

# Spiritual Warrior

## *The call to Christian Chivalry in a world of growing darkness*

---

*We can easily forgive a child who is afraid of the dark;  
the real tragedy of life is when men are afraid of the light. ~ Plato*

### Introduction

Realize dear reader, that this is written by a man who has more than a deep faith in God. I have a *certainty* and *personal knowledge* of God and how He moves throughout my life. I find that we may all take our own journeys toward discovering our faith and beliefs, but in my case, my own circuitous route eventually brought me back to my beginning – I was raised as a Christian.

### ***The quest for Areté***

*Areté* (pronounced ‘*ah-rhi-TEY*’) in its basic sense, means excellence of any kind. In its earliest appearance in Greek, this notion of excellence was ultimately bound up with the notion of the fulfillment of purpose or function: the act of living up to one's full potential. “Ancient Greek philosophers examined human nature for traits that set it apart from other creatures. They sought to discover what made us special in order to learn our purpose in the universe, and better attain that goal. Two traits were seen as definitive: the use of reason, and the development of virtue<sup>1</sup>.”

“The combination of reason and virtue is what makes us most excellently human. We are therefore expected to develop a high degree of reason and virtue in our lives. When we accomplish that, it is said that we achieve *Areté*, our highest virtue. Philosophers concluded that the goal of human nature is to strive for this excellence<sup>2</sup>.”

I realize that some readers may have other faiths or beliefs. They may be on other paths on their quest for *Areté*. What I share with you is *my* path, and my hope is to share my personal observations, experiences and understanding for those who may be on a similar path. I believe that the tenets of chivalry are an aspect of a personal code that brings us closer in our Quest for *Areté*. My personal Quest for *Christian Areté* is described by the tenets of what I am calling Christian Chivalry.

I consider myself a ‘*Knight Errant*’. A knight errant would search for adventures in order to prove himself worthy. In my own case, I am proving my worthiness only to myself. Unlike the ancient Greek philosophers, I believe that we will never actually attain, but can only continually strive for *Areté*. In a sense it is similar to the Grail Quest in that the significance of the Grail is not the Grail itself, but our response to its calling. It is our response to the call of *Areté* that is significant.

---

<sup>1</sup> Chivalry-Now: *Areté* (<http://www.chivalrynow.net/articles2014/arete.htm>)

<sup>2</sup> *ibid.*

## The Growing Darkness

*"Two things fill the mind with ever new and increasing admiration and awe, the oftener and more steadily we reflect on them, the starry heavens above and the moral law within." ~ Immanuel Kant*

There is a moral darkness rising in our world, growing like the waters of a flood – leaving nothing but destruction in its wake. These rising waters from which people drink, do nothing to quench their thirst but rather deepen it, making them drink more but they will not find relief. And like the waters of a flood, they carry nothing of value, only debris and waste. Mankind's troubled soul is being consumed in this rising tide of darkness.

### **Morality defined**

Morality (from the Latin *moralitas* "manner, character, proper behavior") is the differentiation of intentions, decisions, and actions between those that are "good" (or right) and those that are "bad" (or wrong<sup>3</sup>).

In order to understand the rise of darkness, and society's changing outlook on morality, we must first understand the concept of morality itself. We also need to understand that morality is closely associated with our concept of the 'meaning of life' as it helps to define it. "Moral goodness is what gives each of us the sense that we are worthy human beings. We seek it in our friends and mates, nurture it in our children, advance it in our politics and justify it with our religions. A disrespect for morality is blamed for everyday sins and history's worst atrocities. To carry this weight, the concept of morality would have to be bigger than any of us and outside all of us<sup>4</sup>."

Studies show that morality is an instinctive part of human nature. Anthropologist Donald E. Brown<sup>5</sup> has researched some human 'universals' that includes many moral concepts and emotions, including a distinction between right and wrong; empathy; fairness; admiration of generosity; rights and obligations; prohibition of murder, rape and other forms of violence; rectification of wrongs; sanctions for wrongs against the community; shame; and taboos. By assessing these universal truths, it would appear that morality may be rooted in the design of the normal human brain. "Yet for all the awe that may fill our minds when we reflect on an innate moral law within, the idea is at best incomplete<sup>6</sup>".

Other anthropologists surveyed moral concerns across the globe and found that specific themes keep popping up from amid the diversity. Among them were the idea that *a) it's bad to harm others and good to help them; b) one should reciprocate favors, reward benefactors and punish cheaters; c) one should value loyalty to a group, sharing and solidarity among its members and conformity to its norms; d) it is right to defer to legitimate authorities and to respect people with high status; and e) one should exalt purity, cleanliness and sanctity while loathing defilement, contamination and carnality<sup>7</sup>.*

<sup>3</sup> Wikipedia – the free encyclopedia: *Mortality* (<http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Mortality>)

<sup>4</sup> Steven Pinker, "The Moral Instinct," New York Times Magazine, January 13, 2008, (<http://www.nytimes.com/2008/01/13/magazine/13Psychology-t.html>)

<sup>5</sup> Donald E. Brown (born 1934) is an American professor of anthropology (emeritus). He worked at the University of California, Santa Barbara. He is best known for his theoretical work regarding the existence, characteristics and relevance of universals of human nature. In his best-known work, *Human Universals*, he says these universals, "comprise those features of culture, society, language, behavior, and psyche for which there are no known exceptions."

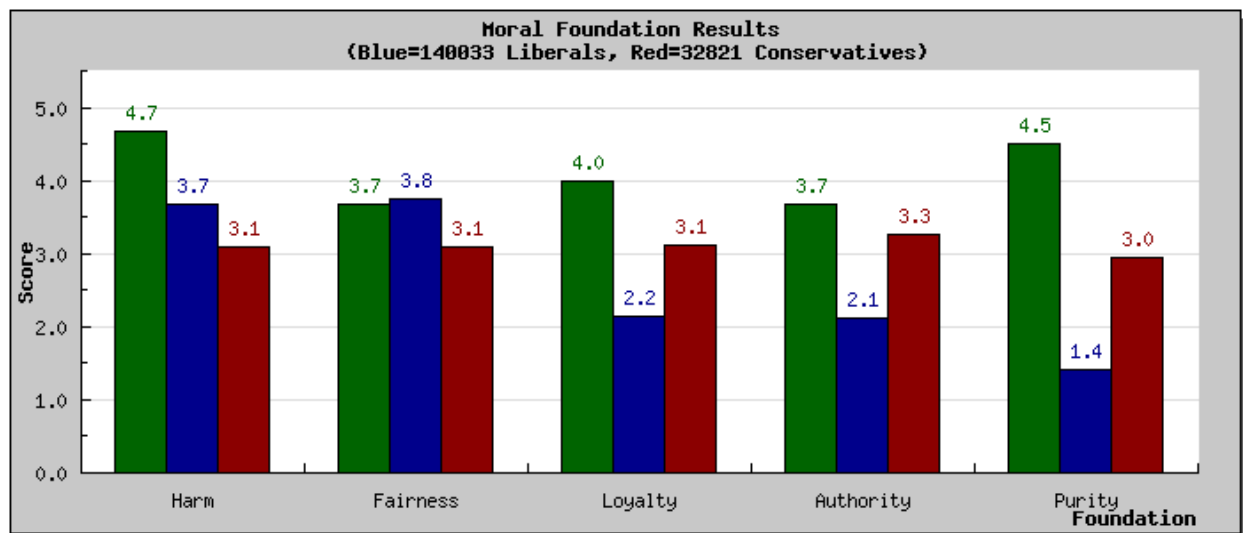
<sup>6</sup> Steven Pinker, *Ibid.*

<sup>7</sup> *Ibid.*

These five themes — harm, fairness, community (or group loyalty), authority and purity — are the primary colors of our moral sense. Not only do they keep reappearing in cross-cultural surveys, but each one tugs on the moral intuitions of people in our own culture. The ranking and placement of these themes also divides the cultures of liberals and conservatives in the United States. Many bones of contention, like homosexuality, atheism and one-parent families from the right, or racial imbalances, sweatshops and executive pay from the left, reflect different weightings of the spheres.

Jonathan Haidt is a professor of business ethics at New York University's Stern School of Business. He is the author of *The Happiness Hypothesis: Finding Modern Truth in Ancient Wisdom*, and of *The Righteous Mind: Why Good People are Divided by Politics and Religion*. He studies the psychological foundations of morality and is working on several projects to help people transcend moralistic divisions and understand each other. In a Web survey<sup>8</sup> (<http://www.yourmorals.org/>), Haidt found that liberals put a lopsided moral weight on harm and fairness while playing down group loyalty, authority and purity. Conservatives place a moderately high weight on all five. It's not surprising that each side thinks it is driven by lofty ethical values and that the other side is base and unprincipled<sup>9</sup>.

I took the same test, and my results are below. People Identifying themselves as liberals are shown in blue, and conservatives are shown in red. My results are in green. Scores run from 0 (the lowest possible score, you completely reject that foundation) to 5 (the highest possible score, you very strongly endorse that foundation and build much of your morality on top of it). You can tell by my scores that much of my personal morality is strongly based upon the 'universals' or what is being called "intuitive ethics".



Mr. Steven Pinker states that "the concept of morality would have to be bigger than any of us and outside all of us." I agree. Current studies seem to indicate that there are ethical norms that transcend society boundaries. These are being called "intuitive ethics," I think this is a good place to start.

<sup>8</sup> YourMorals.org is a collaboration among social psychologists who study morality and politics. It is a project of Moral Foundations.org (<http://www.moralfoundations.org/>) Moral Foundations Theory was created by a group of social and cultural psychologists to understand why morality varies so much across cultures yet still shows so many similarities and recurrent themes. In brief, the theory proposes that several innate and universally available psychological systems are the foundations of "intuitive ethics."

<sup>9</sup> Steven Pinker, "The Moral Instinct," New York Times Magazine, January 13, 2008, (<http://www.nytimes.com/2008/01/13/magazine/13Psychology-t.html>)

### Natural Law – Intuitive Ethics

*“The attempt to understand morality in the legalistic terms of a natural law is ancient but is now mostly associated with the formulation given it by Thomas Aquinas in the late thirteenth century. All earlier natural law is commonly seen as leading up to Aquinas’s paradigmatic version, whereas later natural law is understood as deriving from it.” ~ Knud Haakonssen<sup>10</sup>*

Moral Foundations Theory describes the notion of *intuitive ethics* – a very similar concept to Natural Law. According to Wikipedia: “Natural law, or the law of nature, is a system of law that is determined by nature, and so is universal. Classically, natural law refers to the use of reason to analyze human nature — both social and personal — and deduce binding rules of moral behavior from it<sup>11</sup>.”

To the writers of the Declaration of Independence, and their audience, the mention of the Laws of Nature, (and Nature’s God) delivered a justification of moral authority. Historically, the term provided the foundation of jurisprudence, with roots going back to ancient Greece. Natural law is a view that certain rights or values are inherent in or universally cognizable by virtue of human reason or human nature<sup>12</sup>.

In Paul’s Epistle to the Romans he states, “For when the Gentiles, which have *not* the law, do *by nature* the things contained in the law, these, having not the law, are a law unto themselves: Which shew the work of the law *written in their hearts*, their conscience also bearing witness, and their thoughts the mean while accusing or else excusing one another.” Romans 2:14–15.

Nature’s Law “*provides an actual resource available for moral decisions. It offers the key to personal transformation that completes who we are, an underlying principle that makes freedom and personal autonomy possible*<sup>13</sup>.”

Nature’s Law give us the autonomy that allows us to affirm and respond to the moral directives that we find within ourselves as rational beings of conscience. It affirms our own nature as creatures capable of virtue and reason (*Areté*), using conscience to help decide right from wrong, and plan a proper course of action<sup>14</sup>.

Nature’s law or intuitive ethics describes an intuitive moral code which is wired into our humanity. Anthropologists and Physiologists have determined that there are certain values in human nature that are universal, transcending societal boundaries and are “*bigger than any of us and outside all of us*”. These values include: a) care/harm, b) fairness/cheating, c) loyalty/betrayal, d) authority/subversion, e) sanctity/degradation (indicated above as ‘purity’) and these same learned men are now adding liberty/oppression as a potential 6<sup>th</sup> candidate. Of course the natural tendency is for humanity to pick the least harmful of these choices: care over harm, fairness over cheating, loyalty over betrayal, authority over subversion, sanctity over degradation and liberty over oppression. This leads to the logical conclusion that there is a transcendent tendency toward what we call ‘moral good’.

