

Introduction:

1. Introduction and summary of Book of Ruth leading to the Scriptural circumstance.
2. Reading of text.
3. Scripture and text point to esteem, or respect, in which God and humans hold those who are loyal for righteous reasons.
4. Here we wish to examine the idea of loyalty for righteous reasons and the esteem received because of it.

I. Loyalty to loved ones brings esteem:

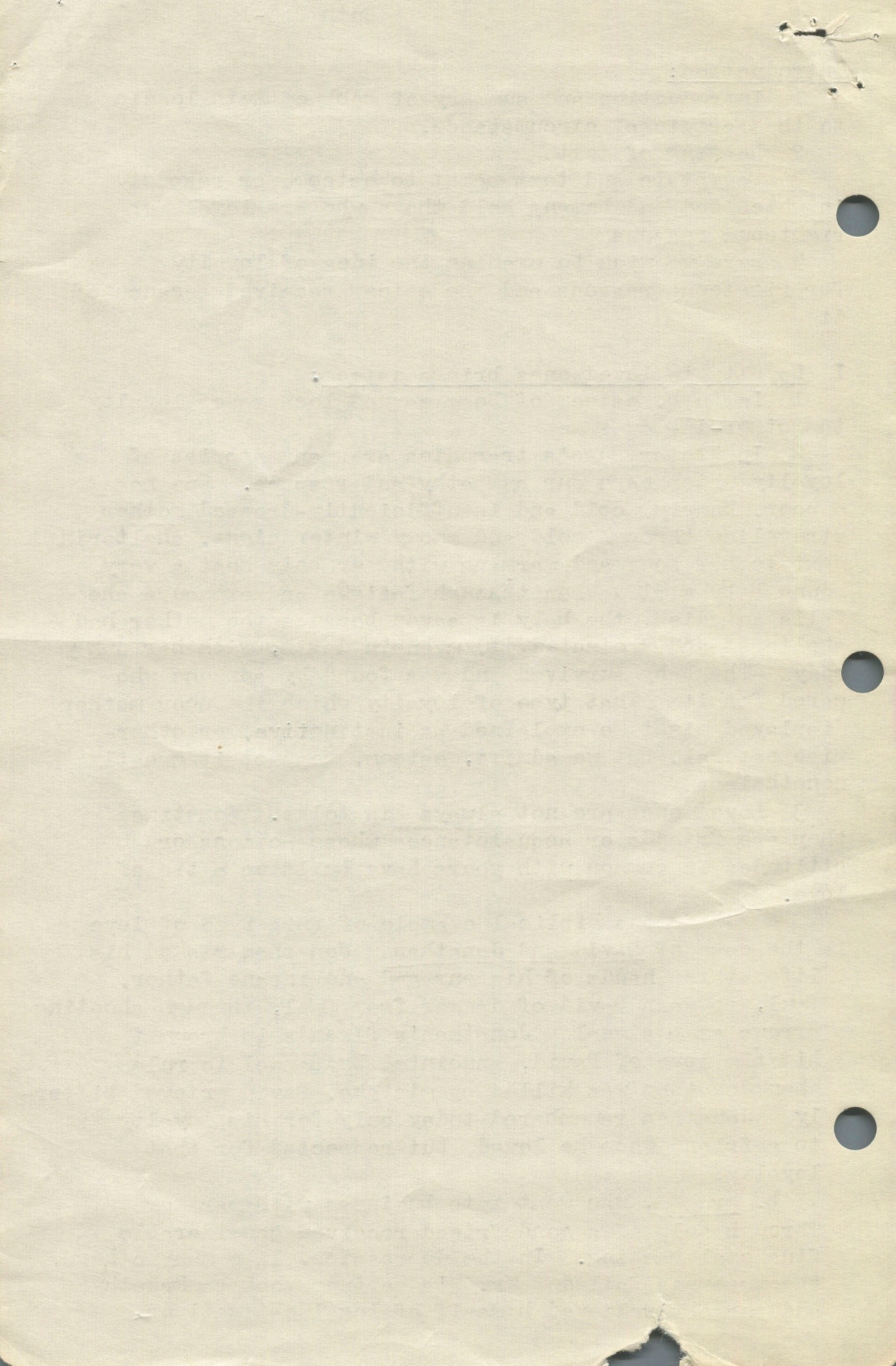
1. In Ruth, esteem of Boaz earned because of loyalty to mother-in-law.

