Love God's Law', we will NEVER be offended! Notice it doesn't say; 'some things' or 'rarely offended', it says NOTHING! It is surely something to meditate on, any time you find yourself offended—it is a danger signal that your link with the Lord is slipping. The fully surrendered person is dead to self—you can't offend a dead person; you can't hurt a dead person's feelings either! Jesus was never offended, but many were offended at His doctrines! They did not 'love the Law of God'.

If the person trapped in this sad delusion ever really begins to see Jesus as He is, and the great sacrifice that was made by heaven to redeem them, this terrible blindness can be broken and the lips once filled with sad laments become full of genuine Praise for the abundance of salvation's blessings.

4. SELF DECEPTION

"I wish to plead with our brethren who shall assemble at the General Conference to heed the message given to the Laodiceans. What a condition of blindness is theirs! This subject has been brought to your notice again and again, but your dissatisfaction with your spiritual condition has not been deep and painful enough to work reform. "Thou sayest, I am rich, and increased with goods, and have need of nothing; and knowest not that thou art wretched, and miserable, and poor, and blind, and naked." The guilt of self-deception is upon our churches. The religious life of many is a lie." *16 MR pg. 108*

This is really the results of cherishing the other deadly sins—we cannot see ourselves. We see other's mistakes and failings with 20-20 vision but not our selves.

"If the sinner or the backslider settles himself in disobedience and sin, the light may flash from heaven all about him, as it did about Saul, without breaking the bewitching power of falsehood and the spell of the world's deception. Unless the human agent inclines his heart to do God's will, and takes up God's service, the light will shine in vain. A thousand fold more light and conviction would accomplish nothing. God knows he has sufficient evidence already. "They have Moses and the prophets." If they will not believe their testimony and arouse to action, neither will they believe though one should be sent to them from the dead."--*Letter 135, 1898, pp. 1, 2, 3. (To G. B. Starr, no date.)*

Because self blocks their vision, Self deceived people don't really see others clearly either but tend to look upon those around them and in their families, as just 'actors in their own play' and not real people with real needs and feelings just as they have. Others are to be used to satisfy whatever need the deceived person has at the moment. If those other people are not mind readers and miss their cue and don't respond as the deluded person's mental script says they should, then there is great discord and strife. Feelings are always directing the course; "I feel good—so I'll be nice to you today" "I feel rotten so you're going to catch it." "I feel Motherly—you're the child". "I feel like being pampered—you pamper me."

This terrible blindness, unless cured by the Great Physician, will lead to damnation. It can't lead anywhere else unless something happens to the person to open his eyes. Sometimes God allows tragedy, illness or bereavement to enter the lives of self-deceived souls to allow a chance that they may wake up before they are forever lost. Sometimes when we are flat on our backs looking up—we see Jesus and loathe ourselves for what we really are- "The whole head is sick, and the whole heart faint. From the sole of the foot even unto the head there is no soundness in it; but wounds, and bruises, and putrefying sores." Isaiah 1:5, 6

5. BACKBITING AND FAULTFINDING

This fits in with all the above—it is the most intense passion of the unconverted one's life to indulge in this, because it is only in this way that he can quiet his conscience where the Holy Spirit is trying to get through to him about his real standing before God. When he can look at all those rotten things all those

other people are doing, he can feel much better about himself. And of course the more he watches others, the less he can see himself.

“Satan is constantly encouraging unbelief. He notes the mistakes and failings of Christ's professed followers, and taunts the angels of God with them. He is an accuser of the brethren, and he will influence as many as possible to do the same work. Those who take it upon themselves to watch their neighbor's garden instead of weeding their own plot of ground will surely find their own gardens so grown up to weeds that every precious plant will be crowded out.” *5 Testimonies pg. 285*

Be not deceived—even a speck of this in the life is death to the influence of the Holy Spirit. But, says someone, aren't we supposed to expose the sins and rebuke others? Yes, but this is a different process—the sins of others are to be exposed by presenting the truths of God's Word—not the tale of the sins.