<sup>10</sup> Knud Haakonssen is Emeritus Professor of Intellectual History at the University of Sussex

<sup>11</sup> Wikipedia – the free encyclopedia: *Natural Law* ([http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Natural\\_law](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Natural_law))

<sup>12</sup> Chivalry-Now: *Nature’s Law* ([http://www.chivalrynow.net/articles2014/natures\\_law.htm](http://www.chivalrynow.net/articles2014/natures_law.htm))

<sup>13</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>14</sup> *Ibid.*

### ***Divergence from the ideal***

If we agree that there is a human tendency toward a transcendent moral good, then where does humanity stand in relation to that standard?

A recent Gallup poll<sup>15</sup> paints a distressing picture of the state of our moral values in the U.S. 44% of those surveyed describe morality in this country as “poor”... only 19% said “excellent or good.” These numbers rank among the worst in this poll over the last decade. The survey also shows 72% of Americans say moral values in the U.S. are getting worse... only 20% say they're getting better.

70% of the adults surveyed assessed our morals as negative. The majority of Republicans, Independents and Democrats *all* assessed our morals negatively. Those respondents with higher incomes had higher negativity, although all groups had a majority of negative views. Those who were married and those who attended church more regularly had more negative views, but again – all groups were decidedly negative about our current moral condition.

Poll respondents give many examples when it comes to *how* moral values are getting worse. From the disrespect of others to parents not teaching their children good values; from dishonesty among government and business leaders to rising crime, loss of religion, breakdown of the family structure; and people not being accountable for their own behavior. “*No one's responsible for anything anymore. Everybody's a victim*”<sup>16</sup>.

Respondents were also asked their opinions of the *reasons* for our moral decline: rampant narcissism; the sense of entitlement; lack of consideration for fellow human beings; lack of parenting; society and celebrities condoning bad behavior; media – television, Internet, video games, music, and cell phones all play a role in the demoralization of this country; the breakdown in the family; turning away from the religious or spiritual aspects of life<sup>17</sup>.

One researcher stated that the massive thrust of television and movies taught people “*that sex, and alternative lifestyles, marital infidelity, and divorce are all to be accepted as normal. The violence from Hollywood has also inundated the minds of our society, and has taken root as well*”<sup>18</sup>.

From this poll, as well as from simple observation, we can see that society is diverging from the transcendent moral good that is hard-wired into our humanity. Of the care/harm duo – we see harm being portrayed as violent ‘entertainment’, we hear of more violence, we see it broadcast on news – it is becoming the new norm. Of the fairness/cheating duo, we hear more of cheating and underhanded behavior not only from our fellow citizens but from our leadership as well. We see that behavior modeled in entertainment and media, and it is less and less being called bad behavior and more and more becoming expected. Of the loyalty/betrayal pair we see betrayal daily, from politics to news reports, and again as entertainment. Loyalty is becoming passé. Of the authority/subversion duo, we see more and more talk about subversion as a road to freedom (which may be necessary) and it is romanticized in movies and in our history. Unfortunately, this also leads to subversion of the authority of good people such as parents or people with legitimate moral authority. In the sanctity/degradation

---

<sup>15</sup> Gallup: Americans' Outlook for U.S. Moral Values Still Pessimistic (<http://www.gallup.com/poll/162740/americans-outlook-moral-values-pessimistic.aspx>)

<sup>16</sup> Jack Cafferty, CNN Commentator, *What's behind precipitous decline in America's morality?* May 17, 2010 (<http://caffertyfile.blogs.cnn.com/2010/05/17/whats-behind-precipitous-decline-in-americas-morality/>)

<sup>17</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>18</sup> *Ibid.*

pair we see the degradation of women as sexual objects, in advertising, movies literature and society. We also see the degradation of the moral values of our last generation who, in my humble opinion were closer to the transcendent moral good than our own current society.

Depression is on the rise with about 10 to 20 times the number of cases as there were 50 years ago<sup>19</sup>. Dr. Martin Seligman suggests that there may be three main causes. The first is what he calls the 'I-We' balance: "Our parents, our grandparents had relationships, had comfortable *spiritual furniture* to sit in when they failed. They had their relationship to God, their patriotism relationship to a nation, relationship to a large community, and probably best of all, a large and stable extended family. All of these larger factors, all of the spiritual furniture, has in the last 50 years become threadbare<sup>20</sup>."

His second point is the 'self-esteem movement'. In his review of children's books over the last 30 years he noticed that earlier books were about feeling good as a product of your own actions like the book "The Little Engine that Could" (I think I can, I think I can). Now books are about self-confidence and self esteem but "our hedonistic nation has become a nation that doesn't much care *how* you get your self-esteem and would prefer to *inject it directly*." He points out that "self-esteem is just a meter that reads out the state of the system. Generally, when you're doing well with the people you love, with your friends, when you're doing well at school, when you're doing well on the playing field, the meter registers high. And in general, when you're doing badly, it registers low." He also warns that the self-esteem movement, the movement that has filled our classrooms with mantras like "I'm special," "I'm special because I can play." He states that it is the movement that has made competition a dirty word in the United States.

His third point is *victimology*. "It has become routine for us to blame our own failings, to blame failings on other people and circumstances. We seem to have victimology as our national ideology, as opposed to individual responsibility. He cites four costs of victimology: "that the feeling better only works for a little while." The second is that "it is inaccurate... [a]nd when it is inaccurate, it is very dangerous to blame problems of your own making on other people or circumstances." The third is that "it erodes the notion of responsibility." And the fourth "is that it deforms what is heroic".

He suggests that the paradox is solved by three things. "First, the 'I' is too big, and the 'we' is too small. Second, we have a generation of kids who feel unwarranted self-esteem. They have been taught to feel good about themselves regardless of how they are doing in the world. And third, we have a generation of kids who have come to believe that when things go wrong, you're a victim."

Although this speech was given several years ago it is even more applicable today, and I believe it holds true for more than children – it holds true for society-at-large. Once again we see the issues of changing focus inward and the individual becoming the most important, rather than the community; we see false feelings of self-esteem caused by words rather than actual pride in accomplishments; and we see the lack of individual responsibility. And all of this is pulling us away from the intuitive ethics – the moral good – causing us *harm* (depression); giving us a counterfeit definition of *fairness*; changing our *loyalty* from others to self, giving ourselves artificial *authority*, and changing our perception of *sanctity*.

<sup>19</sup> Dr. Martin Seligman, then president of the American Psychological Association, speech to the National Press Club about an American depression epidemic, 9/3/1998 ([http://www.nonopp.com/ar/Psicologia/00/epidemic\\_depersion.htm](http://www.nonopp.com/ar/Psicologia/00/epidemic_depersion.htm))

<sup>20</sup> *ibid*.

**Road to ruin**

David Bentley Hart in his website *FirstThings.com* states: “There are, of course, generally observable facts about the characteristics of our humanity (the desire for life and happiness, the capacity for allegiance and affinity, the spontaneity of affection for one’s family) and about the things that usually conduce to the fulfillment of innate human needs (health, a well-ordered family and polity, sufficient food, aesthetic bliss, a sense of spiritual mystery, leisure, and so forth); and if we all lived in a Platonic or Aristotelian or Christian intellectual world, in which everyone presumed some necessary moral analogy between the teleology of nature and the proper objects of the will, it would be fairly easy to connect these facts to moral prescriptions in ways that our society would find persuasive. We do not live in such a world, however<sup>21</sup>.” I agree. We do not live in such a world. We *should* – that is the goal. The object of our will *should* be to pursue the transcendent moral good. Instead we pursue the darkness.

He goes on to say, “To put the matter very simply, belief in natural law is inseparable from the idea of nature as a realm shaped by final causes, oriented in their totality toward a *single transcendent moral Good*: one whose dictates cannot simply be deduced from our experience of the natural order, but must be received as an apocalyptic interruption of our ordinary explanations that nevertheless, miraculously, makes the natural order intelligible to us as a reality that opens up to what is more than natural<sup>22</sup>.”

To this statement, I agree. We need to be listening in order to receive the ‘apocalyptic interruption of our ordinary explanations’. Our spiritual furniture has become threadbare – we have lost our spirituality and that will be our doom as a society.

Will Durant wrote “The Story of Civilization”. In “*Volume three – Caesar and Christ*”, he covers the rise and fall of the Roman Empire and the coming forth of Christianity. He wrote, “*A great civilization is not conquered from without until it has destroyed itself within. The essential causes of Rome’s decline lay in her people, her morals, her class struggle, her failing trade, her bureaucratic despotism, her stifling taxes, her consuming wars*<sup>23</sup>.”

At the end of this volume Durant wrote an epilogue called, “Why Rome Fell”, Ezra Taft Benson gave a brief summary of this epilogue:

*“The first group of causes he termed biological, and no doubt most fundamental. They had to do with the limitation of families, the deferment and avoidance of marriage, the refusal of men and women to shoulder the great responsibilities, God-ordained of honorable parenthood. He mentioned that sexual excesses were indulged in commonly, both in and outside the marriage covenant. The operation of contraception and abortion was common. This together with other things resulted in reduced fertility. Sex ran riot, and moral decay resulted.”*

In 1787 Edward Gibbon completed his noble work The Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire. Here is the way he accounted for the fall:

1. The undermining of the dignity and sanctity of the home, which is the basis of human society.
2. Higher and higher taxes and the spending of public monies for free bread and circuses for the populace.

<sup>21</sup> David Bentley Hart, *FirstThings.com*: *Is, Ought, and Nature’s Laws*, 3/1/2013 (<http://www.firstthings.com/article/2013/03/is-ought-and-natures-laws>).

<sup>22</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>23</sup> Will Durrant, *The Story of Civilization, Vol III, Caesar and Christ*, pp. 89–90



3. The mad craze for pleasure, sports becoming every year more and more exciting and brutal.
4. The building of gigantic armaments when the real enemy was within the decadence of the people.
5. The decay of religion—faith fading into mere form, losing touch with life, and becoming impotent to warn and guide the people.

I agree with Gibbon that one of the main factors of the fall of a great civilization *was, and remains* the decay of religion or spirituality – ‘faith fading into mere form’. Our sense of the miraculous, the spiritual, and the idea that there is something bigger than us as individuals has faded from view.

There is an old quote typically (albeit falsely) attributed to Alexis de Tocqueville from his work ‘Democracy in America’ which says, *“I sought for the greatness and genius of America in her commodious harbors and her ample rivers, and it was not there; in her fertile fields and boundless prairies, and it was not there; in her rich mines and her vast world commerce, and it was not there. Not until I went to the churches of America and heard her pulpits aflame with righteousness did I understand the secret of her genius and power. America is great because she is good, and if America ever ceases to be good, America will cease to be great.”*

No matter where the quote came from the sentiment is correct. We can call it religion or spirituality, but we have lost touch with that divine aspect. We no longer have respect or concern for something greater than ourselves. Without it, we train our focus inward toward self gratification and baseness and away from intuitive ethics or Nature’s Law that prescribes to each of us and all of us the ‘good morals’ that provide care, fairness, loyalty, respect, sanctity, and liberty upon which humanity thrives.

When we train our focus inward and lose touch with the spiritual, we also lose touch with the rest of humanity. Although humans are more connected than ever with the Internet, email, social media and communication of all types, we are becoming more isolated. The feeling of ‘being alone’ in life is becoming more pervasive<sup>24,25</sup>.

Calvin Coolidge once remarked, *“We do not need more material development, we need more spiritual development. We do not need more intellectual power, we need more moral power. We do not need more knowledge, we need more character. We do not need more government, we need more culture. We do not need more law, we need more religion. We do not need more of the things that are seen, we need more of the things that are unseen”<sup>26</sup>.*

The parallels between fallen civilizations and our own current situation are clear. We have lost the sanctity of family, we spend far too much funding and attention on diversions, sports and celebrity have become our Heroes. We focus our defense on threats from abroad when the threat is internal, we are far too focused on our own pleasures, and we have lost the spiritual/religious aspects of our existence. In my humble opinion, when we regain our spiritual center, the rest will fall in line.