2. In Victor Hugo's tragedies are many stories of loyalty which earn our sympathy and respect. One has a poor, hungry, cold and insufficiently-dressed mother struggling through cold and snowy winter night, sheltering next to her body and warming with her body heat a very young baby girl. When through fatigue and exposure she falls and dies, the baby is saved because the mother had sheltered and protected it, even in death, with her own body. The baby survived and was found by someone who cared for it. That type of loyalty which the poor mother displayed might be explained as instinctive, or otherwise natural, but we admire, esteem, respect it greatly nonetheless.

3. Loved ones are not always kin folks. Sometimes they are friends or acquaintances whose actions or attitudes in common with yours have built up a tie of love.

a. A famous Biblical example of this type of love is the case of David and Jonathan. Jonathan risked his life at the hands of his enraged and insane father, Saul, to warn David of danger from Saul, through shooting arrows as a signal. Jonathan's friendship brought him the love of David, anointed by Samuel to rule. When Jonathan was killed by mistake, David grieved bitterly. Jonathan remembered today only for his loyalty to a friend whom he loved, but respected for that loyalty.

b. Mr. W., who went into business with partner. Through help of a good friend received considerable financial backing. In the depression, like many others, the business failed. Mr. W's partner took bankruptcy and thereby relieved himself of legal obligations.