There are times in which a practice or doctrine must be exposed for falsehood— this is done by presenting the truth clearly from inspiration. Sometimes apostasy in a church must be displayed to expose it—but this should be in a spirit of sorrow and repentance and always with the main emphasis on the truth as it is in the Word.

If you find that you are just anxious to hear the latest dastardly deeds of a person or group—you better seek the Lord for healing from the root of bitterness. Remember some of these roots of resentment and bitterness that produce the fruits of a critical and faultfinding tongue go deep into our entire character. Only the Holy Spirit can dig them out and He only does it when we really want it done. We must plead before God for to have this dug out of us if we would see life.

“Give yourselves over to God, and let Him re-solder you, that you may not be defective vessels. Indulge no sharp criticism. When you stand in your lot and place, you will realize that you are not able to charm away unhallowed influences. You will feel that you must learn from the Lord Jesus how to be meek and lowly”. *Other Manuscripts Volume Seventeen pg: 265*

“The language of the Christian must be mild and circumspect; for his holy faith requires him to represent Christ to the world. All those who abide in Christ will manifest the kind, forgiving courtesy that characterized his life. Their works will be works of piety, equity, and purity. They will have the meekness of wisdom, and will exercise the gift of the grace of Jesus. They will be willing and ready to forgive, earnestly seeking to be at peace with their brethren. They will represent that spirit which they desire to be exercised toward them by their Heavenly Father.” *Advent Review and Sabbath Herald 03-12-95*

6. SELF RIGHTEOUSNESS AND HYPOCRISY

When we look pretty good to ourselves—it is because we have distanced ourselves so far from Christ that we don't see the contrast in our own lives. The hypocrite fools himself more than he fools others and he can never fool God!

“Self-exaltation is a dangerous element. It tarnishes everything it touches. It is the offspring of pride, and it works so ingeniously that, unless guarded against, it will take possession of the thoughts and control the actions. The Laodicean message must be proclaimed with power; for now it is especially applicable. Now, more than ever before, are seen pride, worldly ambition, self-exaltation, double-dealing, hypocrisy, and deception. Many are speaking great swelling words of vanity, saying, "I am rich, and increased with goods, and have need of nothing." Yet they are miserable, and poor, and blind, and naked.” *The Watchman, 04-16-07*

Did you know that if you try to live a religious life and you have not fully surrendered to Jesus and been truly converted—the very best you can ever be is a hypocrite? Well it is true. Man has nothing in himself to allow him to live a godly life without the Holy Spirit.

“The enemy has been at work seeking to control the thoughts and affections of many who claim to be led by the Spirit of truth. Many cherish unkind thoughts, envyings, evil surmisings, and pride, and manifest a fierce spirit that leads them to do works like those of the evil one. They have a love of authority, a desire for pre-eminence, a longing for a high reputation, a disposition to censure and revile others, and they wrap about themselves the garment of hypocrisy, calling their unsanctified ambition zeal for the truth.” *Advent Review and Sabbath Herald, 03-12-95*

"Beware of the leaven of the Pharisees, which is hypocrisy" Luke 12:1. Yes, like leaven it soon permeates all our lives and corrupts every thing we engage in. It makes us 'swell with pride' it makes us 'puffed wheat'. Self righteousness is the dead opposite of Agape love—it despises its brethren, it uses the bodies of others to climb on to get to a higher place. You do not have to be highly educated to be a hypocrite, no—many pride themselves on their ignorance, and are just as haughty as the long-robed scribes.

If you ever hear or tell a tale of the sin of others and there is even the slightest feeling of self-satisfaction in doing this, or you ever have the thought cross your mind; "I'm glad I don't do what he does", quick! Fall on your knees before God in repentance and plead to have this terrible leaven removed from you before it eats out all of your spiritual eyesight and leaves you in the congregation of the dead—forever!

