

the COMMENTARY
AND
homilies of St. John Chrysostom
archbishop of constantinople,
on the
EPISTLES OF ST. PAUL THE APOSTLE
TO the
GALATIANS AND EPHESIANS.
The Oxford Translations Revised, with Additional Notes, by
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Preface.

St. Chrysostom's Commentary on the Epistle to the Galatians is continuous, according to chapter and verse, instead of being arranged in Homilies, with a moral or practical application at their close, as in his exposition of other Epistles. It was written in Antioch, as Montfaucon infers from a reference which the Author, makes upon Chap. i., ver. 16 (p. 20) to other of his writings, which certainly were written about the same time in that city. Vid. *Hom. de Mutal. Nom.*, Tom. III., p. 98, Ed. Ben. The year is uncertain, but seems not to have been earlier than a.d. 395.

The Homilies on the Epistle to the Ephesians have been by some critics assigned to the Episcopate at Constantinople, in consequence of certain imperfections in their composition, which seemed to argue absence of the comparative leisure which he enjoyed at Antioch. There is a passage too in Homily XI., pp. 231, 232, which certainly is very apposite to the Author's circumstance in the court of Eudoxia. Yet there are strong reasons for deciding that they too were delivered at Antioch. St. Babylas and St. Julian, both saints at Antioch, are mentioned familiarly, the former in Homily IX., p. 205, the latter in Homily XXI., pp. 342, 343. Monastic establishments in mountains in the neighborhood are spoken of in Homily VI., p. 165, and XIII., p. 248;³ and those near Antioch are famous in St. Chrysostom's history. A schism too is alluded to in Homily XI., p. 230, as existing in the community he was addressing, and that not about a question of doctrine; circumstances which are accurately fulfilled in the contemporary history of Antioch, and which are more or less noticed in the Homilies on 1 Corinthians, which were certainly delivered at Antioch.⁴

Moreover, he makes mention of the prevalence of superstitions, Gentile and Jewish, among the people whom he was addressing, in Homily VI., fin., p. 166, Homily XII., fin., p. 240, which is a frequent ground of complaint in his other writings against the Christians of Antioch: *vid.* in Gal. p. 15; in 1 Cor., Homily XII., §§ 13, 14; in Col., Homily VIII., fin.; *Contr. Jud.* I., pp. 386–388.

Since Evagrius, the last Bishop of the Latin succession in the schism, died in a.d. 392, these Homilies must have been composed before that date.

As to the Translations, the Editors have been favored with the former by a friend who conceals his name; and with the latter, by the Rev. William John Copeland, M.A., Fellow of Trinity College, Oxford.

J.H. Newman

³ Vid. also XXI., p. 338.

⁴ Vid. also Preface to Translation of Homilies on 1 Cor., p. xiii.



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Chapter I.

Verse 1-3

“Paul, an Apostle, (not from men, neither through man, but through Jesus Christ and God the Father, who raised Him from the dead;) and all the brethren which are with me, unto the Churches of Galatia: Grace to you and peace from God the Father, and our Lord Jesus Christ.”

The exordium⁶ is full of a vehement and lofty spirit, and not the exordium only, but also, so to speak, the whole Epistle. For always to address one’s disciples with mildness, even when they need severity is not the part of a teacher but it would be the part of a corrupter and enemy. Wherefore our Lord too, though He generally spoke gently to His disciples, here and there uses sterner language, and at one time pronounces a blessing, at another a rebuke. Thus, having said to Peter, “Blessed art thou, Simon Barjona,” ([Matt. xvi. 17.](#)) and having promised to lay the foundation of the Church upon his confession, shortly afterwards He says, “Get thee behind Me, Satan: thou art a stumbling block unto Me.” ([Matt. xvi. 23.](#)) Again, on another occasion, “Are ye also even yet without understanding?” ([Matt. xv. 16.](#)) And what awe He inspired them with appears from John’s saying, that, when they beheld Him conversing with the Samaritan woman, though they reminded Him to take food, no one ventured to say, “What seekest Thou, or why speakest thou with her?” ([John iv. 27.](#)) Thus taught, and walking in the steps of his Master, Paul hath varied his discourse according to the need of his disciples, at one time using knife and cautery, at another, applying mild remedies. To the Corinthians he says, “What will ye? shall I come unto you with a rod, or in love, and in a spirit of meekness?” ([1 Cor. vi. 21.](#)) but to the Galatians, “O foolish Gala-

5 [Properly so-called. His other works on the Scriptures are in the form of homilies, or expository sermons, with the exception of his continuous commentary on the first six chapters of Isaiah. But as Schaff says “his homilies are expository and his commentaries are homiletical.”—G.A.]

6 “The two threads which run through this Epistle—the defence of the Apostle’s own authority, and the maintenance of the doctrine of grace—are knotted together in the opening salutation. By expanding his official title into a statement of his direct commission from God, he meets the personal attack of his enemies; and by dwelling on the work of redemption in connection with the name of Christ ([v. 4.](#)) he resists their doctrinal errors.”—Lightfoot.—G.A.]

tians.” (Gal. iii. 1.) And not once only, but a second time, also he has employed this reproof, and towards the conclusion he says with a reproachful allusion to them, “Let no man trouble me;” (Gal. vi. 17.) but he soothes them again with the words, “My little children, of whom I am again in travail:” (Gal. iv. 19.) and so in many other instances.

Now that this Epistle breathes an indignant spirit, is obvious to every one even on the first perusal; but I must explain the cause of his anger against the disciples. Slight and unimportant it could not be, or he would not have used such vehemence. For to be exasperated by common matters is the part of the little-minded, morose, and peevish; just as it is that of the more redolent and sluggish to lose heart in weighty ones. Such a one was not Paul. What then was the offence which roused him? it was grave and momentous, one which was estranging them all from Christ, as he himself says further on, “Behold, I Paul say unto you, that if ye receive circumcision, Christ will profit you nothing;” (Gal. v. 2.) and again, “Ye who would be justified by the Law, ye are fallen away from Grace.” (Gal. v. 4.) What then is this? For it must be explained more clearly. Some of the Jews who believed, being held down by the prepossessions of Judaism, and at the same time intoxicated by vain-glory, and desirous of obtaining for themselves the dignity of teachers, came to the Galatians, and taught them that the observance of circumcision, sabbaths, and new-moons, was necessary, and that Paul in abolishing these things was not to be borne. For, said they, Peter and James and John, the chiefs of the Apostles and the companions of Christ, forbade them not. Now in fact they did not forbid these things, but this was not by way of delivering positive doctrine, but in condescension to the weakness of the Jewish believers, which condescension Paul had no need of when preaching to the Gentiles; but when he was in Judæa, he employed it himself⁷ also. But these deceivers, by withholding the causes both of Paul’s condescension and that of his brethren, misled the simpler ones, saying that he was not to be tolerated, for he appeared but yesterday, while Peter and his colleagues were from the first,—that he was a disciple of the Apostles, but they of Christ,—that he was single, but they were many, and pillars of the Church. They accused him too of acting a part; saying, that this very man who forbids circumcision observes the rite elsewhere, and preaches one way to you and another way to others.

Since Paul then saw the whole Galatian people in a state of excitement, a flame kindled against their Church, and the edifice shaken and tottering to its fall, filled with the mixed feelings of just anger and despondency, (which he has expressed in the words, “I could wish to be present with you now, and to change my voice,”—Gal. iv. 20.) he writes the Epistle as an answer to these charges. This is his aim from the very commencement, for the underminers of his reputation had said, The others were disciples of Christ but this man of the

7 [As is narrated, for example, in Acts xxi. 20–26, which was, Baur and his Tübingen critics to the contrary notwithstanding, in accordance with Paul’s principle and practice, as announced in 1 Cor. ix. 20.—G.A.]



“Apostles.” Wherefore he begins thus, “Paul, an Apostle not from men, neither through man.” For, these deceivers, as I was saying before, had said that this man was the last of all the Apostles and was taught by them, for Peter, James, and John, were both first called, and held a primacy among the disciples, and had also received their doctrines from Christ Himself; and that it was therefore fitting to obey them rather than this man; and that they forbade not circumcision nor the observance of the Law. By this and similar language and by depreciating Paul, and exalting the honor of the other Apostles, though not spoken for the sake of praising them, but of deceiving the Galatians, they induced them to adhere unreasonably to the Law. Hence the propriety of his commencement. As they disparaged his doctrine, saying it came from men, while that of Peter came from Christ, he immediately addresses himself to this point, declaring himself an apostle “not from men, neither through man.” It was Ananias who baptized him, but it was not he who delivered him from the way of error and initiated him into the faith; but Christ Himself sent from on high that wondrous voice, whereby He inclosed him in his net. For Peter and his brother, and John and his brother, He called when walking by the seaside, ([Matt. iv. 18.](#)) but Paul after His ascension into heaven. ([Acts. ix. 3, 4.](#)) And just as these did not require a second call, but straightway left their nets and all that they had, and followed Him, so this man at his first vocation pressed vigorously forward, waging, as soon as he was baptized, an implacable war with the Jews. In this respect he chiefly excelled the other Apostles, as he says, “I labored more abundantly than they all;” ([1 Cor. xv. 10.](#)) at present, however, he makes no such claim, but is content to be placed on a level with them. Indeed his great object was, not to establish any superiority for himself, but, to overthrow the foundation of their error. The not being “from men” has reference to all alike for the Gospel’s root and origin is divine, but the not being “through man” is peculiar to the Apostles; for He called them not by men’s agency, but by His own.⁸

But why does he not speak of his vocation rather than his apostolate, and say, “Paul” called “not by man?” Because here lay the whole question; for they said that the office of a teacher had been committed to him by men, namely by the Apostles, whom therefore it

8 “Not from men as an ultimate, nor through man as a mediate authority.”—Ellicott. “In the first clause, ‘from men,’ he distinguishes himself from the false apostles who did not derive their authority from God at all; in the second, ‘through man,’ he ranks himself with the twelve who were commissioned directly from God. The singular is used in second clause, ‘through man,’ because offices which emanate from a body of men are conferred by their single representative.”—Lightfoot. [“Paul has in second clause used the singular because the contrast is ‘through Jesus Christ.’”—Meyer.—G.A.]

behooved him to obey. But that it was not entrusted to him by men, Luke declares in the words, “As they ministered to the Lord, and fasted, the Holy Ghost said, Separate me Barnabas and Saul.” (Acts xiii. 2.)