Ronald Reagan once remarked, “If we ever forget that we are One Nation Under God, then we will be a nation gone under”. His meaning is clear in the evidence we see. Once we lose our spirituality,

<sup>24</sup> Alex Greig, Daily Mail Online: *All the lonely Facebook friends: Study shows social media makes us MORE lonely and unhappy and LESS sociable*, 9/12/2013 (<http://www.dailymail.co.uk/news/article-2419419/All-lonely-Facebook-friends-Study-shows-social-media-makes-MORE-lonely-unhappy-LESS-sociable.html>)

<sup>25</sup> Vanessa Barford, BBC News Magazine: *Is modern life making us lonely?*, 8 April 2013 (<http://www.bbc.com/news/magazine-22012957>)

<sup>26</sup> Calvin Coolidge speech as Vice President to Wheaton College, Norton, Massachusetts, June 19, 1923



religion, or belief in something greater – we will indeed fail as a nation. History proves this, and as Edmund Burke said, “Those who don't know history are destined to repeat it.”

Dr. Ryan Howell, an Assistant Professor of Psychology at San Francisco State University wrote an article for Psychology Today's online magazine. He cites the benefits of spirituality as follows<sup>27</sup>:

**“Spiritual people are gracious.** Psychology has demonstrated that expressing gratitude is associated with many positive emotions such as optimism, being generous with time and resources, and overall vitality. Spirituality encourages people to be positive, which may be expressed in many of these life practices.

**Spiritual people are compassionate.** Experiencing compassion toward others is one the strongest correlates with living a spiritual life. A variety of positive or pro-social emotions have strong links with spiritualism, including allowing one to feel good about the little things in life and look at the world through empathetic eyes.

**Spiritual people flourish.** Spirituality is linked to many important aspects of human functioning-- spiritual people have positive relationships, high self-esteem, are optimistic, and have meaning and purpose in life.

**Spiritual people self-actualize.** Spiritual individuals strive toward a better life and consider personal growth and fulfillment as a central goal. Spirituality can be considered to be a path toward self-actualization, because it requires people to focus on their internal values and work on becoming a better individual.

**Spiritual people take time to savor life experiences.** Individuals who value spirituality take the time to reflect on their daily activities and ultimately build lasting memories of their experiences. Because spiritual people are more conscious of small, daily activities, they experience positive emotions associated with the smaller pleasures in life.

Ellen L. Idler, Ph.D., Acting Dean of Social and Behavioral Sciences at Rutgers University, New Brunswick states that in a study called *Monitoring the Future* (Wallace and Forman, 1998) found that religious involvement has a large and positive impact on the lifestyles of students. Findings from another study of adults in Alameda County, California (Strawbridge et al., 1997) showed that those who attend religious services have lower mortality rates overall. In 1979, a published landmark study revolutionized our understanding of the impact of the social environment on health (Berkman and Syme, 1979). The study found that the most socially isolated people with the fewest social ties to others were at the highest risk of mortality. Dr. Idler states, "...the cumulative effects of good health practices and social support facilitated by religious and spiritual practice during one's lifetime can result in being physically and emotionally healthy<sup>28</sup>."

<sup>27</sup> Dr. Ryan T. Howell, Ph.D., Psychology Today (online) *Why Be Spiritual? Five Benefits of Spirituality*, 2/27/13 (<http://www.psychologytoday.com/blog/cant-buy-happiness/201302/why-be-spiritual-five-benefits-spirituality>)

<sup>28</sup> Dr. Ellen Idler, Ph.D., Spirituality in Higher Education Newsletter, Volume 4 Issue: *The Psychological and Physical benefits of Spiritual/Religious Practices*, Feb 2008 ([http://spirituality.ucla.edu/docs/newsletters/4/Idler\\_Final.pdf](http://spirituality.ucla.edu/docs/newsletters/4/Idler_Final.pdf))

## The Undercurrent

With any rising tide, there is also an undercurrent – a slow but steady pull in the opposite direction. A still small voice telling rumors of an impending event. To those that hear that small voice, every nerve is restless with an unexplained longing. The heart beats faster and the anticipation is palpable. This is the ‘call to arms’ that we hear in our hearts. This is the invitation to be part of the solution to the inky blackness of the world’s soul. We are being called to be the people of light, to push back the darkness and restore the moral underpinnings of society.

### Anagnorisis

When we recognize this ‘call to arms’ in our hearts as truth, we experience what the Greek philosophers called *Anagnorisis* (pronounced ‘an-ag-NŌR-iss-iss’), meaning a “*change of perception, a change of consciousness itself, brought about when our hero’s journey, our personal quest for truth, is sufficiently able to jar us from the trap of illusion induced complacency*”<sup>29</sup>.

The ‘call to arms’ is there continually, as if humanity itself is crying out for healing. Most people cannot hear the cry, most people are too self-absorbed, or too distracted to hear. But those with ears attuned to the heartbeat of the world not only hear the cry but can feel its pull to do something about it. I heard a song on the radio by Matthew West called ‘Do Something’. The most poignant words were, “*So, I shook my fist at Heaven, Said ‘God, why don’t you do something?’ He said, ‘I did, I created you’*” Point well taken. It is up to us to heal our broken world. Those of us who hear, will find it difficult if not impossible to simply stop listening to humanity’s cry for help.

The task is overwhelming and as an individual I sometimes feel as though I will have no impact whatsoever. But long ago, one man made an impact, and whether you believe in His divinity or not, His legacy has grown and lasted through time. One person can make a difference – I can make a difference. And as an army of light – we can make a difference.

### Aletheia

*Aletheia* (pronounced ‘al-e-THEE-a’) is another Greek word variously translated as *unclosedness, unconcealedness, disclosure or truth*. The literal meaning of the word is akin to ‘*the state of not being hidden; the state of being evident*’ and it also implies sincerity, as well as factuality or reality. There are also some nuances which make this concept more profound.

“The first nuance means *unforgotten or remembered*. This suggests that truth is something we already know, but need to consciously recall. This is very important to moral tendencies that appear to be instinctive rather than learned, such as the dictates of conscience. We own them already. Because they are part of who we are, their development is essential to our growth and fulfillment. This amounts to a very subjective relationship with moral truth that springs from our own cognitive functions”<sup>30</sup>.

The second nuance means *unhidden or discovered*, which describes our relationship with experiential truth. “We approach it objectively, with inquiry, logic, research and method, and form

<sup>29</sup> Chivalry-Now: *Agagnorisis* (<http://www.chivalrynow.net/articles2014/agagnorisis.htm>)

<sup>30</sup> Chivalry-Now: *Aletheia* (<http://www.chivalrynow.net/articles2014/aletheia.htm>)

reasonable conclusions. This applies to a wide range of our everyday encounters and understanding of the world<sup>31</sup>."

The third nuance comes from the root *lethe* which means, *forgetfulness, concealment or oblivion*. *Aletheia* then would be *awareness or consciousness*. As the *oblivion* meaning is also connected with the word *lethal*, *Aletheia* would be akin to *healthy or life-giving*. "This suggests that the encounter with *Aletheia*, whether it comes subjectively, objectively or both, is life-enhancing."<sup>32</sup>

The *truth* we find in this growing trend in humanity is its destructive outcome. It is a lethal trend which has ruined many societies throughout history. It is a *remembered truth* (to those who are willing to admit) which when approached objectively, and logically is self-evident as a road to ruin. The trend of society is lethal but the truth of what is occurring is life-enhancing because we have identified it and have the ability to change it.

### Synderesis

*Synderesis* (pronounced 'sin-der-EE-sis') is a Greek term from scholastic philosophy, signifying the innate principle in the moral consciousness of every person which directs the agent to good and restrains him from evil. It is the ability of our reason to intuitively act in accordance with the transcendent moral good. *Synderesis* is the faculty of judging and of willing the right, in agreement with "the transcendent moral good" and persisting in the separate powers of the soul in spite of the corruption of human nature<sup>33</sup>.

*Synderesis* is our guide to moral behavior and becomes our lamp on the path toward changing the course of our society.

### Phronesis

*Phronesis* (pronounced 'frō-NEE-sis') is another Greek term and is related. It means *practical wisdom* and sometimes it is translated as '*prudence*'. It refers to an individual's capacity to discern what is worth doing together with the ability to get it done, a "reasoned and true state of capacity to act with regard to human good". According to Aristotle<sup>34</sup>, "*Phronesis involves not only the ability to decide how to achieve a certain end, but also the ability to reflect upon and determine good ends consistent with the aim of living well overall.*"

The *phronesis* of the situation tells us that if this direction of moral decay is sustained, it will become our ruin. We have the capacity to act with regard for human good and the ability to reflect upon and determine good ends consistent with living well as a society. We have the ability to change.

As human beings we can reflect on the situation and make judgments about our own and others' actions and as a result we can make considered moral choices. As Helene Guldberg, Ph.D. states, "Human beings have something that no other animal has: an ability to participate in a collective cognition. Because we, as individuals, are able to draw on the collective knowledge of humanity, in a

<sup>31</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>32</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>33</sup> Internet Encyclopedia of Philosophy - A Peer-reviewed Academic Resource: *Synderesis* (<http://www.iep.utm.edu/synderes/>)

<sup>34</sup> Wikipedia – the free encyclopedia: *Phronesis* (<http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Phronesis>)

way no animal can, our individual abilities go way beyond what evolution has endowed us with. Our species is no longer constrained by our biology<sup>35</sup>.”

We see the uncovered truth of the situation as alarming but also life-enhancing because of its discovery (*aletheia*) – it gives us hope. Our perception of the situation is changed (*anagnorisis*) because of the truth that current course is not consistent with the aim of living well overall and it gives us the practical wisdom to know it must be changed (*phronesis*). Our judgment and willingness to do right in agreement with the transcendent moral good (*synderesis*) gives us the justification and moral authority in making that change (*Nature's Law*).

### Synthesis

We have established that there is a transcendent tendency toward the moral good that is hard-wired into our humanity. Throughout history there has been a tendency for some people to disregard what is good and move toward the darkness. But people are moving away from the moral good in increasing numbers and society is changing drastically. This movement is being fed via the inventions meant to bring us closer together – social media; or meant to entertain – movies, books and magazines; or meant to inform – newspapers, television, magazines; etc. All of these venues are now being used to transmit a message of darkness and move us further from our intuitive ethics. This is causing us to change our focus from the external to the internal, which is also causing humanity to feel more alone. This growing trend is attempting to change the intuitive ethics that are part of who we are.

Those who have opened their eyes and ears can see and hear the evidence, and realize that moral goodness is a fundamental truth, and we are moving away from it. We can see the changes in society and recognize that our future is at risk. It is a realization that brings us both fear and hope in the future. Fear at the outcome if it is not stopped and hope in the realization that the problem – or at least the symptoms have been realized and are being identified. Our perception of the situation changes how we view things from this point forward. We can see that humanity's current course leads to darkness. It is what we do with this knowledge that will set us apart from those that simply seek safety in the shadows.

---

<sup>35</sup> Helene Guldberg, Ph.D. *Psychology Today* (online magazine): *Only Humans Have Morality, Not Animals*, June 18, 2011 (<http://www.psychologytoday.com/blog/reclaiming-childhood/201106/only-humans-have-morality-not-animals>)

## Inner Purpose

*“There comes a special moment in everyone’s life, a moment for which that person was born. That special opportunity, when he seizes it, he will fulfill his mission — a mission for which he is uniquely qualified. In that moment, he finds greatness. It is his finest hour”. ~ Winston Churchill*

From a purely logical point of view we can acknowledge an idea of intuitive ethics which show that there is a human tendency toward moral good. It has been demonstrated in many works by scientists from various disciplines. We can also observe that the current state of affairs is counter-productive to that tendency. Anxiety and depression develops when humanity is not following the natural course it was hard-wired to follow.