If you ever feel pretty good about yourself and your spiritual condition, you are in big trouble, because those who are really converted and are close to Jesus, feel less and less self satisfaction and know that they are hopeless unless Jesus lives His life in them.

7. REBELLION

The spirit of rebellion is natural to man; it is what says; "I won't have this Man to rule over me." It says, "I won't have anyone telling me what to do." And "I have every right to believe whatever I want." "I'm going to worship God in my own way, I'm going to express myself." "I like it this way and nobody has any right to tell me otherwise."

It sets its own plans in defiance of God's Word and will eventually say; "I will let nothing stop me from carrying out my own ideas."

Oh dear ones, if you have this attitude sneaking into your mind in any way, flee to the Lord immediately and cry out to have it removed! If cherished it will lead to the sin against the Holy Spirit!

Full and total rebellion is the end of the line when the Holy Spirit has done everything possible to bring in light and truth and has been beaten back until the heart is as hard as an adamant stone and the Holy Watcher must say, "Leave him alone—he is joined to his idols".

"I question whether genuine rebellion is ever curable. Study in Patriarchs and Prophets the rebellion of Korah, Dathan, and Abiram. This rebellion was extended, including more than two men. It was led by two hundred and fifty princes of the congregation, men of renown. Call rebellion by its right name, and apostasy by its right name, and then consider that the experience of the ancient people of God with all its objectionable features was faithfully chronicled to pass into history. The Scripture declares, "These things . . . are written for our admonition, upon whom the ends of the world are come" (1 Corinthians 10:11). And if men and women who have the knowledge of the truth are so far separated from their great Leader, that they will take the great leader of apostasy, and name him Christ our Righteousness, it is because they have not sunk that shaft deep into the mines of truth. They are not able to distinguish the precious ore from the base material." *Manuscript Releases Volume Nine, Pg. 360.*

There is no better way I can close this appeal than to give you Sister White's dying message to her beloved Advent congregation:

[A late testimony to her nurse.] "I hate sin. I hate sin. I hate sin. I am charged to tell our people, that do not realize, that the devil has device after device, and he carries them out in ways that they do not expect. Satan's agencies will invent ways to make sinners out of saints.

"I tell you now, that when I am laid to rest, great changes will take place. I do not know when I shall be taken; and I desire to warn all against the devices of the devil. I want the people to know that I warned them fully before my death. I do not know especially what changes will take place; but they would watch every conceivable sin that Satan will try to immortalize.

"Remember that the Lord will carry us through. I am guarding every moment, so that nothing may come between me and the Lord. I hope there will not. God grant that we may all prove faithful. There will be a glorious meeting soon." *UNPUBLISHED MANUSCRIPTS, VOLUME 6 pg: 28 MS 1, 1915*

Oh, Brothers and sisters, please turn to Jesus with ALL your heart—even a little of any of the 7 deadly sins, excused or cherished in the mind will blind you, and you will walk off the edge of the straight and narrow pathway and fall into the wicked world below. And the horrible thing is—you won't know it has happened! The Holy Spirit can only work IN you when you surrender ALL, holding nothing back—then the mighty power of heaven will recreate you completely and make you ready for a place 'among these that stand by'. The passions and selfishness of this earth can never go into heaven—all who go there will reflect Jesus fully.

“God is drawing those who listen to conscience, take counsel with right reason and with God, and surrender their will, their entire prospects, with the whole heart to God. It is then, and then only, that the human agents learn how wayward is the heart, and how unwilling to give up all for Jesus. But if they walk in the light while they have the light, they soon receive another kind of knowledge; they learn how mighty is the grace of God to subdue selfishness, and expel it from the soul. Truth has the ascendancy. There is a sense of spiritual freedom, they rejoice in the glorious liberty of the sons and daughters of God.”

General Conference Daily Bulletin 01-28-93 pg. 1414

“Little children, let no man deceive you: he that doeth righteousness is righteous, even as he is righteous.” 1. John 3:7