From this passage it is manifest⁹ that the power of the Son and Spirit is one, for being commissioned by the Spirit, he says that he was commissioned by Christ. This appears in another place, from his ascription of the things of God to the Spirit, in the words which he addresses to the elders at Miletus: “Take heed unto yourselves, and to all the flock, in the which the Holy Ghost hath made you bishops.” (Acts xx. 28.) Yet in another Epistle he says, “And God hath set some in the Church, first Apostles, secondly prophets, thirdly teachers.” (1 Cor. xii. 28.) Thus he ascribes indifferently the things of the Spirit to God, and the things of God to the Spirit. Here too he stops the mouths of heretics, by the words “through Jesus Christ and God the Father;” for, inasmuch as they said this term “through” was applied to the Son as importing inferiority, see what he does. He ascribes it to the Father, thus teaching us not to prescribe laws to the ineffable Nature, nor define the degrees of Godhead which belong to the Father and Son. For to the words “through Jesus Christ” he has added, “and God the Father;” for if at the mention of the Father alone he had introduced the phrase “through whom,” they might have argued sophistically that it was peculiarly applicable to the Father, in that the acts of the Son were to be referred to Him. But he leaves no opening for this cavil, by mentioning at once both the Son and the Father, and making his language apply to both. This he does, not as referring the acts of the Son to the Father, but to show that the expression implies no distinction of Essence.¹⁰ Further, what can now be said by those, who have gathered a notion of inferiority from the Baptismal formula,—from our being baptized into the name of the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit?¹¹ For if the Son be inferior because He is named after the Father, what will they say seeing that, in the passage before us, the Apostle beginning from Christ proceeds to mention the Father?—but let us not even utter such a blasphemy, let us not swerve from the truth in our contention with them; rather let us preserve, even if they rave ten thousand times, the due measures of reverence. Since then it would be the height of madness and impiety to argue that the Son was greater than the Father because Christ was first named, so we dare not hold that the Son is inferior to the Father, because He is placed after Him in the Baptismal formula.

9 This digression, and others which follow, were occasioned by the controversies of the day; the Arians and Macedonians denying the co-equality and consubstantiality of Father, Son, and Holy Ghost.

10 [“To urge this use of διὰ in connection with Son and the Father as direct evidence for the ὁμοουσία of the Father and the Son (as Chrysostom and Theod.) may perhaps be rightly deemed precarious. Yet there is something very noticeable in this use of a common preposition with both the first and second persons of the Trinity by a writer so cumulative and yet for the most part so exact in his use of prepositions as St. Paul.”—Ellicott.—G.A.]

11 [That is, from the order of the three names.—G.A.]

“Who raised Him from the dead.”

Wherefore is it, O Paul, that, wishing to bring these Judaizers to the faith, you introduce none of those great and illustrious topics which occur in your Epistle to the Philippians, as, “Who, being in the form of God, counted it not a prize to be on an equality with God,” (Philip. ii. 6.) or which you afterwards declared in that to the Hebrews, “the effulgence of his glory, and the very image of His substance;” (Heb. i. 3.) or again, what in the opening of his Gospel the son of thunder sounded forth, “In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God;” (John i. 1..) or what Jesus Himself oftentimes declared to the Jews, “that His power and authority was equal to the Father’s?” (John v. 19, 27, &c.) Do you omit all these, and make mention of the economy of His Incarnation only, bringing forward His cross and dying? “Yes,” would Paul answer. For had this discourse been addressed to those who had unworthy conceptions of Christ, it would have been well to mention those things; but, inasmuch as the disturbance comes from persons who fear to incur punishment should they abandon the Law, he therefore mentions that whereby all need of the Law is excluded, I mean the benefit conferred on all through the Cross and the Resurrection. To have said that “in the beginning was the Word,” and that “He was in the form of God, and made Himself equal with God,” and the like, would have declared the divinity of the Word, but would have contributed nothing to the matter in hand. Whereas it was highly pertinent thereto to add, “Who raised Him from the dead,” for our chiefest benefit was thus brought to remembrance, and men in general are less interested by discourses concerning the majesty of God, than by those which set forth the benefits which come to mankind. Wherefore, omitting the former topic, he discourses of the benefits which had been conferred on us.

But here the heretics insultingly exclaim, “Lo, the Father raises the Son!” For when once infected, they are wilfully deaf to all sublimer doctrines; and taking by itself and insisting on what is of a less exalted nature, and expressed in less exalted terms, either on account of the Son’s humanity, or in honor of the Father, or for some other temporary purpose, they outrage, I will not say the Scripture, but themselves. I would fain ask such persons, why they say this? do they hope to prove the Son weak and powerless to raise *one* body? Nay, verily, faith in Him enabled the very shadows of those who believed in Him to effect the resurrection of the dead. (Acts. v. 15.) Then believers in Him, though mortal, yet by the very shadows of their earthly bodies, and by the garments which had touched these bodies, could raise the dead, but He could not raise Himself? Is not this manifest madness, a great stretch of folly? Hast thou not heard His saying, “Destroy this Temple, and in three days I will raise it up?” (John ii. 19.) and again, “I have power to lay down my life, and I have power to take it again?” (John x. 18.) Wherefore then is the Father said to have raised Him up, as also to have done other things which the Son Himself did? It is in honor of the Father, and in compassion to the weakness of the hearers.



“And all the brethren which are with me.”

Why is it that he has on no other occasion in sending an epistle added this phrase? For either he puts his own name only or that of two or three others, but here has mentioned the whole number and so has mentioned no one by name.

On what account then does he this?

They made the slanderous charge that he was singular in his preaching, and desired to introduce novelty in Christian teaching. Wishing therefore to remove their suspicion, and to show he had many to support him in his doctrine, he has associated with himself “the brethren,” to show that what he wrote he wrote with their accord.¹²

“Unto the Churches of Galatia.”

Thus it appears, that the flame of error had spread over not one or two cities merely, but the whole Galatian people. Consider too the grave indignation contained in the phrase, “unto the Churches of Galatia:” he does not say, “to the beloved” or “to the sanctified,” and this omission of all names of affection or respect, and this speaking of them as a society merely, without the addition “Churches of God,” for it is simply “Churches of Galatia,” is strongly expressive of deep concern and sorrow. Here at the outset, as well as elsewhere, he attacks their irregularities, and therefore gives them the name of “Churches,” in order to shame them, and reduce them to unity. For persons split into many parties cannot properly claim this appellation, for the name of “Church” is a name of harmony and concord.

“Grace to you and peace from God the Father, and our Lord Jesus Christ.”

This he always mentions as indispensable, and in this Epistle to the Galatians especially; for since they were in danger of falling from grace he prays that they may recover it again, and since they had come to be at war with God, he beseeches God to restore them to the same peace.

“God the Father.”

Here again is a plain confutation of the heretics, who say that John in the opening of his Gospel, where he says “the Word was God,” used the word Θεός without the article, to imply an inferiority in the Son’s Godhead; and that Paul, where he says that the Son was “in the form of God,” did not mean the Father, because the word Θεός is without the article. For what can they say here, where Paul says, ἀπὸ Θεοῦ Πατρὸς, and not ἀπὸ τοῦ Θεοῦ? And it is in no indulgent mood towards them that he calls God, “Father,” but by way of severe rebuke, and suggestion of the source whence they became sons, for the honor was vouchsafed to them not through the Law, but through the washing of regeneration. Thus everywhere,

12 [Meyer agrees with Lightfoot and Ellicott in the view that πάντες means not all the Christians of the place where he was (probably Ephesus), but only his traveling companions; but he differs from them in holding that “the impressive effect of the epistle could not but be strengthened by indicating that these brethren collectively desired to address the very same instructions, warnings and exhortations to the Galatians.”—G.A.]

even in his exordium, he scatters traces of the goodness of God, and we may conceive him speaking thus: "O ye who were lately slaves, enemies and aliens, what right have ye suddenly acquired to call God your Father? it was not the Law which conferred upon you this relationship; why do ye therefore desert Him who brought you so near to God, and return to your tutor?"¹³

But the Name of the Son, as well as that of the Father, had been sufficient to declare to them these blessings. This will appear, if we consider the Name of the Lord Jesus Christ with attention; for it is said, "thou shalt call His Name Jesus; for it is He that shall save His people from their sins;" ([Matt. i. 21.](#)) and the appellation of "Christ" calls to mind the unction of the Spirit.

Ver. 4. "Who gave himself for our sins."¹⁴

Thus it appears, that the ministry which He undertook was free and uncompelled; that He was delivered up by Himself, not by another. Let not therefore the words of John, "that the Father gave His only-begotten Son" ([John iii. 16.](#)) for us, lead you to derogate from the dignity of the Only-begotten, or to infer therefrom that He is only human. For the Father is said to have given Him, not as implying that the Son's ministry was a servile one, but to teach us that it seemed good to the Father, as Paul too has shown in the immediate context: "according to the will of our God, and Father." He says not "by the command," but "according to the will," for inasmuch as there is an unity of will in the Father and the Son, that which the Son wills, the Father wills also.

"For our sins,"¹⁵ says the Apostle; we had pierced ourselves with ten thousand evils, and had deserved the gravest punishment; and the Law not only did not deliver us, but it even condemned us, making sin more manifest, without the power to release us from it, or to stay the anger of God. But the Son of God made this impossibility possible for he remitted our sins, He restored us from enmity to the condition of friends, He freely bestowed on us numberless other blessings.

Ver. 4. "That He might deliver us out of this present evil world."

Another class of heretics¹⁶ seize upon these words of Paul, and pervert his testimony to an accusation of the present life. Lo, say they, he has called this present world evil, and

13 [The word is παιδαγωγός, the same that is used in [Gal. 3: 24, 25](#), and translated 'school-master' in the A.V., but 'tutor' in the Rev. Ver.—G.A.]

14 ["The Galatians had practically ignored the atoning death of Christ; compare [ii. 21](#) and [v. 4.](#)"]—Lightfoot.—G.A.]

15 ["The idea of satisfaction is implied not in the preposition ὑπέρ but the whole nature of the case."]—Meyer.—G.A.]