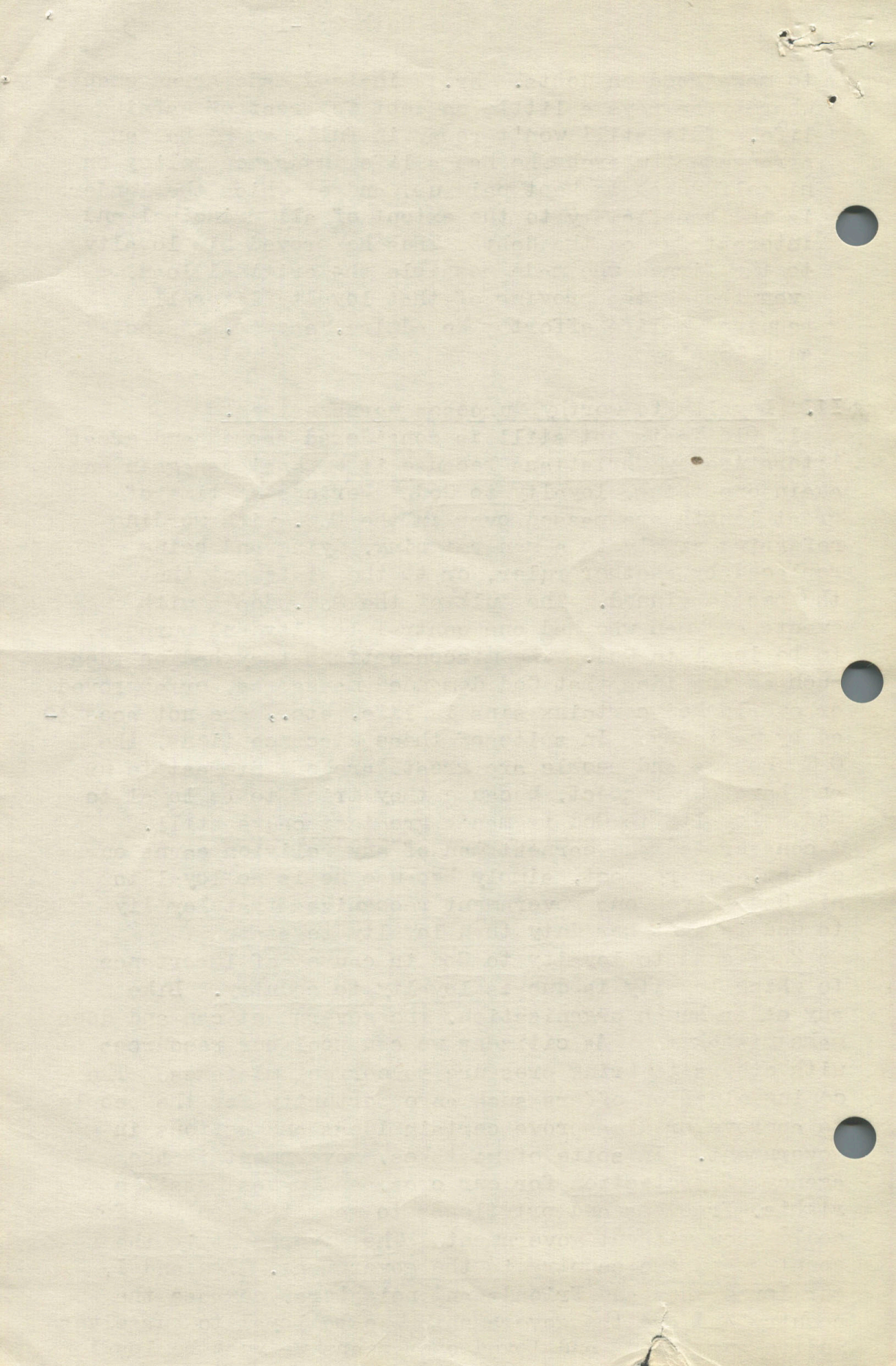


to make good on debts. Mr. W instead made arrangements whereby he pays a little on debt for rest of earning life. This still won't repay in full, so he has an arrangement whereby he has a life insurance policy on himself which is kept paid up, and of which the lender is the beneficiary to the extent of all principal and interest due on the debt. Thus he proved his loyalty to the firm who made possible the original loan, even though the proving of that loyalty literally required a life effort. We admire, esteem, respect such loyalty.

### III: Loyalty to worthy purposes earns esteem.

1. Old Testament still is considered sacred and great literature by Christians because it emphasizes again and again one thing, loyalty to God. Periods of time of great length are passed over in the O.T. with wording referring simply to a man reigning, dying and being replaced by another ruler; or to the statement that the people sinned. The bulk of the O.T. deals with events and men who had one central loyalty and purpose, to be loyal to God. The misconceptions they had on ideas such as the idea that God demanded massacres, or approved or overlooked certain sins in life, etc., are not accepted by us today. In spite of these misconceptions, the O.T. heroes and people are great, are of interest to us and have our respect, because they tried to be loyal to God. Loyalty to God is man's greatest cause still. A consecrated and earnest man of any religion earns our esteem, our respect, simply because he is so loyal to his God. Even our government recognizes that loyalty to God is a higher duty than loyalty to state.

2. Second to loyalty to God in causes of importance to which loyalty is due is loyalty to country. Like any other human organization, the government can and does make mistakes. As citizens we can pool our resources with others to bring pressure to correct mistakes. The coming election offers such an opportunity for the people to approve or disapprove certain ideas and actions in government. In spite of mistakes, government is the agency of protection for our homes, and makes possible rights, freedoms and privileges to many that only a few could know without government. The government is the country and the country is the government. You and I, our loved ones and friends and neighbors, compose the country and are the government. To be loyal to ourselves and to our friends and loved ones means we must be loyal



to the country. That is why when danger threatens us and our freedoms, as it is today, we must support the government, be loyal to the country, in guarding against such dangers. Each of us owes a debt of service to his country for the rights it protects for us. Service in the military thus becomes not ~~something~~ something to hate because of its hardness, but something to be done in a willing and cheerful spirit to the best of one's ability. It is a token of loyalty to a great cause, the case of protection and maintenance of home and freedoms. We are right in giving recognition and honors to war heroes, for they earn esteem and respect for outstanding loyalty to a great cause.

3. There are many other great causes to which loyalty is due. The person loyal to good causes always wins our esteem, our respect.