The insistent call to our hearts is meant to rekindle the flames of our inner-aim, our hard-wired need to live within intuitive ethics. It is time to change the course we are on so that we may find the happiness that comes from a life well-lived. We are all uniquely qualified. As Hermann Hess wrote, “We are sun and moon, dear friend; we are sea and land. It is not our purpose to become each other; it is to recognize each other, to learn to see the other and honor him for what he is: each the other’s opposite and complement<sup>36</sup>.” We must use our individual talents to reclaim our birthright – a life of moral goodness, a life of happiness derived from living within our prescribed ethical boundaries.

## Telos

*Telos* (pronounced ‘TEL-ōs’) can be described as the *purpose* or *inner-aim* of an object, or in this case, a human. In his Nicomachean Ethics, Aristotle (384-322 BCE) describes the happy life intended for man by nature as one lived in accordance with virtue<sup>37</sup>. Aquinas follows Aristotle in thinking that an act is good or bad depending on whether it contributes to or deters us from our proper human end—the *telos* or final goal at which all human actions aim. That *telos* is happiness, where “happiness” is understood in terms of completion, perfection, or well-being. Achieving happiness, however, requires a range of intellectual and moral virtues that enable us to understand the nature of happiness and motivate us to seek it in a reliable and consistent way<sup>38</sup>.

In our sense here, it is this definition in relation to the intuitive morality that we have rediscovered. This, when coupled with the search for the spiritual or religious aspect adds “the elevation from the universe of finitude and guilt to the reunion with the ultimate reality, the transcendent ground and abyss of everything that is<sup>39</sup>.” So our definition might result in: “the actualization of man’s potential defined by the transcendent moral good, resulting in his reunion with the ultimate reality of its source”.

And it is this *telos*, that is being activated by that gentle whisper that calls to us for *action*, and that time for action is now. Our inner-aim has two components, that which is the *way* to live (living within the intuitive ethical boundaries) and that which is the *reason* to live (our individual *telos*).

<sup>36</sup> Hermann Hesse, *Narcissus and Goldmund*, 1930

<sup>37</sup> Internet Encyclopedia of Philosophy - A Peer-reviewed Academic Resource: Aristotle; *Politics*, 5. *The Importance of Telos* (<http://www.iep.utm.edu/aris-pol/#H5>)

<sup>38</sup> Internet Encyclopedia of Philosophy - A Peer-reviewed Academic Resource: Thomas Aquinas: *Moral Philosophy* (<http://www.iep.utm.edu/aq-moral/>)

<sup>39</sup> Paul Tillich, *The Spiritual Situation in Our Technical Society* (Macon: Mercer University Press 1988), 78

### **Kairos**

The word Kairos (pronounced 'KYE-rōs' or alternatively 'KEY-rōs') refers to an auspicious or opportune moment in time when significant evolutionary change happens due to a combination of historical variables. In contrast, from a theological point of view, Paul Tillich described it as a special time when the eternal breaks into the temporal and people respond. Both descriptions recognize moments in time that are fertile for change — more than fertile, inevitably insistent, providing irresistible catalysts for human development<sup>40</sup>. Anaxarchus says that the ability to seize the “opportune moment” (*kairos*) is the boundary marker of wisdom<sup>41</sup>.

This is the kairos moment in history that we can change our course and find our individual and collective path to areté. Our *reason* to live is defined by our individual quest for areté – the quest to find what makes us different, what defines our telos, and how we can reach that perfection within the prescribed boundaries of moral goodness (our *way* to live). This will bring us the happiness, self-esteem derived from actual accomplishments, and the connection with others who recognize our differences and celebrate what we can do with them.

### **Spiritual mystery**

The website for 'The International Fellowship of Chivalry-Now', has the following statement: “Mystery is part of truth, even if we cannot define or understand it. To ignore that fact, to not include it in our consciousness of the world, however inconclusively, limits our perception of everything. Without acknowledging mystery, we are not receptive to inspirations that arise from the subconscious. We fail to learn the profound lessons gleaned from the life-enhancing subjective/objective experience of Aletheia<sup>42</sup>.”

Based on more than 30 years of psychological counseling and pastoral care, Howard Clinebell<sup>43</sup> believed that humans have seven spiritual hungers in common:

1. All people need to experience regularly the healing and empowerment of love – from others, self, and an ultimate source.
2. Everyone needs to experience renewing times of transcendence – moments that expand us beyond the immediate sensory spheres.
3. Everybody needs vital beliefs that give some sense of meaning and hope the midst of losses, tragedies, and failures.
4. Every person needs to have values, priorities, and life commitments - usually centered in issues of justice, integrity, and love - that guide us in personally and socially responsible living.
5. Each human being needs to discover and develop their inner wisdom, creativity and love of their unique transpersonal/spiritual self.
6. All people need a deepening awareness of oneness with other people and with the natural world, the wonderful web of all living things.

<sup>40</sup> Chivalry-Now: *Kairos* (<http://www.chivalrynow.net/articles2014/kairos.htm>)

<sup>41</sup> (Anaxarchus was a Greek philosopher of the school of Democritus) Internet Encyclopedia of Philosophy - A Peer-reviewed Academic Resource: *Anaxarchus* (<http://www.iep.utm.edu/anaxarch/>)

<sup>42</sup> Chivalry-Now: *Concepts* (<http://www.chivalrynow.net/articles2014/concepts.htm#9>)

<sup>43</sup> Howard John Clinebell (June 3, 1922 – April 13, 2005) was a minister in the United Methodist Church and a professor in pastoral counseling. He pioneered a counseling approach that combined psychotherapy and religion.

7. Every human being needs spiritual resources to help heal the painful wounds of grief, guilt, resentment, unforgiveness, self-rejection, and shame. We also need spiritual resources to deepen our experiences of trust, self-esteem, hope, joy and love of life.

The psychiatrist Carl Jung spent much of his life's work exploring other realms including Eastern and Western philosophy, alchemy, astrology, sociology, as well as literature and the arts. He cautioned that modern humans rely too heavily on science and logic and would benefit from integrating spirituality and appreciation of the unconscious realm. Jung's work convinced him that life has a *spiritual purpose* beyond material goals. Our main task, he believed, is to discover and fulfill our deep innate potential (*areté*). Based on his study of Christianity, Hinduism, Buddhism, Gnosticism, Taoism, and other traditions, Jung believed that this journey of transformation, which he called *individuation*, is at the mystical heart of all religions. It is a quest to meet the self and at the same time to meet the Divine. Jung advocated that the spiritual experience is essential to our well-being.

'The International Fellowship of Chivalry-Now' describes what is called *Grail Consciousness* as "*a fundamental awareness of life's mystery in our everyday lives*"<sup>44</sup>. The idea is that we are "*dealing with mysteries that cannot be fathomed. Just because we do not understand something does not mean that it does not exist. That we exist at all serves as proof.*" Mystery, Spirituality, Religion – whatever you call it – the recognition of that aspect of existence is necessary for a healthy and fulfilling life.

It is the spiritual aspects of the Quest that make it worthwhile. The spiritual aspects may lay hidden, but by following our inner-aim of striving toward the intuitive good morals, we reach for *Areté*. As we perfect our path, we become more enlightened and more of the spiritual aspects become enacted in our own lives. As the *spiritual becomes reality*, we recognize the *aletheia*, the uncovered/rediscovered truth that sets us free.

I have experienced the *reality* of the spiritual aspect in my life, which manifests itself from time to time in my daily existence. The intuitive ethics we experience are part of our connection with this spiritual aspect, the divine, our Maker. We that believe that there is a heaven or a realm outside of our own existence, tend to also attribute to it a certain peace, orderliness, fulfillment and sense of genuine acceptance that we do not find in our daily lives. We see this heaven as a model of what our current existence should be, and as our spiritual experience is made more manifest in our daily lives, we also bring more of those heavenly attributes into our physical reality.

ως εν ουρανῳ και επι γης  
On Earth as it is in Heaven

Jesus was once asked when the kingdom of God would come. The kingdom of God, Jesus replied, is not something people will be able to see and point to. Then came these striking words: "*Neither shall they say, Lo here! or, lo there! for, behold, the kingdom of God is within you.*" (Luke 17:21)

From *within* is the gateway to the spiritual, the divine. It is accessed through prayer, meditation and even dreams. It is that still small voice that we attune to in our most quiet moments. It has had many names that may differ, but the inner reality to which those names point is one and the same.

---

<sup>44</sup> Chivalry-Now: Concepts (<http://www.chivalrynow.net/articles2014/concepts.htm#9>)



St. Gregory of Nyssa wrote “[The soul] leaves all surface appearances, not only those that can be grasped by the senses but also those which the mind itself seems to see, and it keeps on going deeper until by the operation of the spirit it penetrates the invisible and incomprehensible, and it is there that it sees God. The true vision and the true knowledge of what we seek consists precisely in not seeing, in an awareness that our goal transcends all knowledge<sup>45</sup>” Our quest to meet the self and at the same time to meet the Divine starts within.

### **The call to action**

*“I am not afraid...I was born to do this.” ~ Joan of Arc*

Wynton Marsalis once said, *“Many a revolution started with the actions of a few. Only 56 men signed the Declaration of Independence. A few hanging together can lead a nation to change.”* Change comes only when people act. It has been said that the *“only thing necessary for the triumph of evil is for good men to do nothing<sup>46</sup>”*. In the case of our future, the only thing necessary for our continued journey into the darkness is for good people to do nothing. If we sit by and idly watch it happen without attempting to change it, we will fail as humanity. Change starts with one person’s quest, and gathers momentum as more join in the attempt to make a substantive change. Mahatma Gandhi said, *“A small body of determined spirits fired by an unquenchable faith in their mission can alter the course of history.”* And Margaret Mead agrees: *“Never doubt that a small group of thoughtful, committed, citizens can change the world. Indeed, it is the only thing that ever has.”*

What have we to lose but our humanity? We were – in-fact – born to do this.

*“You and I have a rendezvous with destiny. We will preserve for our children this, the last best hope of man on earth, or we will sentence them to take the first step into a thousand years of darkness. If we fail, at least let our children and our children's children say of us we justified our brief moment here. We did all that could be done.” ~ Ronald Reagan*

*“...Do not go gentle into that good night.  
Rage, rage against the dying of the light.”  
~ Dylan Thomas*

We have heard the call and know that this direction of humanity must be changed. We know that it must start within each of us, and we know that it starts by actualizing our inner purpose (*telos*) by living in accordance with intuitive ethics (*Natures Law*). Those intuitive ethics once gave rise to the idea of a chivalric code, and since the time chivalry was born, in the meandering thoughts of human minds, that code has matured and has become refined. It is no longer just a code for the physical battlefields, but for the battlefield of thought and ideals bringing about material change in our world. It is required now to help us to shape ourselves into instruments of change. This is the *kairos moment*.

Chivalry changes, and yet remains the same. The ideals and principles have become more refined within the hearts of its students. Chivalry is as old as mankind and as young as the newest heart within which it has taken root. Chivalry not only lives – it grows, matures and changes – and yet it remains the

<sup>45</sup> Herbert Musurillo, *From Glory to Glory* (New York: Charles Scribner’s Sons, 1961), 118.

<sup>46</sup> Edmund Burke quote

same. Its principles are immutable but its attributes provide countless ways for realization. Its blossom in ones heart is apparent and yet it often goes unnoticed until needed – and it is needed now.