16 That is, the Manichees, who considered matter intrinsically evil, and paid divine honors to the sun, moon, and stars. Vid. Epiph. *Hær.* lxvi. [On Mani and the Manichean heresy see Schaff, *Church History*, Vol. II. pp. 498–508 where a full account of the literature is given also.—G.A.]



pray tell me what does “world” [age] αἰών mean but time measured by days and seasons? Is then the distinction of days and the course of the sun evil? no one would assert this even if he be carried away to the extreme of unreasonableness. “But” they say, “it is not the ‘time,’ but the present ‘life,’ which he hath called evil.” Now the words themselves do not in fact say this; but the heretics do not rest in the words, and frame their charge from them, but propose to themselves a new mode of interpretation. At least therefore they must allow us to produce our interpretation, and the rather in that it is both pious and rational. We assert then that evil cannot be the cause of good, yet that the present life is productive of a thousand prizes and rewards. And so the blessed Paul himself extols it abundantly in the words, “But if to live in the flesh, if this is the fruit of my work, then what I shall choose I wont not;” (Philip. i. 22.) and then placing before himself the alternative of living upon earth, and departing and being with Christ, he decides for the former. But were this life evil, he would not have thus spoken of it, nor could any one, however strenuous his endeavor, draw it aside into the service of virtue. For no one would ever use evil for good, fornication for chastity, envy for benevolence. And so, when he says, that “the mind of the flesh is not subject to the law of God, neither indeed can it be,” (Rom. viii. 7.) he means that vice, as such, cannot become virtue; and the expression, “evil world,” must be understood to mean evil actions, and a depraved moral principle. Again, Christ came not to put us to death and deliver us from the present life in that sense, but to leave us in the world, and prepare us for a worthy participation of our heavenly abode. Wherefore He saith to the Father, “And these are in the world, and I come to Thee; I pray not that Thou shouldest take them from the world, but that Thou shouldest keep them from the evil,” (John xvii. 11, 15.) i.e., from sin. Further, those who will not allow this, but insist that the present life is evil, should not blame those who destroy themselves; for as he who withdraws himself from evil is not blamed, but deemed worthy of a crown, so he who by a violent death, by hanging or otherwise, puts an end to his life, ought not to be condemned. Whereas God punishes such men more than murderers, and we all regard them with horror, and justly; for if it is base to destroy others, much more is it to destroy one’s self. Moreover, if this life be evil, murderers would deserve a crown, as rescuing us from evil. Besides this, they are caught by their own words, for in that they place the sun in the first, and the moon in the second rank of their deities, and worship them as the givers of many goods, their statements are contradictory. For the use of these and the other heavenly bodies, is none other than to contribute to our present life, which they say is evil, by nourishing and giving light to the bodies of men and animals and bringing plants to maturity. How is it then that the constitution of this “evil life” is so ministered to by those, who according to you are gods? Gods indeed they are not, far from it, but works of God created for our use; nor is this world evil. And if you tell me of murderers, of adulterers, of tomb-robbers, these things have nothing to do with the present life, for these offences proceed not from that life which we live in the flesh, but from a depraved

will. For, if they were necessarily connected with this life, as embraced in one lot with it, no man would be free or pure from them, for no man can escape the characteristic accidents of humanity, such as, to eat and drink, to sleep and grow, to hunger and thirst, to be born and die, and the like; no man can ever become superior to these, neither sinner nor just man, king nor peasant, We all are subject to the necessity of nature. And so if vice were an essential element of this life, no one could avoid it, any more than the things just mentioned. And let me not be told that good men are rare, for natural necessity is insuperable by all, so that as long as one virtuous man shall be found, my argument will in no wise be invalidated. Miserable, wretched man! what is it thou sayest? Is this life evil, wherein we have learnt to know God, and meditate on things to come, and have become angels instead of men, and take part in the choirs of the heavenly powers? What other proof do we need of an evil and depraved mind?

“Why then,” they say, “does Paul call the present life evil?” In calling the present world [age] evil, he has accommodated himself to our usage, who are wont to say, “I have had a bad day,” thereby complaining not of the time itself, but of actions or circumstances. And so Paul in complaining of evil principles of action has used these customary forms of speech; and he shows that Christ hath both delivered us from our offences, and secured us for the future. The first he has declared in the words, “Who gave Himself for our sins;” and by adding, “that He might deliver us out of this present evil world,” he has pronounced our future safety. For neither of these did the Law avail, but grace was sufficient for both.

Ver. 4. “According to the will of our God and Father.”¹⁷

Since they were terrified by their notion that by deserting that old Law and adhering to the new, they should disobey God, who gave the Law, he corrects their error, and says, that this seemed good to the Father also: and not simply “the Father,” but “our Father,” which he does in order to affect them by showing that Christ has made His Father our Father.

Ver. 5. “To whom be the glory for ever and ever. Amen.”

This too is new and unusual, for we never find the word, “Amen” placed at the beginning of an Epistle, but a good way on; here, however he has it in his beginning, to show that what he had already said contained a sufficient charge against the Galatians, and that his argument was complete, for a manifest offence does not require an elaborate crimination. Having spoken of the Cross, and Resurrection, of redemption from sin and security for the future, of the purpose of the Father, and the will of the Son, of grace and peace and His whole gift, he concludes with an ascription of praise.

Another reason for it is the exceeding astonishment into which he was thrown by the magnitude of the gift, the superabundance of the grace, the consideration who we were, and

17 [“And not by our own merits. cf. τοῦ καλέσαντος, v. 6.”—Lightfoot. “The salvation was willed by God to whom Christ was obedient (Philip. ii. 9).”—Meyer.—G.A.]

what God had wrought, and that at once and in a single moment of time. Unable to express this in words, he breaks out into a doxology, sending up for the whole world an eulogium, not indeed worthy of the subject, but such as was possible to him. Hence too he proceeds to use more vehement language; as if greatly kindled by a sense of the Divine benefits, for having said, "To whom be the glory for ever and ever, Amen," he commences with a more severe reproof.

Ver. 6. "I marvel that ye are so quickly¹⁸ removing from Him that called you in the grace of Christ, unto a different Gospel."

Like the Jews who persecuted Christ, they imagined their observance of the Law was acceptable to the Father, and he therefore shows that in doing this they displeased not only Christ, but the Father also, for that they fell away thereby not from Christ only, but from the Father also. As the old covenant was given not by the Father only, but also by the Son, so the covenant of grace proceeded from the Father as well as the Son, and Their every act is common: "All things whatsoever the Father hath are Mine." (*John xv. 16.*) By saying that they had fallen off from the Father, he brings a twofold charge against them, of an apostasy, and of an immediate apostasy. The opposite extreme a late apostasy, is also blameworthy, but he who falls away at the first onset, and in the very skirmishing, displays an example of the most extreme cowardice, of which very thing he accuses them also saying: "How is this that your seducers need not even time for their designs, but the first approaches suffice for your overthrow and capture? And what excuse can ye have? If this is a crime among friends, and he who deserts old and useful associates is to be condemned, consider what punishment he is obnoxious to who revolts from God that called him." He says, "I marvel," not only by way of reproof, that after such bounty, such a remission of their sins, such overflowing kindness, they had deserted to the yoke of servitude, but also in order to show, that the opinion he had had of them was a favorable and exalted one. For, had he ranked them among ordinary and easily deceived persons, he would not have felt surprise. "But since you," he says, "are of the noble sort and have suffered, much, I do marvel." Surely this was enough to recover and lead them back to their first expressions. He alludes to it also in the middle of the Epistle, "Did ye suffer so many things in vain? if it be indeed in vain." (*Gal. iii. 4.*) "Ye are removing;" he says not, "ye are removed," that is, "I will not believe or suppose that your seduction is complete;" this is the language of one about to recover them, which further on he expresses yet more clearly in the words, "I have confidence to you-ward in the Lord that ye will be none otherwise minded." (*Gal. v. 10.*)

"From Him that called you in the grace of Christ."

18 [This note of time helps to fix the date of the Epistle as being about 56 or 57 during Paul's two years' stay at Ephesus (*Acts 19: 10.*). So most modern expositors, though Lightfoot and some others put it later.—G.A.]



The calling is from the Father, but the cause of it is the Son. He it is who hath brought about reconciliation and bestowed it as a gift, for we were not saved by works in righteousness: or I should rather say that these blessings proceed from Both; as He says, “Mine are Thine, and Thine are Mine.” (John xvii. 10.) He says not “ye are removing from the Gospel” but “from God who called you,” a more frightful expression, and more likely to affect them. Their seducers did not act abruptly but gradually, and while they removed them from the faith in fact, left names unchanged. It is the policy of Satan not to set his snares in open view; had they urged them to fall away from Christ, they would have been shunned as deceivers and corrupters, but suffering them so far to continue in the faith, and putting upon their error the name of the Gospel, without fear they undermined the building employing the terms which they used as a sort of curtain to conceal the destroyers themselves. As therefore they gave the name of Gospel to this their imposture, he contends against the very name, and boldly says, “unto a different Gospel,”—

Ver. 7. “Which is not another Gospel.”

And justly, for there is not another.¹⁹ Nevertheless the Marcionites²⁰ are misled by this phrase, as diseased persons are injured even by healthy food, for they have seized upon it, and exclaim, “So Paul himself has declared there is no other Gospel.” For they do not allow all the Evangelists, but one only, and him mutilated and confused according to their pleasure. Their explanation of the words, “according to my Gospel and the preaching of Jesus Christ,” (Rom. xvi. 25.) is sufficiently ridiculous; nevertheless, for the sake of those who are easily seduced, it is necessary to refute it. We assert, therefore, that, although a thousand Gospels were written, if the contents of all were the same, they would still be one, and their unity no wise infringed by the number of writers. So, on the other hand, if there were one writer only, but he were to contradict himself, the unity of the things written would be destroyed. For the oneness of a work depends not on the number of its authors, but on the agreement or contradictoriness of its contents. Whence it is clear that the four Gospels are one Gospel; for, as the four say the same thing, its oneness is preserved by the harmony of the contents, and not impaired by the difference of persons. And Paul is not now speaking of the number but of the discrepancy of the things spoken. With justice might they lay hold of this expression, if the Gospels of Matthew and Luke differed in the signification of their contents, and

19 [The Revised version brings out the difference of the words for “another.” The ἕτερον, “a different kind of” gospel, the second is ἄλλο, “another,” simply. “To a different sort of gospel,—nay, it is not another gospel. There cannot be two gospels. Only certain men are troubling you and trying to pervert the gospel of Christ. But a perverted gospel is no gospel at all.”—G.A.]

20 Marcion flourished about a.d. 120–130. His doctrine was a compound of various preceding theologies, chiefly the Gnostic. He received only a part of St. Luke’s Gospel. Tertull. *in Marc.* iv. 2–4. He it was who on asking Polycarp to “acknowledge” him, received for answer, “I acknowledge thee as the first-born of Satan.”

in their doctrinal accuracy; but as they are one and the same, let them cease being senseless and pretending to be ignorant of these things which are plain to the very children.

Ver. 7. “Only there are some that trouble you, and would pervert the Gospel of Christ.”

That is to say, ye will not recognize another Gospel, so long as your mind is sane, so long as your vision remains healthy, and free from distorted and imaginary phantoms. For as the disordered eye mistakes the object presented to it, so does the mind when made turbid by the confusion of evil thoughts. Thus the madman confounds objects; but this insanity is more dangerous than a physical malady, for it works injury not in the regions of sense, but of the mind; it creates confusion not in the organ of bodily vision, but in the eye of the understanding.