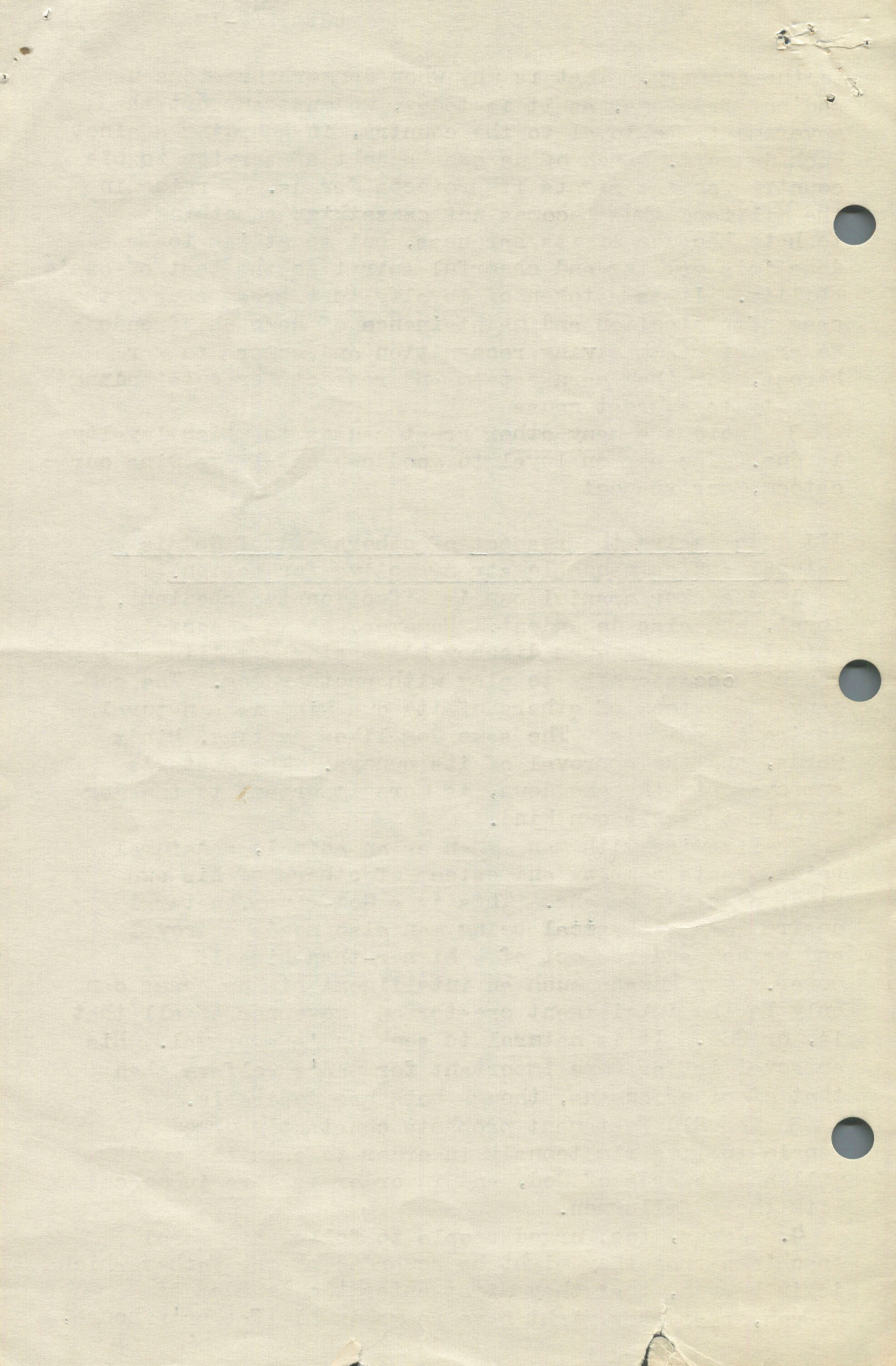
III. To desire the respect of others and of God is a natural and commendable strong motive for action.

1. A cocker spaniel pup is affectionate, obedient, loyal, and also dependent. However, he is a social animal, and will even disobey his master's calling and run off occasionally to play with another dog. The company and esteem of others of its own kind is a natural desire in animals. The same dog likes petting, kind words, and the approval of its owners. The master's approval, in the showdown, is more important to the dog than that of his own kind.

2. Likewise with man. Man as an animal, a natural being, wants company and esteem of others of his own kind, of other humans. This is a God-given, natural desire. As a physical being man also needs approval and esteem and respect of a higher-than-himself power. For humans such an intelligent higher power can only be the intelligent creator and governor of all that is, or God. It is natural to seek God's approval. His approval is far more important for man's welfare than that of other humans, though both are desirable.

3. The Old Testament prophets constantly urged people to live righteously in order to earn the good will and rewards of God, and in order to live in peace with their fellowmen.

4. Jesus, too, urged people to follow his moral teachings that they might be rewarded by the Father which is in heaven, that they might enter the Kingdom of Heaven, that they might have rooms in his Father's house,





that they might have life eternal. In all this He was commending the desire to have the esteem of God.

Conclusion:

1. It is natural and commendable to desire the respect of others and of God.
2. The sure way to earn such esteem, respect and admiration is to be loyal to those whom we love and to worthy causes.
3. Loyalty to those we love is easier than to causes, but loyalty to great causes is just as necessary as loyalty to people.
4. May God help us to be loyal to Him, to worship of Him as done in our religion at church and chapel, and to our country.
5. Such loyalty will make us better soldiers, better citizens, better members of families, better friends, better individuals.
6. As Boaz said to Ruth for her loyalty to Naomi, may the Father say to you at the time of eternal judging, "a full reward be given you by the Lord, The God of Israel, under whose wings you have come to take refuge."