## Chivalry

*“Some say that the age of chivalry is past, that the spirit of romance is dead. The age of chivalry is never past, so long as there is a wrong left unredressed on earth.” ~ Charles Kingsley*

Thousands of works have been written about chivalry covering everything from its definition, its philosophy and its usage and customs. Merriam-Webster defines chivalry as *“the system of values (such as loyalty and honor) that knights in the Middle Ages were expected to follow<sup>47</sup>”* and as *“an honorable and polite way of behaving especially toward women<sup>48</sup>”*

Wikipedia give a more in-depth definition<sup>49</sup> as: *“The Knight's Code of Chivalry was a moral and honorable system that stated all knights should protect others who cannot protect themselves, such as widows, children, and elders. All knights needed to have the strength and skills to fight wars in the Middle Ages; they not only had to be strong but they were also extremely disciplined and were expected to use their power to protect the weak and defenseless.*

*Knights vowed to be loyal, generous, and “of noble bearing”. Knights were required to tell the truth and respect the honor of women. Knights vowed to protect the weak and guard the honor of fellow knights. They were to obey those in authority, and to never refuse a challenge from an equal. Knights lived by honor and for glory. Knights were to fear God and maintain His Church. Knights always kept their faith and never turned their back on a foe. Knights despised pecuniary reward. They persevered to the end in any enterprise begun.”*

It may seem foreign to us to conceptualize chivalry in a modern world. The International Fellowship of Chivalry-Now<sup>50</sup> sums up the need for the chivalric ideal in our society: *“Chivalry spells out certain ethical standards that foster the development of manhood. Men are called to be: **truthful, loyal, courteous to others, helpmates to women, supporters of justice, and defenders of the weak.** They are also expected to **avoid scandal.***

*Beautiful ideals! They attract us with a sense of nostalgia that feels almost religious. That’s because they are part of us already. Unfortunately, they contend with powerful, often destructive influences, like commercial television, that bombard us with outrageously bullish images of men that are, at best, inappropriate.*

*The virtues of chivalry offer more than pleasantries and politeness. They give purpose and meaning to male strength, and therefore support the overall workings of society. They remind us that Camelot is an ideal worth striving for, the reflection of who we are when we are at our best.”*

Chivalry is the embodiment of intuitive ethics derived from Nature’s Law. It is a manner of behavior consistent with the ideal of striving for the best that we can be (*areté*) to fulfill our inner purpose (*telos*). It helps us to rediscover the truth (*aletheia*) regarding how to behave in situations, and as we realize this we experience a change in perception (*anagnorisis*) about our role in the world.

<sup>47</sup> Merriam-Webster: Chivalry (<http://www.merriam-webster.com/dictionary/chivalry>)

<sup>48</sup> *ibid.*

<sup>49</sup> Wikipedia – the free encyclopedia: Chivalry (<http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Chivalry>)

<sup>50</sup> Chivalry-Now: Modern Chivalry (<http://www.chivalrynow.net/articles/chivalry.htm>)

Throughout history many societies in which a specialized warrior class exists, specific codes of conduct (ethical or honor codes) are established to ensure that the warrior class would not become a danger to the rest of the society.

Prof. Shannon E. French, Ph.D. of the U.S. Naval Academy illustrates, “Whatever additional martial activities they may engage in, such as conquering foreign peoples, acquiring booty or expanding territory, warriors (even the so-called ‘barbarian’ warriors) exist for one primary purpose. That purpose is to defend their communities from any forces that may seek to undermine the security of the social contract from the ‘Barbarians at the Gate.’ The trick is that they must find some way to accomplish this goal without become the barbarians themselves<sup>51</sup>.”

In our modern day, we have military codes of conduct which provide the ethical code for our ‘specialized warrior class’. Most of the tenets of chivalry can be seen in those codes, and most people who have been in the military will have adopted those codes as a personal credo. Chivalry has an active role for those who are not a part of the actual ‘warrior class’ as well.

Chivalry as a code, can be broken down to the virtues that help to define it. The virtues are *not* the code itself, but aspects of *behavior* that helps to enact the code.

### The virtues

There are literally hundreds of attempts to list the *virtues* of chivalry, but we will only list 12 that are seen as being the pillars. These are the ones most listed and combine the four cardinal virtues from ancient Greek philosophy (*prudence, justice, fortitude, temperance*) with the seven heavenly virtues of Prudentius<sup>52</sup>: (*chastity, [temperance], charity, diligence, patience, kindness, and humility*), and will add the three theological virtues of *faith, hope* and *love* [charity]. Thus our list will be: *humility, prudence, justice, fortitude, temperance, chastity, diligence, patience, kindness, faith, hope* and *love*. What follows is a sampling of philosophic and spiritual views of each.

#### I. **Humility** (*humilitas* – it is the *radix virtutum* – the root of virtue)

For Aristotle, a human being’s most *fundamental* orientation to the world is that of *wonder*. Wonder reflects our *telos*, and it is motivationally important to the activities through which our *telos* can be realized. Maimonides would agree that wonder is a basic feature of our rational nature but, given the fact of creation and revelation and God’s justice and mercy, it can be said that a human being’s most basic orientation to reality is gratitude or a combination of gratitude and humility. This is because gratitude is owed to God for the very existence of the world and for the wisdom of the created order<sup>53</sup>. As described earlier in an earlier quote from Chivalry-Now we saw that “*Mystery is part of truth, even if we cannot define or understand it. To ignore that fact, to not include it in our consciousness of the world, however inconclusively, limits our perception of everything.*” Mystery gives us a sense of wonder, and that sense of wonder grounds our humility.

<sup>51</sup> Prof. Shannon E. French, Ph.D., U.S. Naval Academy, Dept. of Leadership, Ethics, and Law; *The Warrior’s Code*, 2001 (<http://isme.tamu.edu/JSCOPE02/French02.html>)

<sup>52</sup> Aurelius Prudentius Clemens. The poetry of Prudentius is influenced by early Christian authors, such as Tertullian and St. Ambrose, as well as the Bible and the acts of the martyrs. *Psychomachia* (“Battle of Souls”) describes the struggle of faith, supported by the cardinal virtues, against idolatry and the corresponding vices.

<sup>53</sup> Internet Encyclopedia of Philosophy - A Peer-reviewed Academic Resource: Maimonides (<http://www.iep.utm.edu/maimonid/>)

*"Of one thing I am certain, that the age needs, first and foremost to be startled; to be taught the nature of wonder<sup>54</sup>."*

The sort of humility advocated is consistent with courage, resolve, excellent judgment, and the willingness to accept weighty responsibility. Humility concerns restraint of the ego, restraint of self-love in order to remain mindful of the needs and the welfare of others, and guarding against an inflated opinion of oneself and one's own interests<sup>55</sup>. It is this 'true humility' that gives us our perspective and keeps us from being focused on self. It allows us to define our inner-purpose in relation to the whole.

*"God opposes the proud but gives grace to the humble"* (Proverbs 3:34)

*"Young men, in the same way, be submissive to those who are older. All of you, clothe yourselves with humility toward one another, because, 'God opposes the proud but gives grace to the humble.' Humble yourselves, therefore, under God's mighty hand, that he may lift you up in due time."* (1 Peter 5:5-6)

The term "humility" comes from the Latin word *humilitas*, a noun related to the adjective *humilis*, which may be translated as "humble", but also as "grounded", "from the earth", or "low", since it derives in turn from *humus* (earth)<sup>56</sup>.

Legitimate humility comprises the following behaviors and attitudes<sup>57</sup>:

- Submitting to God and legitimate authority
- Recognizing virtues and talents that others possess, particularly those that surpass one's own, and giving due honor and, when required, obedience
- Recognizing the limits of one's talents, ability, or authority; and, not reaching for what is beyond one's grasp

C.S. Lewis writes, in *Mere Christianity*, that pride is the "anti-god" state, the position in which the ego and the self is directly opposed to God: "Unchastity, anger, greed, drunkenness, and all that, are mere fleabites in comparison: it was through Pride that the devil became the devil: Pride leads to every other vice: it is the complete anti-God state of mind." In contrast, Lewis states that, in Christian moral teaching, the opposite of pride is humility and, in his famous phrase, *"Humility is not thinking less of yourself, but thinking of yourself less"*<sup>58</sup>.

Having true humility is having a clear perspective, and therefore respect, for one's place in context. It contributes to the intuitive ethics of care over harm, fairness over cheating, loyalty over betrayal, authority over subversion, sanctity over degradation and liberty over oppression. It is, as Lewis says, *"not thinking less of yourself, but thinking of yourself less."* It is understanding your position in the scheme of things, and what you can offer to the betterment of society of your inner-self as it is made real by your quest for areté.

Humility is the charioteer of the virtues. It drives them and steers them within due bounds of our place in context.

<sup>54</sup> G.K. Chesterson Black and White, 14 February 1903. Repr. in Maycock, op.cit., p. 160.

<sup>55</sup> Internet Encyclopedia of Philosophy - A Peer-reviewed Academic Resource: *Mainonides* (<http://www.iep.utm.edu/mainonid/>)

<sup>56</sup> Wikipedia – the free encyclopedia: *Humility* ( <http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Humility> )

<sup>57</sup> *ibid.*

<sup>58</sup> *ibid.*

- II. **Prudence** (*prudentia* – it is the *auriga virtutum* – or the charioteer of the virtues. Also the Greek *phronesis*)

*“I, wisdom, dwell with prudence, and I find knowledge and discretion.”* (Proverbs 8:12)

*“Everything that a wise one does is in knowledge, and a fool speaks emptiness.”* (Proverbs 13:16)

The word comes from Old French *prudence* (14th century), from Latin *prudentia* (foresight, sagacity). It is often associated with wisdom, insight, and knowledge. In this case, the virtue is the ability to judge between virtuous and vicious actions, not only in a general sense, but with regard to appropriate actions at a given time and place<sup>59</sup>.

In order to act well, we need to make good judgments about how we should behave. This is precisely the sort of habit associated with prudence, which Aquinas defines as *“wisdom concerning human affairs”* or *“right reason with respect to action”*. In order to make good moral judgments, a twofold knowledge is required: one must know (1) the general moral principles that guide actions and (2) the particular circumstances in which a decision is required. For *“actions are about singular matters: and so it is necessary for the prudent man to know both the universal principles of reason, and the singulars about which actions are concerned”*. This passage may appear to suggest that prudence involves a fairly simple and straightforward process of applying moral rules to specific situations. But this is somewhat misleading since the activity of prudence involves a fairly developed ability to evaluate situations themselves. As Thomas Hibbs explains: *“prudence involves not simply the subordination of particulars to appropriate universals, but the appraisal of concrete, contingent circumstances”*. From this perspective, good decisions will always be responsive to what our situation requires. Thus *we cannot simply consult a list of moral prescriptions in determining what we should do*. We must also *“grasp what is pertinent and to assess what ought to be done in complex circumstances”*<sup>60</sup>.

Prudence is a practice, an art and a learned science. It is not as simple as consulting a ‘list of moral prescriptions’ but is based upon reasoning the outcomes of complex circumstances. Because we see the circumstance and use prudence to guide our actions, prudence becomes the *auriga virtutum* (the charioteer of all the other virtues).

As a cardinal virtue, prudence functions as a principle virtue on which a variety of other excellences hinge. Those excellences include: memory, intelligence, docility, shrewdness, reason, foresight, circumspection, and caution. Without these excellences, we may commit a number of cognitive errors that may prevent us from acting in a morally appropriate way. For example, we may reject the guidance of good counsel; make decisions precipitously; or act thoughtlessly by failing *“to judge rightly through contempt or neglect of those things on which a right judgment depends”*<sup>61</sup>.

Aquinas says prudence has eight “quasi-integral parts” (*memory, understanding, docility, shrewdness, reasoning, foresight, circumspection, caution*) which can be classified as follows: Those that supply knowledge (*memory* and *understanding* or an intuitive grasp of the salient features of the present situation), those that acquire knowledge (*docility* and *shrewdness*), that which uses

<sup>59</sup> Wikipedia – the free encyclopedia: *Prudence* (<http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Prudence>)

<sup>60</sup> Internet Encyclopedia of Philosophy - A Peer-reviewed Academic Resource: *Thomas Aquinas: Moral Philosophy* (<http://www.iep.utm.edu/aq-moral/>)

<sup>61</sup> *ibid.*

knowledge (*reasoning*, constructing the practical syllogism), and those that apply knowledge in command, the chief act of prudence (*foresight* directs present actions to the foreseen end, *circumspection* adjusts means to circumstances, and *caution* avoids obstacles to realizing the end)<sup>62</sup>.

When the moral virtues, together with prudence, are present, Aristotle takes it that reasoning well and acting accordingly will follow naturally (we can speak of virtue as “second nature”)<sup>63</sup>. It refers to an individual’s capacity to discern what is worth doing together with the ability to get it done, a “reasoned and true state of capacity to act with regard to human good”. According to Aristotle, “*Phronesis* involves not only the ability to decide how to achieve a certain end, but also the ability to reflect upon and determine good ends consistent with the aim of living well overall.”