“And would²¹ pervert the Gospel of Christ.” They had, in fact, only introduced one or two commandments, circumcision and the observance of days, but he says that the Gospel was subverted, in order to show that a slight adulteration vitiates the whole. For as he who but partially pares away the image on a royal coin renders the whole spurious, so he who swerves ever so little from the pure faith, soon proceeds from this to graver errors, and becomes entirely corrupted. Where then are those who charge us with being contentious in separating from heretics, and say that there is no real difference between us except what arises from our ambition? Let them hear Paul’s assertion, that those who had but slightly innovated, subverted the Gospel. Not to say that the Son of God is a created Being, is a small matter. Know you not that even under the elder covenant, a man who gathered sticks on the sabbath, and transgressed a single commandment, and that not a great one, was punished with death? (**Num. xv. 32, 36.**) and that Uzzah, who supported the Ark when on the point of being overturned, was struck suddenly dead, because he had intruded upon an office which did not pertain to him? (**2 Sam. vi. 6, 7.**) Wherefore if to transgress the sabbath, and to touch the falling Ark, drew down the wrath of God so signally as to deprive the offender of even a momentary respite, shall he who corrupts unutterably awful doctrines find excuse and pardon? Assuredly not. A want of zeal in small matters is the cause of all our calamities; and because slight errors escape fitting correction, greater ones creep in. As in the body, a neglect of wounds generates fever, mortification, and death; so in the soul, slight evils overlooked open the door to graver ones. It is accounted a trivial fault that one man should neglect fasting; that another, who is established in the pure faith, dissembling on account of circumstances, should surrender his bold profession of it, neither is this anything great or dreadful; that a third should be irritated, and threaten to depart from the true faith, is excused on the plea of passion and resentment. Thus a thousand similar errors are daily introduced into the Church, and we are become a laughing-stock to Jews and Greeks, seeing



21 [θέλονται; On this word Jerome aptly says, *Volunt sed non valent*. The troubling of the Galatians, however, did actually take place.—G.A.]

that the Church is divided into a thousand parties. But if a proper rebuke had at first been given to those who attempted slight perversions, and a deflection from the divine oracles, such a pestilence would not have been generated, nor such a storm have seized upon the Churches. You will now understand why Paul calls circumcision a subversion of the Gospel. There are many among us now, who fast on the same day as the Jews, and keep the sabbaths in the same manner; and we endure it nobly or rather ignobly and basely. And why do I speak of Jews seeing that many Gentile customs are observed by some among us; omens, auguries, presages, distinctions of days, a curious attention to the circumstances of their children's birth, and, as soon as they are born, tablets with impious inscriptions are placed upon their unhappy heads, thereby teaching them from the first to lay aside virtuous endeavors, and drawing part of them at least under the false domination of fate.²² But if Christ in no way profits those that are circumcised, what shall faith hereafter avail to the salvation of those who have introduced such corruptions? Although circumcision was given by God, yet Paul used every effort to abolish it, because its unseasonable observance was injurious to the Gospel. If then he was so earnest against the undue maintenance of Jewish customs, what excuse can we have for not abrogating Gentile ones? Hence our affairs are now in confusion and trouble, hence have our learners being filled with pride, reversed the order of things throwing every thing into confusion, and their discipline having been neglected by us their governors, they spurn our reproof however gentle. And yet if their superiors were even more worthless and full of numberless evils, it would not be right for the disciple to disobey. It is said of the Jewish doctors, that as they sat in Moses' seat, their disciples were bound to obey them, though their works were so evil, that the Lord forbid His disciples to imitate them. What excuse therefore is there for those who insult and trample on men, rulers of the Church, and living, by the grace of God, holy lives? If it be unlawful for us to judge each other, much more is it to judge our teachers.

Ver. 8, 9. "But though we, or an angel from heaven, should preach unto you any Gospel other than that which we preached unto you, let him be anathema."

See the Apostle's wisdom; to obviate the objection that he was prompted by vainglory to applaud his own doctrine, he includes himself also in his anathema; and as they betook themselves to authority, that of James and John, he mentions angels also saying, "Tell me not of James and John; if one of the most exalted angels of heaven corrupt the Gospel, let him be anathema." The phrase "of heaven" is purposely added, because priests are also called angels. "For the priest's lips should keep knowledge, and they should seek the law at his mouth: for he is the messenger [angel] of the Lord of hosts." (*Mal. ii. 7.*) Lest therefore it should be thought that priests are here meant, by the term "angels," he points out the celes-

22 [There is an eloquent passage on this same subject of foolish and sinful superstitions among Christians in Homily xii. on Ephesians, near the end.—G.A.]

tial intelligences by the addition, “from heaven.” And he says not, if they preach a contrary Gospel, or subvert the whole of the true one, let them be anathema; but, if they even slightly vary, or incidentally disturb, my doctrine. “As we have said before, so say I now again.” That his words might not seem to be spoken in anger, or with exaggeration, or with recklessness he now repeats them.²³ Sentiments may perhaps change, when an expression has been called forth by anger, but to repeat it a second time proves that it is spoken advisedly, and was previously approved by the judgment. When Abraham was requested to send Lazarus, he replied, “They have Moses and the Prophets; let them hear them: if they hear them not, neither will they be persuaded, if one rise from the dead.” (Luke xvi. 31.) And Christ introduces Abraham thus speaking, to show that He would have the Scriptures accounted more worthy of credence, even than one raised from the dead: Paul too, (and when I say Paul, I mean Christ, who directed his mind,) prefers them before an angel come down from heaven. And justly, for the angels, though mighty, are but servants and ministers, but the Scriptures were all written and sent, not by servants, but by God the Lord of all. He says, if “any man” preach another Gospel to you than that which we have preached,—not “if this or that man:” and herein appears his prudence, and care of giving offence, for what needed there still any mention of names, when he had used such extensive terms as to embrace all, both in heaven and earth? In that he anathemized evangelists and angels, he included every dignity, and his mention of himself included every intimacy and affinity. “Tell me not,” he exclaims, “that my fellow-apostles and colleagues have so spoken; I spare not myself if I preach such doctrine.” And he says this not as condemning the Apostles for swerving from the message they were commissioned to deliver; far from it, (for he says, whether we or they thus preach;) but to show, that in the discussion of truth the dignity of persons is not to be considered.

Ver. 10. “For²⁴ am I now persuading men: or God?” or am I seeking to please men? if I were still pleasing men, I should not be a servant of Christ.”

Granting, says he, that I might deceive you by these doctrines, could I deceive God, who knows my yet unuttered thoughts, and to please whom is my unceasing endeavor? See here the Apostolical spirit, the Evangelical loftiness! So too he writes to the Corinthians, “For we are not again commending ourselves unto you, but speak as giving you occasion of glorying;” (2 Cor. v. 12.) and again, “But with me it is a very small thing that I should be judged of you, or of man’s judgment.” (1 Cor. iv. 3.) For since he is compelled to justify himself to his dis-

23 [Though this view of Chrysostom, that the προειρήκαμεν refers to what immediately precedes is held by many others, it is not tenable for two reasons; 1. St. Paul would have used the singular προειρηκα, as he does in λέγω, immediately following. 2 The πρό in composition, and the καί ἄρτι, both, mark some greater distinction of time than this would allow.—G.A.]

24 [“I speak thus strongly, for my language shall not be misconstrued. Will any one now say that careless of winning the favor of God, I seek to ingratiate myself with men?” Lightfoot.—G.A.]

ciples, being their teacher, he submits to it; but he is grieved at it, not on account of chagrin, far from it, but on account of the instability of the minds of those led away and on account of not being fully trusted by them. Wherefore Paul now speaks, as it were, thus:—Is my account to be rendered to you? Shall I be judged by men? My account is to God, and all my acts are with a view to that inquisition, nor am I so miserably abandoned as to pervert my doctrine, seeing that I am to justify what I preach before the Lord of all.

He thus expressed himself, as much with a view of withstanding their opinions, as in self-defence; for it becomes disciples to obey, not to judge, their master. But now, says he, that the order is reversed, and ye sit as judges, know that I am but little concerned to defend myself before you; all, I do for God's sake, and in order that I may answer to Him concerning my doctrine. He who wishes to persuade men, is led to act tortuously and insincerely, and to employ deceit and falsehood, in order to engage the assent of his hearers. But he who addresses himself to God, and desires to please Him, needs simplicity and purity of mind, for God cannot be deceived. Whence it is plain that I have thus written to you not from the love of rule, or to gain disciples, or to receive honor at your hands. My endeavor has been to please God, not man. Were it otherwise, I should still consort with the Jews,²⁵ still persecute the Church, I who have cast off my country altogether, my companions, my friends, my kindred, and all my reputation, and taken in exchange for these, persecution, enmity, strife, and daily-impending death, have given a signal proof that I speak not from love of human applause. This he says, being about to narrate his former life, and sudden conversion, and to demonstrate clearly that it was sincere. And that they might not be elevated by a notion that he did this by way of self-vindication to them, he premises, "For do I now persuade men?" He well knew how, on a fitting occasion, to correct his disciples, in a grave and lofty tone: assuredly he had other sources whence to demonstrate the truth of his preaching,—by signs and miracles, by dangers, by prisons, by daily deaths, by hunger and thirst, by nakedness, and the like. Now however that he is speaking not of false apostles, but of the true, who had shared these very perils, he employs another method. For when his discourse was pointed towards false apostles, he institutes a comparison by bringing forward his endurance of danger, saying, "Are they ministers of Christ? (I speak as one beside himself) I more; in labors more abundantly, in prisons more abundantly, in stripes above measure, in deaths oft." (2 Cor. xi. 23.) But now he speaks of his former manner of life and says,

25 "χριστοῦ δοῦλος should not be taken in an historical sense, as Chrysostom. This would be feeble and lacking in depth of thought. No, it is to be taken in its ethical character."—Meyer.—G.A.]

Ver. 11, 12. “For²⁶ I make known to you, brethren, as touching the Gospel which was preached by me that it is not after man. For neither did I receive it from man, nor was I taught it, but it came to me through revelation of Jesus Christ.”

You observe how sedulously he affirms that he was taught of Christ, who Himself, without human intervention, condescended to reveal to him all knowledge. And if he were asked for his proof that God Himself thus immediately revealed to him these ineffable mysteries, he would instance his former manner of life, arguing that his conversion would not have been so sudden, had it not been by Divine revelation. For when men have been vehement and eager on the contrary side, their conviction, if it is effected by human means, requires much time and ingenuity. It is clear therefore that he, whose conversion is sudden, and who has been sobered in the very height of his madness, must have been vouchsafed a Divine revelation and teaching, and so have at once arrived at complete sanity. On this account he is obliged to relate his former life, and to call the Galatians as witnesses of past events. That the Only-Begotten Son of God had Himself from heaven vouchsafed to call me, says he, you who were not present, could not know, but that I was a persecutor you do know. For my violence even reached your ears, and the distance between Palestine and Galatia is so great, that the report would not have extended thither, had not my acts exceeded all bounds and endurance. Wherefore he says,

Ver. 13. “For²⁷ ye have heard of my manner of life in time past in the Jews’ religion, how that beyond measure I persecuted the Church of God, and made havoc of it.”

Observe how he shrinks not from aggravating each point; not saying simply that he “persecuted” but “beyond measure,” and not only “persecuted” but “made havoc of it,” which signifies an attempt to extinguish, to pull down, to destroy, to annihilate, the Church.

Ver. 14. “And I advanced in the Jews’ religion beyond many of mine own age among my countrymen, being more exceedingly zealous for the traditions of my fathers.”

To obviate the notion that his persecution arose from passion, vain-glory, or enmity, he shows that he was actuated by zeal, not indeed “according to knowledge,” (Rom. x. 2.) still by a zealous admiration of the traditions of his fathers. This is his argument;²⁸—if my

26 [The reading γάρ (Rev. Ver. W. H.) gives a reason for what is implied in the sentence preceding, while δέ, an inferior reading, means ‘but,’ (now to enter more particularly on the subject of my letter) “I make known to you.”—So Meyer.—G.A.]