In successful practical reasoning, *synderesis* [tendencies toward the moral good], prudence, and moral virtue work together to ensure that the action meets all of the criteria of a good action: suitability of object (what kind of action is this, borrowing or stealing?), due attention to circumstances (might frankness here and now be unduly embarrassing to one’s interlocutor?), and goodness of the end of action (is my goal in giving alms to impress a potential benefactor, or to succor the need of the less fortunate; ultimately, the end is good if and only if it is conducive to the agent’s final end). While practical reasoning presupposes our understanding of our final end as perfection, everything else in our practical lives, including our conception of our final end and to what extent we honor the principles grasped by *synderesis*, lies within its scope<sup>64</sup>.

Prudence is considered the measure of moral virtues since it provides a model of ethically good actions. “The work of art is true and real by its correspondence with the pattern of its prototype in the mind of the artist. In similar fashion, the free activity of man is good by its correspondence with the pattern of prudence.” (Josef Pieper)<sup>65</sup>

As Aristotle said<sup>66</sup>, “(phronesis) involves not only the ability to decide how to achieve a certain end, but also the ability to reflect upon and determine good ends consistent with the aim of living well overall.” It is our inborn ability to understand how our decisions will help us achieve the intuitive moral principles (Nature’s Law/Divine Law) and provide a harmonious result.

*Humility* is the charioteer of the virtues. It drives them and steers them within due bounds of our place in context. *Prudence* is the ability to understand our decisions and actions to achieve ends consistent with living well.

### III. Justice (Latin: *iustitia*, Greek: *Dikaiosyne*)

“When justice is done, it brings joy to the righteous but terror to evildoers.” (Proverbs 21:15)

“A false balance is abomination to the LORD: but a just weight is his delight.” (Proverbs 11:1)

The other cardinal virtues (fortitude, temperance and prudence) concern *our own state*. The virtue of justice, however, governs *our relationships with others* (ST IIaIIae 57.1). Specifically, it

<sup>62</sup> Internet Encyclopedia of Philosophy - A Peer-reviewed Academic Resource: *Medieval Theories of Practical Reason* (<http://www.iep.utm.edu/prac-med/>)

<sup>63</sup> Internet Encyclopedia of Philosophy - A Peer-reviewed Academic Resource: *Medieval Theories of Practical Reason* (<http://www.iep.utm.edu/prac-med/>)

<sup>64</sup> *ibid.*

<sup>65</sup> Wikipedia – the free encyclopedia: *Prudence* (<http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Prudence>)

<sup>66</sup> Wikipedia – the free encyclopedia: *Phronesis* (<http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Phronesis>)



denotes a sustained or constant willingness to extend to each person what he or she deserves (ST Ilallae 58.1)<sup>67</sup>.

Plato contends that an equitable state is attained by considering the welfare of the whole. In a fair society, the rulers, the military, the artisan, all behave in a specified way, as they ought to behave. In such a society, then rulers are prudent, the soldiers are courageous, and all the producers perform self-control or moderation. Justice in Plato's opinion is a moral notion. Barker says, "*Justice is, for Plato, at once a part of human virtue and the bond which joins men together in the states. It makes man good and makes him social.*" A more or less identical perception has been mentioned by Sabine. He states, "*Justice (for Plato) is a bond which holds a society together.*" Justice provides the similarity of what is spoken in the Greek language as 'Dikaiosyne', a term which has a wider all-inclusive implication than the word 'justice'. 'Dikaiosyne' means 'just', 'righteousness'<sup>68</sup>.

The important features of Plato's conception can be mentioned thus: (i) Justice is another name of *righteousness*; (ii) It is more the performance of duties than the enjoyment of rights. (iii) It is the individual's contribution to society in accordance with his abilities, capacities, and capabilities, (iv) It is attuned to intuitive morality, (v) It is the strength of the social fabric as it involves a web of social system.

Edward Goldsmith (*Archaic Societies and Cosmic Order — A Summary*) states: "Across the world, from the beginnings of prehistory, the belief that society must follow a certain path – or 'Way' – in order to maintain itself, and the wholeness of the world around it, has been a common theme running through many societies and cultures. This Way, which a society must follow in order to maintain the order of the cosmos, is defined as that which conforms to traditional rules, or 'laws' – laws which the Ancient Greek referred to as the *Nomos*, or the *Dike* – meaning justice, righteousness or morality. The Dike was 'the way of the World, the way things happen'<sup>69</sup>."

Natural Law considers justice as the system of consequences that naturally derives from any action or choice. In this, it is similar to the laws of physics: in the same way as the Newton's Third Law of Motion requires that for every action there must be an equal and opposite reaction, justice requires according individuals or groups what they actually deserve, merit, or are entitled to. Justice, on this account, is a universal and absolute concept: laws, principles, religions, etc., are merely attempts to codify that concept, sometimes with results that entirely contradict the true nature of justice<sup>70</sup>.

If we assume that Natural Law, or Divine Law gives us intuitive morality, then justice, fairness and righteousness must derive from them. Plato's idea of the individual's contribution to society in accordance with his abilities, capacities, and capabilities is more attuned to justice in the practice of

<sup>67</sup> Internet Encyclopedia of Philosophy - A Peer-reviewed Academic Resource: *Thomas Aquinas: Moral Philosophy* (<http://www.iep.utm.edu/aq-moral>)

<sup>68</sup> Shvoong.com – The Global Source for Summaries and Reviews: *Plato's Concept of Justice* (<http://www.shvoong.com/social-sciences/political-science/1770718-plato-concept-justice/#ixzz30rHABrRI>)

<sup>69</sup> Jane Harrison, *Themis: A study of the Social Origins of Greek Religion*, Cambridge University Press, 1927, p.517

<sup>70</sup> Internet Encyclopedia of Philosophy - A Peer-reviewed Academic Resource: *Thomas Aquinas: Moral Philosophy* (<http://www.iep.utm.edu/aq-moral>)

'giving justly'. According to Aquinas, justice denotes a sustained or constant willingness to extend to each person what he or she deserves (*ST II-II* 58.1)<sup>71</sup>.

Aquinas acknowledges that legal justice does not appear to be altogether different from the virtues we previously considered. After all, courage, temperance, and prudence are just as likely to contribute to others' welfare as legal justice. Yet these virtues differ *logically* from legal justice because they have specific objects of their own (*ST II-II* 58.6). Whereas legal justice concerns the common good, prudence concerns commanding action, temperance concerns curbing concupiscent passion, and courage concerns strengthening irascible passion against fear. To put the matter as baldly as possible, the purpose of the other virtues is to make us *good people*; making us *good citizens* is the end at which legal justice aims (*Ibid.*, *sed contra*)<sup>72</sup>.

"Jesus said unto him, *"I am the Way, the Truth, and the Life; no man cometh unto the Father, but by Me"* (John 14:6). When you look at the life He would have us lead, He was in-fact describing a person who contributes to society in accordance with his abilities, capacities, and capabilities, as well as one who extends to each person what he or she deserves.

*Humility* is the charioteer of the virtues. It drives them and steers them within due bounds of our place in context. *Prudence* is the ability to understand our decisions and actions to achieve ends consistent with living well. *Justice* is contributing to society with our abilities and extending to each person what they deserve.

#### IV. Fortitude (Latin: *fortitude*, Greek: *Andreia*)

*"Be of good courage, and let us behave ourselves valiantly for our people, and for the cities of our God: and let the Lord do that which is good in his sight."* (1 Chronicles 19:13)

*"For I am the Lord your God, who takes hold of your right hand and says to you, 'Do not fear; I will help you.'"* (Isaiah 41:13)

*Andreia*, 'manly' spirit, is needed to counter faint-heartedness, laziness, and over-attachment to pleasure. It involves an attitude of 'taking the fight to the enemy', where the enemy is one's own foolishness, vice and ignorance. Misused it manifests itself as anger, aggression and military vain-glory. Properly used it involves self-directed, constructive anger. *Andreia* also manifests itself as a willingness for, even a love of, toil and effort. It is one of the four cardinal virtues, along with prudence (*phronesis*), temperance (*sophrosyne*), and justice (*dikaiosyne*). Aristotle noted that, as with other virtues, *andreia* is an optimal level (a "mean") between the extremes of too little courage (cowardliness) and too much courage (rashness)<sup>73</sup>.

St. Thomas is at pains to say explicitly that fortitude ranks third after prudence and justice among the cardinal virtues. Kant was able to say: "*Virtue is the moral strength of the will in obeying the dictates of duty*" (*Anthropol.*, sect. 10, a). Aristotle would have admitted this too; nevertheless he chose his definition: "*Fortitude is the virtue of the man who, being confronted with a noble occasion of encountering the danger of death, meets it fearlessly*" (*Eth. Nic.*, III, 6).

<sup>71</sup> *ibid.*

<sup>72</sup> Internet Encyclopedia of Philosophy - A Peer-reviewed Academic Resource: *Thomas Aquinas: Moral Philosophy* (<http://www.iep.utm.edu/aq-moral/>)

<sup>73</sup> John Uebersax, PhD; Works on Psychology, Religion and Society: *Andreia* (<http://www.ohn-uebersax.com/plato/words/andreia.htm>)

Fortitude is of two types; *physical courage* is courage in the face of physical pain, hardship, death, or threat of death, while *moral courage* is the ability to act rightly in the face of popular opposition, shame, scandal, or discouragement<sup>74</sup>.

C.S. Lewis said of fortitude that it “...includes both kinds of courage—the kind that faces danger as well as the kind that ‘sticks it’ under pain. ‘Guts’ is perhaps the nearest modern English. You will notice, of course, that you cannot practise any of the other virtues very long without bringing this one into play<sup>75</sup>.”

St Augustine said that “*fortitude is love readily bearing all things for the sake of the loved object*” (*De moribus eccl.*, Chap. Xv)

Fortitude is bound to our inner passion for our *telos* to be realized, in which case our passion to realize our *telos* will drive us to bear all things for the sake of Areté – becoming the ultimate expression of our *telos*. Nelson Mandela once said, “*I learned that courage was not the absence of fear, but the triumph over it. The brave man is not he who does not feel afraid, but he who conquers that fear.*” In this regard, our fear of being different by accessing and realizing our inner purpose is conquered by our fortitude in becoming the ultimate embodiment of our *telos*.

C. S. Lewis notes that “*Courage is not simply one of the virtues, but the form of every virtue at the testing point.*” Maya Angelou the American author and poet adds, “*Courage is the most important of all the virtues, because without courage you can't practice any other virtue consistently. You can practice any virtue erratically, but nothing consistently without courage.*” Fortitude or courage is what it takes to see our tasks through, with honor and integrity in reaching a goal that is consistent with the common good.

*Humility* is the charioteer of the virtues. It drives them and steers them within due bounds of our place in context. *Prudence* is the ability to understand our decisions and actions to achieve ends consistent with living well. *Justice* is contributing to society with our abilities and extending to each person what they deserve. *Fortitude* is the ability to overcome faint-heartedness and see our tasks through no matter what the personal cost.

## V. Temperance (Latin: *temperare*, Greek: *Sophrosyne*)

“*But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, self-control; against such things there is no law.*” (Galatians 5:22)

“*Educate your children to self-control, to the habit of holding passion and prejudice and evil tendencies subject to an upright and reasoning will, and you have done much to abolish misery from their future and crimes from society.*” ~ Benjamin Franklin

“*The ability to subordinate an impulse to a value is the essence of the proactive person.*” ~ Stephen R. Covey, *The 7 Habits of Highly Effective People: Powerful Lessons in Personal Change*

Temperance can be defined as the righteous habit which makes a man govern his natural appetite for pleasures of the senses in accordance with the norm prescribed by reason, or as or moderation, marked by personal restraint<sup>76</sup>. *Sophrosyne* is a Greek philosophical term

<sup>74</sup> Wikipedia – the free encyclopedia: *Courage* (<http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Courage>)

<sup>75</sup> C.S. Lewis, *Mere Christianity* (1952; Harper Collins 2001) 79

<sup>76</sup> Wikipedia – the free encyclopedia: *Temperance (virtue)* ([http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Temperance\\_%28virtue%29](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Temperance_%28virtue%29))

etymologically meaning 'healthy-mindedness' and from there, self-control or moderation guided by knowledge and balance. Roman poet Juvenal later interpreted sophrosyne as "*mens sana in corpore sano*" (a healthy mind in a healthy body).