27 [“He begins here the *historical proof* that he was indebted for his gospel to the *revelation* he had mentioned.”—Meyer. “My early education was such that no human agency could have brought the change (from Judaism to Christianity). It required a direct interposition from God.”—Lightfoot.—G.A.]

28 [Chrysostom’s interpretation of this passage is hardly sustained by the context. It is not a proof of his sincerity that he is adducing; he is continuing and completing the statement that his former manner of life was proof that he could not have received the Gospel from man.—G.A.]

efforts against the Church sprung not from human motives, but from religious though mistaken zeal, why should I be actuated by vain-glory, now that I am contending for the Church, and have embraced the truth? If it was not this motive, but a godly zeal, which possessed me when I was in error, much more now that I have come to know the truth, ought I to be free from such a suspicion. As soon as I passed over to the doctrines of the Church I shook off my Jewish prejudices, manifesting on that side a zeal still more ardent; and this is a proof that my conversion is sincere, and that the zeal which possesses me is from above. What other inducement could I have to make such a change, and to barter honor for contempt, repose for peril, security for distress? none surely but the love of truth.

Ver. 15, 16. “But when it was the good pleasure of God, Who separated me, even from my mother’s womb, and called me through His grace, to reveal His Son in me, that I might preach Him among the Gentiles, immediately I conferred not with flesh and blood.”

Here his object is to show, that it was by some secret providence that he was left for a time to himself. For if he was set apart from his mother’s womb to be an Apostle and to be called to that ministry, yet was not actually called till that juncture, which summons he instantly obeyed, it is evident that God had some hidden reason for this delay. What this purpose was, you are perhaps eager to learn from me, and primarily, why he was not called with the twelve. But in order not to protract this discourse by digressing from that which is more pressing, I must entreat your love not to require all things from me, but to search for it by yourselves, and to beg of God to reveal it to you. Moreover I partly discussed this subject when I discoursed before you on the change of his name from Saul to Paul; which, if you have forgotten, you will fully gather from a perusal of that volume.²⁹ At present let us pursue the thread of our discourse, and consider the proof he now adduces that no natural event had befallen him,—that God Himself had providentially ordered the occurrence.

“And called me through His grace.”

God indeed says that He called him on account of his excellent capacity, as He said to Ananias, “for he is a chosen vessel unto Me, to bear my name before the Gentiles, and kings,” (**Acts ix. 15.**) that is to say, capable of service, and the accomplishment of great deeds. God gives this as the reason for his call. But he himself everywhere ascribes it to grace, and to God’s inexpressible mercy, as in the words, “Howbeit for this cause I obtained mercy,” not that I was sufficient or even serviceable, but “that in me as chief might Jesus Christ show forth all His long-suffering, for an ensample of them which should hereafter believe on Him unto eternal life.” (**1 Tim. i. 16.**) Behold his overflowing humility; I obtained mercy, says he, that no one might despair, when the worst of men had shared His bounty. For this is the force of the words, “that He might show forth all His long-suffering for an ensample of them which should hereafter believe on Him.”

29 [Vid. *Hom. de Mut. Nom.* t. iii. p. 98. Ed. Ben.—G.A.]

“To reveal His Son³⁰ in me.”

Christ says in another place, “No one knoweth who the Son is, save the Father; and who the Father is, save the Son, and he to whomsoever the Son willeth to reveal Him.” (Luke x. 22.) You observe that the Father reveals the Son, and the Son the Father; so it is as to Their glory, the Son glorifies the Father, and the Father the Son; “glorify Thy Son, that the Son may glorify Thee,” and, “as I have glorified Thee.” (John xvii. 1, 4.) But why does he say, “to reveal His Son in me,” and not “to me?” it is to signify, that he had not only been instructed in the faith by words, but that he was richly endowed with the Spirit;—that the revelation had enlightened his whole soul, and that he had Christ speaking within him.³¹

“That I might preach Him among the Gentiles.” For not only his faith, but his election to the Apostolic office proceeded from God. The object, says he, of His thus specially revealing Himself to me, was not only that I might myself behold Him, but that I might also manifest Him to others. And he says not merely, “others,” but, “that I might preach Him among the Gentiles,” thus touching beforehand on that great ground of his defence which lay in the respective characters of the disciples; for it was necessary to preach differently to the Jews and to the heathen.

“Immediately I conferred not with flesh and blood.”

Here he alludes to the Apostles, naming them after their physical nature; however, that he may have meant to include all mankind, I shall not deny.³²

Ver. 17. “Neither went I up to Jerusalem to them which were Apostles before me.”

These words weighed by themselves seem to breath an arrogant spirit, and to be foreign to the Apostolic temper. For to give one’s suffrage for one’s self, and to admit no man to share one’s counsel, is a sign of folly. It is said, “Seest thou a man wise in his own conceit? there is more hope of a fool than of him;” (Prov. xxvi. 12.) and, “Woe unto them that are wise in their own eyes, and prudent in their own sight!” (Isa. v. 21.) and Paul himself in another place, “Be not wise in your own conceits.” (Rom. xii. 16.) Surely one who had been thus taught, and had thus admonished others, would not fall into such an error, even were he an ordinary man; much less then Paul himself. Nevertheless, as I said, this expression nakedly considered may easily prove a snare and offence to many hearers. But if the cause of it is subjoined, all will applaud and admire the speaker. This then let us do; for it is not the right course to weigh the mere words, nor examine the language by itself, as many errors

30 [“In his pre-Christian blindness Paul had known Christ κατὰ σάρκα, 2 Cor. v. 16.”—Meyer.—G.A.]

31 [“Ev ἐμοί means ‘in my mind,’ ‘in my consciousness.’ 2 Cor. iv. 6,” in opposition to Lightfoot who says, “In me’ means, as the context shows, not a revelation made inwardly to himself, but through him to others.”—G.A.]

32 [“Flesh and blood,” is twice used elsewhere (Mat. 16: 17 and Eph. 6: 12,) to denote “weak human nature,” “feeble man.”—G.A.]

will be the consequence, but to attend to the intention of the writer. And unless we pursue this method in our own discourses, and examine into the mind of the speaker, we shall make many enemies, and every thing will be thrown into disorder. Nor is this confined to words, but the same result will follow, if this rule is not observed in actions. For surgeons often cut and break certain of the bones; so do robbers; yet it would be miserable indeed not to be able to distinguish one from the other. Again, homicides and martyrs, when tortured, suffer the same pangs, yet is the difference between them great. Unless we attend to this rule, we shall not be able to discriminate in these matters; but shall call Elijah and Samuel and Phineas homicides, and Abraham a son-slayer; that is, if we go about to scrutinize the bare facts, without taking into account the intention of the agents. Let us then inquire into the intention of Paul in thus writing, let us consider his scope, and general deportment towards the Apostles, that we may arrive at his present meaning. Neither formerly, nor in this case, did he speak with a view of disparaging the Apostles or of extolling himself, (how so? when he included himself under his anathema?) but always in order to guard the integrity of the Gospel. Since the troublers of the Church said that they ought to obey the Apostles who suffered these observances, and not Paul who forbade them, and hence the Judaizing heresy had gradually crept in, it was necessary for him manfully to resist them, from a desire of repressing the arrogance of those who improperly exalted themselves, and not of speaking ill of the Apostles. And therefore he says, "I conferred not with flesh and blood;" for it would have been extremely absurd for one who had been taught by God, afterwards to refer himself to men. For it is right that he who learns from men should in turn take men as his counsellors. But he to whom that divine and blessed voice had been vouchsafed, and who had been fully instructed by Him that possesses all the treasures of wisdom, wherefore should he afterwards confer with men? It were meet that he should teach, not be taught by them. Therefore he thus spoke, not arrogantly, but to exhibit the dignity of his own commission. "Neither went I up," says he, "to Jerusalem to them which were Apostles before me." Because they were continually repeating that the Apostles were before him, and were called before him, he says, "I went not up to them." Had it been needful for him to communicate with them, He, who revealed to him his commission, would have given him this injunction. Is it true, however, that he did not go up thither?³³ nay, he went up, and not merely so, but in order to learn somewhat of them. When a question arose on our present subject in the city of Antioch, in the Church which had from the beginning shown so much zeal, and it was discussed whether the Gentile believers ought to be circumcised, or were under no necessity to undergo the rite, this very Paul himself and Silas³⁴ went up. How is it then that he says,

33 [Paul here simply means he did not go to Jerusalem before he began preaching.—G.A.]

34 Of those who were sent with St. Paul from Antioch to Jerusalem, Barnabas is the only one named in [Acts xv. 2](#), and it would rather seem from [Ver. 22](#), that Silas was then at Jerusalem, and did not accompany St. Paul till his return from thence.

I went not up, nor conferred? First, because he went not up of his own accord, but was sent by others; next, because he came not to learn, but to bring others over. For he was from the first of that opinion, which the Apostles subsequently ratified, that circumcision was unnecessary. But when these persons deemed him unworthy of credit and applied to those at Jerusalem he went up not to be farther instructed, but to convince the gain-sayers that those at Jerusalem agreed with him. Thus he perceived from the first the fitting line of conduct, and needed no teacher, but, primarily and before any discussion, maintained without wavering what the Apostles, after much discussion, (*Acts xv. 2, 7.*) subsequently ratified. This Luke shows by his own account, that Paul argued much at length with them on this subject before he went to Jerusalem. But since the brethren chose to be informed on this subject, by those at Jerusalem, he went up on their own account, not on his own. And his expression, "I went not up," signifies that he neither went at the outset of his teaching, nor for the purpose of being instructed. Both are implied by the phrase, "Immediately I conferred not with flesh and blood." He says not, "I conferred," merely, but, "immediately;" and his subsequent journey was not to gain any additional instruction.

Ver. 17. "But I went away into Arabia."

Behold a fervent soul! he longed to occupy regions not yet tilled, but lying in a wild state. Had he remained with the Apostles, as he had nothing to learn, his preaching would have been straitened, for it behooved them to spread the word every where. Thus this blessed man, fervent in spirit, straightway undertook to teach wild barbarians,³⁵ choosing a life full of battle and labor. Having said, "I went into Arabia," he adds, "and again I returned unto Damascus." Here observe his humility; he speaks not of his successes, nor of whom or of how many he instructed. Yet such was his zeal immediately on his baptism, that he confounded the Jews, and so exasperated them, that they and the Greeks lay in wait for him with a view to kill him. This would not have been the case, had he not greatly added to the numbers of the faithful; since they were vanquished in doctrine, they had recourse to murder, which was a manifest sign of Paul's superiority. But Christ suffered him not to be put to death, preserving him for his mission. Of these successes, however, he says nothing, and so in all his discourses, his motive is not ambition, nor to be honored more highly than the Apostles, nor because he is mortified at being lightly esteemed, but it is a fear lest any detriment should accrue to his mission. For he calls himself, "one born out of due time," and, "the first of sinners," and "the last of the Apostles," and, "not meet to be called an Apostle." And this

35 ["This journey is to be looked upon not as having for its object a quiet preparation, but as a first experiment of extraneous ministry."—Meyer. *Farrar, Life and Work of Paul*. Ch. xi. takes the opposite view and says, "No one, I think, who reads this passage attentively can deny that it gives the impression of an intentional retirement from human intercourse." So also Schaff, who says it was a sort of substitute for the three years intercourse with Jesus enjoyed by the other Apostles. *Ap. Ch.* 236.—G.A.]

he said, who had labored more than all of them; which is real humility; for he who, conscious of no excellence, speaks humbly of himself, is candid but not humble; but to say so after such trophies, is to be practised in self-control.

Ver. 17. “And again I returned unto Damascus.”

But what great things did he not probably achieve in this city? for he tells us that the governor under Aretas the king set guards about the whole of it, hoping to entrap this blessed man. Which is a proof of the strongest kind that he was violently persecuted by the Jews. Here, however, he says nothing of this, but mentioning his arrival and departure is silent concerning the events which there occurred, nor would he have mentioned them in the place I have referred to, (2 Cor. xi. 32.) had not circumstances required their narration.

Ver. 18. “Then after three years I went up to Jerusalem³⁶ to visit Cephas.”

What can be more lowly than such a soul? After such successes, wanting nothing of Peter, not even his assent, but being of equal dignity with him, (for at present I will say no more,) he comes to him as his elder and superior. And the only object of this journey was to visit Peter; thus he pays due respect to the Apostles, and esteems himself not only not their better but not their equal. Which is plain from this journey, for Paul was induced to visit Peter by the same feeling from which many of our brethren sojourn with holy men: or rather by a humbler feeling for they do so for their own benefit, but this blessed man, not for his own instruction or correction, but merely for the sake of beholding and honoring Peter by his presence. He says, “to visit Peter;” he does not say to see, (ἰδεῖν,) but to visit and survey, (ἰστορησαί,) a word which those, who seek to become acquainted with great and splendid cities, apply to themselves. Worthy of such trouble did he consider the very sight of Peter; and this appears from the Acts of the Apostles also. (Acts xxi. 17, 18 etc.) For on his arrival at Jerusalem, on another occasion, after having converted many Gentiles, and with labors far surpassing the rest, reformed and brought to Christ Pamphylia, Lycaonia, Cilicia, and all nations in that quarter of the world, he first addresses himself with great humility to James, as to his elder and superior. Next he submits to his counsel, and that counsel contrary to this Epistle. “Thou seest, brother, how many thousands there are among the Jews of them which have believed; therefore shave thy head, and purify thyself.” (Acts xxi. 20 f.) Accordingly he shaved his head, and observed all the Jewish ceremonies; for where the Gospel was not affected, he was the humblest of all men. But where by such humility he saw any injured, he gave up that undue exercise of it, for that was no longer to be humble but to outrage and destroy the disciples.

Ver. 18. “And tarried with him fifteen days.”

36 [First visit to Jerusalem, Acts ix. 26. For a reconciliation of the two accounts of this visit see *Handy Com. on Gal.* Excursus A (by Sanday).—G.A.]

To take a journey on account of him was a mark of respect; but to remain so many days, of friendship and the most earnest affection.³⁷

Ver. 19. “But other of the Apostles saw I none, save James,³⁸ the Lord’s brother.”

See what great friends he was with Peter especially; on his account he left his home, and with him he tarried. This I frequently repeat, and desire you to remember, that no one, when he hears what this Apostle seems to have spoken against Peter, may conceive a suspicion of him. He premises this, that when he says, “I resisted Peter,” no one may suppose that these words imply enmity and contention; for he honored and loved his person more than all and took this journey for his sake only, not for any of the others. “But other of the Apostles saw I none, save James.” “I saw him merely, I did not learn from him,” he means. But observe how honorably he mentions him, he says not “James” merely, but adds this illustrious title, so free is he from all envy. Had he only wished to point out whom he meant, he might have shown this by another appellation, and called him the son of Cleophas, as the Evangelist does.³⁹ But as he considered that he had a share in the august titles of the Apostles, he exalts himself by honoring James; and this he does by calling him “the Lord’s brother,” although he was not by birth His brother, but only so reputed. Yet this did not deter him from giving the title; and in many other instances he displays towards all the Apostles that noble disposition, which beseeemed him.

Ver. 20. “Now touching the things which I write unto you, behold, before God, I lie not.”

Observe throughout the transparent humility of this holy soul; his earnestness in his own vindication is as great as if he had to render an account of his deeds, and was pleading for his life in a court of justice.

Ver. 21. “Then I came into the regions of Syria and Cilicia.”⁴⁰

After his interview with Peter, he resumes his preaching and the task which lay before him, avoiding Judæa, both because of his mission being to the Gentiles, and of his unwillingness to “build upon another man’s foundation.” Wherefore there was not even a chance meeting, as appears from what follows.

37 [And yet it was not long enough to have allowed his receiving his doctrine and Gospel from Peter. Besides he had already been preaching three years.—G.A.]

38 “Thus this James is distinguished from the circle of the twelve (1 Cor. xv. 8.) to which Peter belonged but included in the number of Apostles in the wider sense, which explains the merely supplementary mention of this Apostle.”—Meyer.

39 [Compare John xix. 25 with Matt. xxvii. 56. But see Lightfoot’s learned and exhaustive essay on “The Brethren of the Lord,” *Com. on Gal.* pp. 88–127, and Schaff, *Church History*, I, 272–275.—G.A.]

40 [Compare Acts ix. 30, where Luke says the brethren took Paul to Cæsarea, and thence despatched him to Tarsus (in Cilicia).—G.A.]

Ver. 22, 23. “And I was still unknown by face unto the Churches of Judæa; but they only heard say, he that once persecuted us now preacheth the faith of which he once made havoc.”

What modesty in thus again mentioning the facts of his persecuting and laying waste the Church, and in thus making infamous his former life, while he passes over the illustrious deeds he was about to achieve! He might have told, had he wished it, all his successes, but he mentions none of these and stepping with one word over a vast expanse, he says merely, “I came into the regions of Syria and Cilicia;” and, “they had heard, that he, which once persecuted us, now preacheth the faith of which he once made havoc.” The purpose of the words, “I was unknown to the Churches of Judæa,” is to show, that so far from preaching to them the necessity of circumcision, he was not known to them even by sight.

Ver. 24. “And they glorified God in me.” See here again how accurately he observes the rule of his humility; he says not, they admired me, they applauded or were astonished at me, but ascribes all to Divine grace by the words, “they glorified God in me.”

Chapter II.

Verse 1–2

“Then after the space of fourteen years,⁴¹ I went up again to Jerusalem with Barnabas, taking Titus also with me. And I went up by revelation.”

His first journey was owing to his desire to visit Peter, his second, he says, arose from a revelation of the Spirit.

Ver. 2. “And I laid before them the Gospel which I preach among the Gentiles, but privately before them who were of repute, lest by any means I should be running or had run in vain.”

What is this, O Paul! thou who neither at the beginning nor after three years wouldest confer with the Apostles, dost thou now confer with them, after fourteen years are past, lest thou shouldest be running in vain? Better would it have been to have done so at first, than after so many years; and why didst thou run at all, if not satisfied that thou wert not running in vain? Who would be so senseless as to preach for so many years, without being sure that his preaching was true? And what enhances the difficulty is, that he says he went up by revelation; this difficulty, however, will afford a solution of the former one. Had he gone up of his own accord, it would have been most unreasonable, nor is it possible that this blessed soul should have fallen into such folly; for it is himself who says, “I therefore so run, as not uncertainly; so fight I, as not beating the air.” (1 Cor. ix. 26.) If therefore he runs, “not uncertainly,” how can he say, “lest I should be running, or had run, in vain?” It is evident from this, that if he had gone up without a revelation, he would have committed an act of folly. But the actual case involved no such absurdity; who shall dare to still harbor this suspicion, when it was the grace of the Spirit which drew him? On this account he added the words “by revelation,” lest, before the question was solved, he should be condemned of folly; well knowing that it was no human occurrence, but a deep Divine Providence concerning the present and future. What then is the reason of this journey of his? As when he went up before

41 [“The Acts mention five such journeys after his conversion: (1.)-ix. 23 (Comp. Gal. i. 18.) (2.)-xi. 30; xii. 25. (3.)-xv. 2, the journey to the Apostolic Council, a.d. 50 or 51. (4.)-xviii. 22, the journey in 54. (5.)-xxi. 15 (Comp. Ro. 15: 25 ff.) the last journey when he was made a pardoner and sent to Cæsarea in 58. The first of these journeys cannot be meant on account of Gal. i. 18. The second is excluded by the chronological date of Gal. ii. 1, for as it took place during the famine of Palestine in the year of Herod’s death, a.d. 44, it would put the commission of Paul back to the year 30, which is much too early. There is no good reason why Paul should have mentioned this second journey. The fifth journey cannot be meant for it took place after the composition of Epistle to Galatians and after dispersion of Apostles. Nor can we think of the fourth journey which was transient, nor was Barnabas with him on that journey, Acts xv. 39. So the journey here mentioned is the same as that of Acts xv. 2. This took place 50 or 51, i.e., fourteen years after his conversion, 37.”—Schaff in *Pop. Com.*—G.A.]

from Antioch to Jerusalem, it was not for his own sake, (for he saw clearly that his duty was simply to obey the doctrines of Christ,) but from a desire to reconcile the contentious; so now his object was the complete satisfaction of his accusers, not any wish of his own to learn that he had not run in vain. They conceived that Peter and John, of whom they thought more highly than of Paul, differed from him in that he omitted circumcision in his preaching, while the former allowed it, and they believed that in this he acted unlawfully, and was running in vain. I went up, says he, and communicated unto them my Gospel, not that I might learn aught myself, (as appears more clearly further on,) but that I might convince these suspicious persons that I do not run in vain. The Spirit foreseeing this contention had provided that he should go up and make this communication.

Wherefore he says that he went up by revelation,⁴² and, taking Barnabas and Titus as witnesses of his preaching, communicated to them the Gospel which he preached to the Gentiles, that is, with the omission of circumcision. “But privately before them who were of repute.” What means “privately?” Rather, he who wishes to reform doctrines held in common, proposes them, not privately, but before all in common; but Paul did this privately, for his object was, not to learn or reform any thing, but to cut off the grounds of those who would fain deceive. All at Jerusalem were offended, if the law was transgressed, or the use of circumcision forbidden; as James says, “Thou seest, brother, how many thousands there are among the Jews of them which have believed; and they are informed of thee, that thou teachest to forsake the law.” ([Acts xxi. 20](#), et seq.) Since then they were offended he did not condescend to come forward publicly and declare what his preaching was, but he conferred privately with those who were of reputation before Barnabas and Titus, that they might credibly testify to his accusers,⁴³ that the Apostles found no discrepancy in his preaching, but confirmed it. The expression, “those that were of repute,” (τοῖς δοκοῦσιν) does not impugn the reality of their greatness; for he says of himself, “And I also seem (δοκῶ) to have the Spirit of God,” thereby not denying the fact, but stating it modestly. And here the phrase implies his own assent to the common opinion.