Advocated by Plato; self-restraint (sophrosyne) is one of his four core virtues of the ideal city, and was echoed by Aristotle. Aquinas didn't think that temperance eradicates our desire for bodily pleasure. Nor did he think that temperance is a matter of desiring physical pleasure less. Such a description suggests that physical gratification is an innately deficient type of enjoyment. Yet Aquinas denies this. Physical pleasure, he says, is the result of the body's natural operations (ST II-IIae 141.4). According to Aquinas, the purpose of temperance is *to refine the way we enjoy bodily pleasures*. Specifically, it creates in the agent a *proper sense of moderation with respect to what is pleasurable*. For a person can more easily subordinate herself to reason when her passions are not excessive or deficient<sup>77</sup>.

Like prudence, temperance is a cardinal virtue. There are a host of subsidiary virtues that fall under temperance because they serve to modify the most insatiable human passions. Aquinas argues that humility is a part of temperance. Humility aims to restrain the immoderate desire for what one cannot achieve. Meekness, clemency, and studiousness are parts of temperance. They, too, restrain certain appetitive drives: specifically anger, the desire to punish, and the desire to pursue vain curiosities<sup>78</sup>.

With temperance, we have the ability to subdue those passions which cause us to lose focus on our quest for areté: "*mens sana in corpore sano*".

*Humility* is the root of virtue – it gives us our understanding of our position in the scheme of things, and illustrates what we can offer to the betterment of society of our inner-self as it is made real by our quest for areté. *Prudence* is the charioteer of the virtues and involves not only the ability to decide how to achieve a certain end, but also the ability to reflect upon and determine good ends consistent with the aim of living well overall. *Justice* directs us to contribute to society in accordance with our abilities, capacities, and capabilities, as well as to extend to each person what he or she deserves. *Fortitude* is what helps us to see our tasks through, with honor and integrity in reaching a goal that is consistent with the common good. And *temperance* is the ability to subdue those passions which cause us to lose focus on our quest for areté.

## VI. Chastity/Purity (Latin: *castitas*, Greek: *hagneia*)

*"Always aim at complete harmony of thought and word and deed. Always aim at purifying your thoughts and everything will be well."* ~ Mahatma Gandhi

*"A pure heart is superlatively rare and even more attractive."* ~ J.S.B. Morse

*"Blessed are the pure in heart, for they shall see God"* (Matthew 5:8)

The words "chaste" and "chastity" stem from the Latin adjective *castus* meaning "pure".

Purity is the virtue of benevolence—acting without any trace of evil or selfish motives. Intentions are pure only when they are free of self-interest, egoism, desire, envy, cruelty, spite,

<sup>77</sup> Internet Encyclopedia of Philosophy - A Peer-reviewed Academic Resource: Thomas Aquinas: Moral Philosophy (<http://www.iep.utm.edu/aq-moral>)

<sup>78</sup> *ibid.*

greed, malice, lust, trickery, and dishonesty. Motives are pure only when they are free of power, control, and coercion<sup>79</sup>

For the Aztecs, Nahua value theory sees balance and purity jointly as the condition that is ideal as well as intrinsically valuable and worth-cultivating for humans. To the degree humans approximate balance-and-purity in their lives, they perfect their humanness and flourish; to the degree they do not, they destroy their humanness and suffer beastly, miserable lives<sup>80</sup>.

Purity, according to biblical language, is to be morally clean, without blemish.

For the Hindus, a life of virtue is called the dharmic life and one of the virtues is *Saucha* (inner purity)

It is also described as abstaining from sexual conduct according to one's state in life; the practice of courtly love and romantic friendship. Cleanliness through cultivated good health and hygiene, and maintained by refraining from intoxicants. To be honest with oneself, one's family, one's friends, and to all of humanity. Embracing of moral wholesomeness and achieving purity of thought – through education and betterment. The ability to refrain from being distracted and influenced by hostility, temptation or corruption.

Keeping ourselves pure keeps us in balance with life. It allows us to pursue our quest for areté without distraction and with pure motives.

#### VII. Diligence (Latin: *industria*, Greek: *epiméleia*)

*"Being forced to work, and forced to do your best, will breed in you temperance and self-control, diligence and strength of will, cheerfulness and content, and a hundred virtues which the idle will never know". ~ Charles Kingsley*

*"Prefer diligence before idleness, unless you esteem rust above brightness". ~ Plato*

Diligence is steadfast application, assiduousness and industry; the virtue of hard work. It is one of the seven heavenly virtues<sup>81</sup>. Diligence is a zealous and careful nature in one's actions and work; decisive work ethic, steadfastness in belief, fortitude, and the capability of not giving up. Budgeting one's time; monitoring one's own activities to guard against laziness. Upholding one's convictions at all times, especially when no one else is watching (integrity).

Diligence helps us to achieve areté by giving us the drive and industriousness to see our quest through to the end – whatever that may be.

#### VIII. Patience (Latin: *patientia*, Greek: *makrothumia*)

*"Have patience with all things, But, first of all with yourself." ~ Saint Francis de Sales*

*"A man who is a master of patience is master of everything else." ~ George Savile*

*"Genius is eternal patience." ~ Michelangelo*

<sup>79</sup> Haidt, Jonathan (2012). *The Righteous Mind: Why Good People Are Divided by Politics and Religion*. Pantheon. pp. 448.

<sup>80</sup> Internet Encyclopedia of Philosophy - A Peer-reviewed Academic Resource: *Aztec Philosophy* (<http://www.iep.utm.edu/aztec/>)

<sup>81</sup> A list of the seven heavenly virtues appeared in an epic poem entitled *Psychomachia*, or *Battle/Contest of the Soul*, written by Aurelius Clemens Prudentius, d. abt. 410 A.D.. It entails the battle between good virtues and evil vices. The virtues are identified as *chastity, temperance, charity, diligence, patience, kindness, and humility*.

Makrothumia means patience without reaction (by implication, without reaction towards others). It is something that can be perfected. Longanimity (a disposition to bear injuries patiently) – Calmness in the face of suffering and adversity, that is, (objectively) forbearance or (subjectively) fortitude: longsuffering, patience; good-natured tolerance of delay or incompetence. The term macros means “long (in place [distant] or time [neuter plural])” – the term thymos means “passion (as if breathing hard): fierceness, indignation, wrath; passion, angry, heat, anger forthwith boiling up and soon subsiding again.” Makrothumia (related to love) is patience in respect to persons, while Hupomone (endurance – related to hope) is putting up with things or circumstances<sup>82</sup>.

*Patience* is the state of endurance under difficult circumstances, which can mean persevering in the face of delay or provocation without acting on annoyance/anger in a negative way; or exhibiting forbearance when under strain, especially when faced with longer-term difficulties. Patience is the level of endurance one can take before negativity. It is also used to refer to the character trait of being steadfast<sup>83</sup>. It helps us to create a sense of peaceful stability and community rather than suffering, hostility, and antagonism.

#### IX. **Kindness** (Latin: *benignus/humanitas*, Greek: *chrestotes*)

*“Be kind, for everyone you meet is fighting a harder battle.” ~ Plato*

*“Three things in human life are important: the first is to be kind; the second is to be kind; and the third is to be kind.” ~ Henry James*

*“Kindness is a language which the deaf can hear and the blind can see.” ~ Mark Twain*

The Latin term *benignus* (“benevolent”) can be equated to kindness, benevolence, friendliness, courtesy, liberality, bounty, favor, lenity and mercy. The Greek *humanitas* has to do with human nature, civilization and kindness. *Humanitas* was a style of thought, not a formal doctrine. It asserted man’s importance as a cultivated being, in control of his moral universe. The man who practiced *humanitas* was confident of his worth, courteous to others, decent in his social conduct, and active in his political role.

xrēstótēs (“useful kindness”) refers to meeting real needs, in God’s way, in His timing (fashion) xrēstótēs (“divine kindness”) is the Spirit-produced goodness which meets the need and avoids human harshness (cruelty). *chrestotes*, which signifies more than goodness as a quality—it is goodness in righteous action, goodness expressing itself in deeds.

Kindness is goodness in righteous action, expressing itself in deeds.

#### X. **Faith** (Latin: *fides*, Greek: *pistis*)

*“And now these three remain: faith, hope and love. But the greatest of these is love.” (1 Corinthians 13:13)*

*“Now faith is the substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen.” (Hebrews 11:1)*

*“That deep emotional conviction of the presence of a superior reasoning power, which is revealed in the incomprehensible universe, forms my idea of God.” ~ Albert Einstein*

<sup>82</sup> Spiros Zodhiates in *The Complete Word Study Dictionary of the New Testament* (p. 939)

<sup>83</sup> Wikipedia – the free encyclopedia: *Patience* (<http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Patience>)

*"Faith is a knowledge within the heart, beyond the reach of proof."* ~ Khalil Gibran

*Pistis*, the Greek word for faith denotes intellectual and emotional acceptance of a proposition. To Valentinus, faith is primarily intellectual/emotional in character and consists accepting a body of teaching as true<sup>84</sup>.

Faith is confidence or trust in a person, thing, deity, view, or in the doctrines or teachings of a religion. It can also be defined as belief that is not based on proof,[1] as well as confidence based on some degree of warrant<sup>85</sup>.

Faith is always a gift from God, and never something that can be produced by people. In short, *pistis* ("faith") for the believer is "God's divine persuasion" – and therefore distinct from human belief (confidence), yet involving it<sup>86</sup>.

#### XI. **Hope** (Latin: *spes*, Greek: *elpis*)

*"I find hope in the darkest of days, and focus in the brightest. I do not judge the universe."* ~ Dalai Lama

*"Three grand essentials to happiness in this life are something to do, something to love, and something to hope for."* ~ Joseph Addison

*"A strong mind always hopes, and has always cause to hope."* ~ Thomas Carlyle

Hope is a combination of the *desire* for something and *expectation* of receiving it. Like all virtues, it arises from the will, not the passions<sup>87</sup>. Like *Salus* (Salvation, Security), *Ops* (Abundance, Prosperity), and *Victoria* (Victory), *Spes* was a power that had to come from the gods, in contrast to divine powers that resided within the individual such as *Mens* (Intelligence), *Virtus* (Virtue), and *Fides* (Faith, Fidelity, Trustworthiness)<sup>88</sup>.

If *faith* is our reliance and trust in things not seen or proven and gives us the ability to believe in something greater/spiritual, then *hope* is our desire and expectation of completing our transition to our *telos* through our quest for *areté*. It is *hope* that fuels our *diligence* but *faith* that feeds our *patience*.

#### XII. **Love** (Latin: *caritas*, Greek: *agape*)

*"Love is not patronizing and charity isn't about pity, it is about love. Charity and love are the same -- with charity you give love, so don't just give money but reach out your hand instead."* ~ Mother Teresa

*"The simplest acts of kindness are by far more powerful than a thousand heads bowing in prayer."* ~ Mahatma Gandhi

<sup>84</sup> The Gnostic Society Library: *Faith (pistis) and Knowledge (gnosis)* ([http://gnosis.org/library/valentinus/Faith\\_Knowledge.htm](http://gnosis.org/library/valentinus/Faith_Knowledge.htm))

<sup>85</sup> Wikipedia – the free encyclopedia: *Faith* (<http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Faith>)

<sup>86</sup> Bible Hub: 4102. *Pistis* (<http://biblehub.com/greek/4102.htm>)

<sup>87</sup> Wikipedia – the free encyclopedia: *Hope* ([http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Hope\\_%28virtue%29](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Hope_%28virtue%29))

<sup>88</sup> Wikipedia – the free encyclopedia: *Spes* (<http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Spes>)



*"In charity to all mankind, bearing no malice or ill will to any human being, and even compassionating those who hold in bondage their fellow men, not knowing what they do."* ~ John Quincy Adams

Love, in the sense of an unlimited loving kindness towards all others, is held to be the ultimate perfection of the human spirit, because it is said to both glorify and reflect the nature of God. Such love is self-sacrificial. a supernatural virtue that helps us love God and our neighbors, more than ourselves<sup>89</sup>.

Agape is described as "unconditional love" and has been described in Christian theology as the love of God or Christ for humankind. In the New Testament, it refers to the covenant love of God for humans, as well as the human reciprocal love for God; the term necessarily extends to the love of one's fellow man<sup>90</sup>.