Ver. 3. “But not even Titus, who was with me, being a Greek,⁴⁴ was compelled to be circumcised.”

42 [“In St. Luke’s narrative ([Acts xv. 2](#).) he is said to have been sent by the Church at Antioch. The revelation either prompted or confirmed the decision of the Church.”—Lightfoot.—G.A.]

43 [That is, that Barnabas and Titus as witnesses of the proceedings might testify to the Judaizing teachers everywhere, &c.—G.A.]

44 [Being “a Greek:” Lightfoot says this is a “causal” participial clause giving the “reason” why Titus was not circumcised; *because* he was a Greek and not a Jew or part Jew as Timothy was. Schaff makes it a “concessive” clause; *although* he was a Greek, that is, a heathen. Farrar in *Life and Work of Paul* (233–6) claims that Titus *was* circumcised but not compelled to be. This however cannot be held in view of the context and the position of the words in the sentence.—G.A.]

What means, “being a Greek?” Of Greek extraction, and not circumcised; for not only did I so preach but Titus so acted, nor did the Apostles compel him to be circumcised. A plain proof this that the Apostles did not condemn Paul’s doctrine or his practice. Nay more, even the urgent representations of the adverse party, who were aware of these facts, did not oblige the Apostles to enjoin circumcision, as appears by his own words,—

Ver. 4. “And that because of the false brethren, privily brought in.”

Here arises a very important question, Who were these false brethren?⁴⁵ If the Apostles permitted circumcision at Jerusalem, why are those who enjoined it, in accordance with the Apostolic sentence, to be called false brethren? First; because there is a difference between commanding an act to be done, and allowing it after it is done. He who enjoins an act, does it with zeal as necessary, and of primary importance; but he who, without himself commanding it, alloweth another to do it who wishes yields not from a sense of its being necessary but in order to subserve some purpose. We have a similar instance, in Paul’s Epistle to the Corinthians, in his command to husbands and wives to come together again. To which, that he might not be thought to be legislating for them, he subjoins, “But this I say by way of permission, not of commandment.” (1 Cor. vii. 5.) For this was not a judgment authoritatively given but an indulgence to their incontinence; as he says, “for your incontinency.” Would you know Paul’s sentence in this matter? hear his words, “I would that all men were even as I myself,” (1 Cor. vii. 7.) in continence. And so here, the Apostles made this concession, not as vindicating the law, but as condescending to the infirmities of Judaism. Had they been vindicating the law, they would not have preached to the Jews in one way, and to the Gentiles in another. Had the observance been necessary for unbelievers, then indeed it would plainly have likewise been necessary for all the faithful. But by their decision not to harass the Gentiles on this point, they showed that they permitted it by way of condescension to the Jews. Whereas the purpose of the false brethren was to cast them out of grace, and reduce them under the yoke of slavery again. This is the first difference, and a very wide one. The second is, that the Apostles so acted in Judæa, where the Law was in force, but the false brethren, every where, for all the Galatians were influenced by them. Whence it appears that their intention was, not to build up, but entirely to pull down the Gospel, and that the thing was permitted by the Apostles on one ground and zealously practiced by the false brethren on another.

Ver. 4. “Who came in privily to spy out our liberty, which we have in Christ Jesus, that they might bring us into bondage.”

He points out their hostility by calling them spies; for the sole object of a spy is to obtain for himself facilities of devastation and destruction, by becoming acquainted with his ad-

45 [“These were formerly Pharisees (Acts xv. 5.) and were still so in spirit although they professed Christianity and were baptized.” Schaff in *Pop. Com.*—G.A.]

versary's position. And this is what those did, who wished to bring the disciples back to their old servitude. Hence too appears how very contrary their purpose was to that of the Apostles; the latter made concessions that they might gradually extricate them from their servitude, but the former plotted to subject them to one more severe. Therefore they looked round and observed accurately and made themselves busybodies to find out who were un-circumcised; as Paul says, "they came in privily to spy out our liberty," thus pointing out their machinations not only by the term "spies," but by this expression of a furtive entrance and creeping in.

Ver. 5. "To whom we gave place in the way of subjection, no, not for an hour."⁴⁶

Observe the force and emphasis of the phrase; he says not, "by argument," but, "by subjection," for their object was not to teach good doctrine, but to subjugate and enslave them. Wherefore, says he, we yielded to the Apostles, but not to these.

Ver. 5. "That the truth of the Gospel might continue with you."⁴⁷

That we may confirm, says he, by our deeds what we have already declared by words,—namely, that the "old things are passed away, behold they are become new;" and that "if any man is in Christ he is a new creature;" (2 Cor. v. 17.) and that "if ye receive circumcision, Christ will profit you nothing." (Gal. v. 2.) In maintaining this truth we gave place not even for an hour. Then, as he was directly met by the conduct of the Apostles, and the reason of their enjoining the rite would probably be asked, he proceeds to solve this objection. This he does with great skill, for he does not give the actual reason, which was, that the Apostles acted by way of condescension and in the use of a scheme, (οἰκονομία) as it were; for otherwise his hearers would have been injured. For those, who are to derive benefit from a scheme should be unacquainted with the design of it; all will be undone, if this appears. Wherefore, he who is to take part in it should know the drift of it; those who are to benefit by it should not. To make my meaning more evident, I will take an example from our present subject. The blessed Paul himself, who meant to abrogate circumcision, when he was about to send Timothy to teach the Jews, first circumcised him and so sent him. This he did, that his hearers might the more readily receive him; he began by circumcising, that in the end he might abolish it. But this reason he imparted to Timothy only, and told it not to the disciples. Had they known that the very purpose of his circumcision was the abolition of the rite, they would never have listened to his preaching, and the whole benefit would have been lost. But now their ignorance was of the greatest use to them, for their idea that



46 ["Had we consented to the suggestion to circumcise Titus, we should thereby have yielded to the false brethren standing in the background, who declared the circumcision of Gentile Christians to be necessary (Acts xv. 5.); but this did not at all take place."—Meyer.—G.A.]

47 ["In order that by our conduct the principle of Christian freedom should not be shaken and ye should not be induced to deviate from the truth of the Gospel by mixing it up with Mosaism."—Meyer.—G.A.]

his conduct proceeded from a regard to the Law, led them to receive both him and his doctrine with kindness and courtesy, and having gradually received him, and become instructed, they abandoned their old customs. Now this would not have happened had they known his reasons from the first; for they would have turned away from him, and being turned away would not have given him a hearing, and not hearing, would have continued in their former error. To prevent this, he did not disclose his reasons; here too he does not explain the occasion of the scheme, (οἰκονομία,) but shapes his discourse differently; thus:

Ver. 6. “But from those who were reputed to be somewhat⁴⁸ (whatsoever they were, it maketh no matter to me, God accepteth no man’s person.)”

Here he not only does not defend the Apostles, but even presses hard upon those holy men, for the benefit of the weak. His meaning is this: although they permit circumcision, they shall render an account to God, for God will not accept their persons, because they are great and in station. But he does not speak so plainly, but with caution. He says not, if they vitiate their doctrine, and swerve from the appointed rule of their preaching, they shall be judged with the utmost rigor, and suffer punishment; but he alludes to them more reverently, in the words, “of those who were reputed to be somewhat, whatsoever they were.” He says not, “whatsoever they ‘are,’” but “were,” showing that they too had thenceforth⁴⁹ ceased so to preach, the doctrine having extended itself universally. The phrase, “whatsoever they were,” implies, that if they so preached they should render account, for they had to justify themselves before God, not before men. This he said, not as doubtful or ignorant of the rectitude of their procedure, but (as I said before) from a sense of the expediency of so forming his discourse. Then, that he may not seem to take the opposite side and to accuse them, and so create a suspicion of their disagreement, he straightway subjoins this correction: “for those who were reputed to be somewhat, in conference imparted nothing to me.” This is his meaning; What you may say, I know not; this I know well, that the Apostles did not oppose me, but our sentiments conspired and accorded. This appears from his expression, “they gave me the right hand of fellowship;” but he does not say this at present, but only that they neither informed or corrected him on any point, nor added to his knowledge.

Ver. 6. “For those who were reputed to be somewhat, imparted nothing to me:”

48 [Lightfoot says, “The expression is depreciatory here, not indeed of the twelve themselves but of the extravagant and exclusive claims set up for them by the Judaizers.” So also Dr. Schaff. “The addition of τὶ εἶναι and ὅποιοι betrays a certain irritation in reference to the opponents who would not concede Paul an estimation given to the original Apostles.”—Meyer.—G.A.]

49 [“It is entirely in opposition to the context that Chrysostom, Theophylact and Jerome refer this to the earlier teaching of the Apostles, making Paul say that whether at an earlier date they had been Judaizers or not was to him a matter of indifference.”—Meyer.—G.A.]

That is to say, when told of my proceedings, they added nothing, they corrected nothing, and though aware that the object of my journey was to communicate with them, that I had come by revelation of the Spirit, and that I had Titus with me who was uncircumcised, they neither circumcised him, nor imparted to me any additional knowledge.

Ver. 7. “But contrariwise.”

Some hold his meaning to be, not only that the Apostles did not instruct him, but that they were instructed by him. But I would not say this, for what could they, each of whom was himself perfectly instructed, have learnt from him? He does not therefore intend this by the expression, “contrariwise,” but that so far were they from blaming, that they praised him: for praise is the contrary of blame. Some would probably here reply: Why did not the Apostles, if they praised your procedure, as the proper consequence abolish circumcision?⁵⁰ Now to assert that they did abolish it Paul considered much too bold, and inconsistent with his own admission. On the other hand, to admit that they had sanctioned circumcision, would necessarily expose him to another objection. For it would be said, if the Apostles praised your preaching, yet sanctioned circumcision, they were inconsistent with themselves. What then is the solution? is he to say that they acted thus out of condescension to Judaism? To say this would have shaken the very foundation of the economy. Wherefore he leaves the subject in suspense and uncertainty, by the words, “but of those who were reputed to be somewhat; it maketh no matter to me.” Which is in effect to say, I accuse not, nor traduce those holy men; they know what it is they have done; to God must they render their account. What I am desirous to prove is, that they neither reversed nor corrected my procedure, nor added to it as in their opinion defective, but gave it their approbation and assent; and to this Titus and Barnabas bear witness. Then he adds,

Ver. 7. “When they saw that I had been entrusted with the Gospel of the Uncircumcision even as Peter with the Gospel of the Circumcision⁵¹,” —

The Circumcision and Uncircumcision; meaning, not the things themselves, but the nations known by these distinctions; wherefore he adds,

Ver. 8. “For He that wrought for Peter unto the Apostleship of the Circumcision wrought for me also unto the Gentiles.”