Greek philosophers at the time of Plato and other ancient authors have used forms of the word to denote love of a spouse or family, or affection for a particular activity, in contrast to *philia* (an affection that could denote friendship, brotherhood or generally non-sexual affection) and *eros*, an affection of a sexual nature. Thomas Jay Oord has defined *agape* as "an intentional response to promote well-being when responding to that which has generated ill-being."

*Agape* received a broader usage under later Christian writers as the word that specifically denoted *Christian love* or *charity*. "Sharing what's valuable in life means not just giving away material goods, but also time, attention, wisdom and energy — the things that create a strong, rich and diverse community<sup>91</sup>."

In Christian theology charity, Latin *caritas*, is by Thomas Aquinas understood as "the friendship of man for God", which "unites us to God". He holds it as "the most excellent of the virtues". Further, Aquinas holds that "the habit of charity extends not only to the love of God, but also to the love of our neighbor<sup>92</sup>."

Charity is held to be the ultimate perfection of the human spirit, because it is said to both glorify and reflect the nature of God. Confusion can arise from the multiple meanings of the English word "love". The love that is *caritas* is distinguished by its origin, being divinely infused into the soul, and by its residing in the will rather than emotions, regardless of what emotions it stirs up. According to Aquinas, charity is an absolute requirement for happiness, which he holds as man's last goal.

These are only a few of the virtues ascribed to chivalry but they provide a good starting point. They speak of how we behave in given situations and the aspects that govern our reactions. From Greek philosophy to Christian teachings we can learn how to best approach our quest for *areté*, and our realization of our *telos*:

*Humility* is the root of virtue – it gives us our understanding of our position in the scheme of things, and illustrates what we can offer to the betterment of society of our inner-self as it is made real by our quest for *areté*. *Prudence* is the charioteer of the virtues and involves not only the ability to decide how to achieve a certain end, but also the ability to reflect upon and determine good ends consistent with

<sup>89</sup> Wikipedia – the free encyclopedia: *Seven Virtues* ([http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Seven\\_virtues](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Seven_virtues))

<sup>90</sup> Wikipedia – the free encyclopedia: *Agape* (<http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Agape>)

<sup>91</sup> Scott Farrell, Chivalry Today: *The Seven Knightly Virtues*, 9/5/2002 (<http://chivalrytoday.com/knightly-virtues/>)

<sup>92</sup> Wikipedia – the free encyclopedia: *Charity* ([http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Charity\\_%28virtue%29](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Charity_%28virtue%29))

the aim of living well overall. *Justice* directs us to contribute to society in accordance with our abilities, capacities, and capabilities, as well as to extend to each person what he or she deserves. *Fortitude* is what helps us to see our tasks through, with honor and integrity in reaching a goal that is consistent with the common good. And *temperance* is the ability to subdue those passions which cause us to lose focus on our quest for areté.

*Chastity* is the inner purity with which we should conduct ourselves. It is the restraint from being distracted by our carnal needs and a focus on the morally clean. *Diligence* is our ability to be steadfast in our task or mission. It is being solid in our convictions and work. *Patience* is endurance without reaction – it is persevering. And *Kindness* is goodness in righteous action, expressing itself in noble deeds.

*Faith* is our reliance and trust in things not seen or proven and gives us the ability to believe in something greater/spiritual. *Hope* is our desire and expectation of completing our transition to our *telos* through our quest for areté. It is *hope* that fuels our *diligence* but *faith* that feeds our *patience*. Unconditional *love/charity* extends to love of neighbor, and gives us the desire to share of ourselves, our time, attention, wisdom and energy in addition to our possessions.

### The Christian Chivalric (moral) Code

We have briefly discussed the virtues as they are the various behaviors that help us to enact our own personal moral code based on intuitive ethics. From a religious perspective the intuitive moral code was written into a set of rules for the children of Israel, called the ten commandments. It covers both the spiritual and physical realms.

The biblical ten commandments state:

- I. *"You shall have no other gods before Me."*
- II. *"You shall not make for yourself a carved image--any likeness of anything that is in heaven above, or that is in the earth beneath, or that is in the water under the earth."*
- III. *"You shall not take the name of the LORD your God in vain."*
- IV. *"Remember the Sabbath day, to keep it holy."*
- V. *"Honor your father and your mother."*
- VI. *"You shall not murder."*
- VII. *"You shall not commit adultery."*
- VIII. *"You shall not steal."*
- IX. *"You shall not bear false witness against your neighbor."*
- X. *"You shall not covet your neighbor's house; you shall not covet your neighbor's wife, nor his male servant, nor his female servant, nor his ox, nor his donkey, nor anything that is your neighbor's."*

About 1,400 years later, the 10 Commandments were summed up in the New Testament at Matthew 22, when Jesus was confronted by the religious "experts" of the day<sup>93</sup>: *"Teacher, which is the greatest commandment in the Law?" Jesus replied: " 'Love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your mind.' This is the first and greatest commandment. And the second is like it: 'Love your neighbor as yourself.' All the Law and the Prophets hang on these two commandments"* (Matthew 22:36-40).

Christ said, "Do not think that I have come to abolish the Law or the Prophets; I have not come to abolish them but to fulfill them." (Matthew 5:17) and a reflective reading of Christ's teaching reveals that the first four commandments given to the children of Israel are contained in the statement: *"Love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your mind."* The last six commandments are enclosed in the statement: *"Love your neighbor as yourself."*

Christ didn't rewrite or change the commandments – He summarized them. He was showing that both the spiritual and physical morals are important. First, centering one's self with the spiritual brings the benefits alluded to previously. It gives us a sense of belonging to something greater, powerful, meaningful. Christ reminded us that there should be only one singular focus of our spiritual life, and it should be where we put the first fruits of our attention and effort. By doing so, we focus our attention on the greater good, the shared life experience, nature and the cosmos. His second commandment was a summation of the last six, and deals with the physical – with our relationship with other humans. When we give attention to both the spiritual and physical relationships, we are cultivating positive outcomes in both realms.

<sup>93</sup> <http://www.10-commandments.org/>

The International fellowship for Chivalry-Now has a chivalric code<sup>94</sup> called “the 12 trusts of Chivalry Now”. It describes 12 goals of character:

- I. I will develop my life for the greater good.
- II. I will place character above riches, and concern for others above personal wealth.
- III. I will never boast, but cherish humility instead.
- IV. I will speak the truth at all times, and forever keep my word.
- V. I will defend those who cannot defend themselves.
- VI. I will honor and respect women, and refute sexism in all its guises.
- VII. I will uphold justice by being fair to all.
- VIII. I will be faithful in love and loyal in friendship.
- IX. I will abhor scandals and gossip-neither partake nor delight in them.
- X. I will be generous to the poor and to those who need help.
- XI. I will forgive when asked, that my own mistakes will be forgiven.
- XII. I will live my life with courtesy and honor from this day forward.

Chivalry-Now states: *“To resurrect a new chivalry in modern times (more specifically, in our personal lives), it would be helpful to have some sort of template or code to guide us, and as a reminder of what chivalry is all about.”*

When we look at what we have been calling Natural Law, or intuitive ethics we see a) care v. harm, b) fairness v. cheating, c) loyalty v. betrayal, d) authority v. subversion, e) sanctity v. degradation f) liberty v. oppression. We can see how both the 10 Commandments & the 2 from Christ, and the 12 Trusts all fit within the realm of Natural Law. The difference is the addition of the spiritual aspect in the commandments, but then again, ‘developing our lives for the greater good’ also has a spiritual component of sorts.

Utilitarianism is a teleological system – an ethical system that determines morality by the end result. Utilitarianism began with the philosophies of Jeremy Bentham (1748-1832) and John Stuart Mill (1806-1873). Utilitarianism gets its name from Bentham’s test question, *“What is the use of it?”* (*telos*). I think what is called for is our Natural Law but also the spiritual aspect that is shown to have benefit, nay – *necessity*. With that in mind, we find that the commandments fit within *Divine Law* from which Natural Law flows.

These ideals are also found in the pages of Holy Scripture as well as on men’s hearts. As are early models of chivalry: Moses, Joshua, Samson, Daniel, Gideon, David, the mighty biblical men of valor. All of these heroes could rightly be described as knights-errant with a devotion to God’s holy commands. All were champions of those virtues which would, centuries later, be part of what is called chivalry<sup>95</sup>:

*“Wash yourselves, make yourselves clean; Remove the evil of your deeds from My sight. Cease to do evil. Learn to do good. Seek justice. Reprove the ruthless. Defend the orphan. Plead for the widow.”* (Isaiah 1:16 & 17)

*“Thus says the Lord, ‘Do justice and righteousness, and deliver the one who has been robbed from the power of his oppressor. Also do not mistreat or do violence to the stranger, the orphan or the widow; and do not shed innocent blood in this place.’”* (Jeremiah 22:3)

<sup>94</sup> The International Fellowship of Chivalry-Now: *The 12 Trusts* (<http://www.chivalrynow.net/articles/trusts.htm>)

<sup>95</sup> Vital Signs Ministries (<http://www.vitalsignsministries.org/index.php/articles/code-of-chivalry/>)

*"Vindicate the weak and fatherless. Do justice to the afflicted and destitute. Rescue the weak and needy. Deliver them out of the hand of the wicked." (Psalm 82:3 & 4)*

*"Pure and undefiled religion in the sight of our God and Father is this: to visit orphans and widows in their distress, and to keep oneself unstained by the world." (James 1:27)*

*"Deliver those who are being taken away to death, and those who are staggering to slaughter, Oh hold them back. If you say, 'See, we did not know this,' does He not consider it Who weighs the hearts? And does He not know it Who keeps your soul? And will He not render to man according to his work?" (Proverbs 24:11 & 12)*

Christ developed and then gave His life for the greater good. He placed His character above earthly riches and His concern for others above personal wealth. He was humble and knew His position in the scheme of things. He spoke the truth and was often in trouble for it. He kept His promises. He defended the defenseless. He honored women. He was fair to all. He was faithful in love and loyal in friendship. He did not gossip or make scandals. He was generous to the poor and those who needed help. He forgave, and asked forgiveness from God (the 'Lord's Prayer'). He lived His life with courtesy and honor. Christ is an exemplar of my personal Christian chivalric code.

### ***My quest for Areté***

*"Knightly character is art, not nature – something that needs to be achieved, not something that can be relied upon to happen." ~ C.S. Lewis*

*"Chivalry? Why maiden, she is the nurse of pure and high affection, the stay of the oppressed, the redresser of grievances, the curb of the power of the tyrant. Nobility were but an empty name without her. And liberty finds the best protection in her lance and sword." ~ Sir Walter Scott, Ivanhoe*

I see my *telos* as living a spiritual/religious and physical life in accordance with Divine Law (ethics) as defined by my religious beliefs. When attempting to living my life as exemplified by the life of Christ, I will find both the spiritual and physical components addressing my needs as a fulfilled being. Giving of myself to others, standing up for my principles, respecting others for their God-given gifts, protecting those who cannot protect themselves, and attesting to a life of Christian chivalry.

*"It is then that life expresses itself as a Quest for the Holy Grail. Our every experience, no matter how mundane, becomes a spiritual lesson. In such a quest, our every action is judged by our dedication to truth, either adding to or subtracting from our spiritual growth<sup>96</sup>." I believe that it is our spiritual growth that will propel us to a new and better world. It is when we understand that we have been given an innate sense of ethics, and with our personal (chivalric/religious/spiritual) code, we map our actions against those ethics, and attempt to realize the *areté* of our *telos*.*

Whatever your belief, join the quest, and help to drive back the darkness. Whatever spiritual source you choose, the road is clear. Intuitive ethics Natural Law, Divine Law all point to the same goal. Myself, I will live by Christian Chivalry – not the chivalry of old, where the church was misguided during the crusades, but older yet – where Christ defined a Way of life. I will Quest for Areté as a Christian Knight Errant. "But as for me and my household, we will serve the LORD." (Joshua 24:15)

<sup>96</sup> The International Fellowship of Chivalry-Now: *The Grail* (<http://www.chivalrynow.net/grail.htm>)