50 [They did virtually abolish circumcision by the decree of the council at Jerusalem as is shown in the account in (Acts xv.) And the failure of the effort to have Titus circumcised shows that the account in Gal. ii. has nothing inconsistent with that decree. This as to Gentiles. The question did not concern Jews, who were already circumcised in infancy except in cases like that of Timothy where circumcision had been neglected. His case Paul himself decided without any consultation with others.—G.A.]

51 [“This passage cannot be worse misunderstood than it has been by Baur according to whom there was a special Gospel of the uncircumcision and a special gospel of the circumcision, one maintaining the necessity of circumcision, the other allowing it to drop.”—Meyer.—G.A.]

He calls the Gentiles the Uncircumcision and the Jews the Circumcision, and declares his own rank to be equal to that of the Apostles; and, by comparing himself with their Leader not with the others, he shows that the dignity of each was the same. After he had established the proof of their unanimity, he takes courage, and proceeds confidently in his argument, not stopping at the Apostles, but advances to Christ Himself, and to the grace which He had conferred upon him, and calls the Apostles as his witnesses, saying,

Ver. 9. “And when they perceived the grace that was given unto me, James and Cephas and John, they who were reputed to be pillars, gave to me and Barnabas the right hands of fellowship.”⁵²

He says not when they “heard,” but when they “perceived,” that is, were assured by the facts themselves, “they gave to me and Barnabas the right hands of fellowship.” Observe how he gradually proves that his doctrine was ratified both by Christ and by the Apostles. For grace would neither have been implanted, nor been operative in him, had not his preaching been approved by Christ. Where it was for the purpose of comparison with himself, he mentioned Peter alone; here, when he calls them as witnesses, he names the three together, “Cephas, James, John,” and with an encomium, “who were reputed to be pillars.” Here again the expression “who were reputed” does not impugn the reality of the fact, but adopts the estimate of others, and implies that these great and distinguished men, whose fame was universal, bare witness that his preaching was ratified by Christ, that they were practically informed and convinced by experience concerning it. “Therefore they gave the right hands of fellowship” to me, and not to me only, but also to Barnabas, “that we should go unto the Gentiles, and they unto the Circumcision.” Here indeed is exceeding prudence as well as an incontrovertible proof of their concord. For it shows that his and their doctrine was interchangeable, and that both approved the same thing, that they should so preach to the Jews, and he to the Gentiles. Wherefore he adds,

Ver. 9. “That we should go unto the Gentiles and they unto the Circumcision.”⁵³

Observe that here also he means by “the Circumcision,” not the rite, but the Jews; whenever he speaks of the rite, and wishes to contrast it, he adds the word “uncircumcision;” as when he says, “For circumcision indeed profiteth, if thou be a doer of the law; but if thou be a transgressor of the law, thy circumcision is become uncircumcision.” (Rom. ii. 25.)

52 [“If there had been a real conflict in doctrine, the Apostles would not have given Paul their hand, and Paul would have refused them his.”—G.A.]

53 [“There was no difference of doctrine or gospel, but only a division of territory, and how little Paul considered his apostolic call to the ‘Gentiles’ as *excluding* the conversion of the Jews from his operations may be seen from such passages as 1 Cor. ix. 20; Ro. i. 16; ix. 1; xi. 14.”—Meyer.—G.A.]

And again, “Neither circumcision availeth any thing, nor uncircumcision.” But when it is to the Jews and not to the deed that he gives this name, and wishes to signify the nation, he opposes to it not uncircumcision in its literal sense, but the Gentiles. For the Jews are the contradistinction to the Gentiles, the Circumcision to the Uncircumcision. Thus when he says above, “For He that wrought for Peter into the Apostleship of the Circumcision, wrought for me also unto the Gentiles;” and again, “We unto the Gentiles and they unto the Circumcision,” he means not the rite itself, but the Jewish nation, thus distinguishing them from the Gentiles.

Ver. 10. “Only they would that we should remember the poor; which very thing I was also zealous to do.”

This is his meaning: In our preaching we divided the world between us, I took the Gentiles and they the Jews, according to the Divine decree; but to the sustenance of the poor among the Jews I also contributed my share, which, had there been any dissension between us, they would not have accepted. Next, who were these poor persons? Many of the believing Jews in Palestine had been deprived of all their goods, and scattered over the world, as he mentions in the Epistle to the Hebrews⁵⁴, “For ye took joyfully the spoiling of your possessions;” and in writing to the Thessalonians, (1 **Thes. ii. 14.**) he extols their fortitude, “Ye became imitators of the Churches of God which are in Judæa, . . . for ye also suffered the same thing of your own countrymen, even as they did of the Jews.” And he shows throughout that those Greeks who believed were not under persecution from the rest, such as the believing Jews were suffering from their own kindred, for there is no nation of a temper so cruel. Wherefore he exercises much zeal, as appears in the Epistles to the Romans (**Rom. xv. 25–27.**) and Corinthians (1 **Cor. xvi. 1–3.**) that these persons should meet with much attention; and Paul not only collects money for them, but himself conveys it, as he says, “But now I go unto Jerusalem ministering unto the saints,” (**Rom. xv. 25.**) for they were without the necessities of life. And he here shows that in this instance having resolved to assist them, he had undertaken and would not abandon it.

Having by these means declared the unanimity and harmony between the Apostles and himself, he is obliged to proceed to mention his debate with Peter at Antioch.

Ver. 11, 12. “But when Cephas came to Antioch, I resisted him to the face, because he stood condemned. For before that certain came from James, he did eat with the Gentiles: but when they came, he drew back and separated himself, fearing them that were of the circumcision.”

Many, on a superficial reading of this part of the Epistle, suppose that Paul accused Peter of hypocrisy. But this is not so, indeed it is not, far from it;⁵⁵ we shall discover great

54 [Hebrews x. 34. [This is interesting as showing that Chrysostom attributed the Epistle to the Hebrews to St. Paul, though most modern critics do not agree with him in that view.—G.A.]

55 [ἀλλ’ οὐκ ἔστι ταῦτα, οὐκ ἔστιν ἄπαγε.—G.A.]

wisdom, both of Paul and Peter, concealed herein for the benefit of their hearers. But first a word must be said about Peter's freedom in speech, and how it was ever his way to outstrip the other disciples. Indeed it was upon one such occasion that he gained his name from the unbending and impregnable character of his faith. For when all were interrogated in common, he stepped before the others and answered, "Thou art the Christ, the Son of the living God." (Mat. xvi. 16.) This was when the keys of heaven were committed to him. So too, he appears to have been the only speaker on the Mount; (Mat. xvii. 4.) and when Christ spoke of His crucifixion, and the others kept silence, he said, "Be it far from Thee." (Mat. xvi. 22.) These words evince, if not a cautious temper, at least a fervent love; and in all instances we find him more vehement than the others, and rushing forward into danger. So when Christ was seen on the beach, and the others were pushing the boat in, he was too impatient to wait for its coming to land. (John xxi. 7.) And after the Resurrection, when the Jews were murderous and maddened, and sought to tear the Apostles in pieces, he first dared to come forward, and to declare, that the Crucified was taken up into heaven. (Acts ii. 14, 36.) It is a greater thing to open a closed door, and to commence an action, than to be free-spoken afterwards. How could he ever dissemble who had exposed his life to such a populace? He who when scourged and bound would not bate a jot of his courage, and this at the beginning of his mission, and in the heart of the chief city where there was so much danger,—how could he, long afterwards in Antioch, where no danger was at hand, and his character had received lustre from the testimony of his actions, feel any apprehension of the believing Jews? How could he, I say, who at the very first and in their chief city feared not the Jews while Jews, after a long time and in a foreign city, fear those of them who had been converted? Paul therefore does not speak this against Peter, but with the same meaning in which he said, "for they who were reputed to be somewhat, whatsoever they were, it maketh no matter to me." But to remove any doubt on this point, we must unfold the reason of these expressions.

The Apostles, as I said before, permitted circumcision at Jerusalem, an abrupt severance from the law not being practicable; but when they come to Antioch, they no longer continued this observance, but lived indiscriminately with the believing Gentiles which thing Peter also was at that time doing. But when some came from Jerusalem who had heard the doctrine he delivered there, he no longer did so fearing to perplex them, but he changed his course, with two objects secretly in view, both to avoid offending those Jews, and to give Paul a reasonable pretext for rebuking him.⁵⁶ For had he, having allowed circumcision when

⁵⁶ S. Jerome adopts the interpretation given in the text, viz. that S. Peter's dissimulation was no sin, but intended as an opportunity for S. Paul to declare the freedom of the Gentiles from the Jewish Law. On the other hand, S. Austin considers that he acted through wrong motives, and sinned in dissembling. In this opinion he is supported by Tertullian, S. Cyprian, S. Cyril, of Alexandria, S. Gregory and Ambrosiaster. (Hieron. *in loc, et alibi*. August. *de Bapt. contr. Donatist*. ii. 2. *de Mendacio* 8. Tertull. *de Præscript*. 23. *in Marc*. iv. 3. v. 3. Cyprian, *Ep. ad Quint*.

preaching at Jerusalem, changed his course at Antioch, his conduct would have appeared to those Jews to proceed from fear of Paul, and his disciples would have condemned his excess of pliancy. And this would have created no small offence; but in Paul, who was well acquainted with all the facts, his withdrawal would have raised no such suspicion, as knowing the intention with which he acted. Wherefore Paul rebukes, and Peter submits, that when the master is blamed, yet keeps silence, the disciples may more readily come over. Without this occurrence Paul's exhortation would have had little effect, but the occasion hereby afforded of delivering a severe reproof, impressed Peter's disciples with a more lively fear. Had Peter disputed Paul's sentence, he might justly have been blamed as upsetting the plan, but now that the one reproves and the other keeps silence, the Jewish party are filled with serious alarm; and this is why he used Peter so severely. Observe too Paul's careful choice of expressions, whereby he points out to the discerning, that he uses them in pursuance of the plan, (οἰκονομίας) and not from anger.

His words are, "When Cephas came to Antioch, I resisted him to the face, because he stood condemned;" that is, not by me but by others; had he himself condemned him, he would not have shrunk from saying so. And the words, "I resisted him to the face," imply a scheme for had their discussion been real, they would not have rebuked each other in the presence of the disciples, for it would have been a great stumblingblock to them. But now this apparent contest was much to their advantage; as Paul had yielded to the Apostles at Jerusalem, so in turn they yield to him at Antioch. The cause of censure is this, "For before

71. Cyril. Alex. *in Julian*. ix. fin. Gregor. *in Ezech*. ii. *Hom.* 6, 9. Ambrosiast. *in loc.*) S. Austin is influenced in his judgment of the transaction by an anxiety lest disingenuousness and duplicity should receive countenance from the apparent example of an Apostle; S. Chrysostom and S. Jerome by affectionate reverence for the memory of so great a benefactor and so exalted a saint. Vid. Justinian, *in loco*. [In earlier life Chrysostom had himself practiced such a "scheme," as that which he here attributes to Paul. In order to induce his friend Basil to be consecrated as a bishop he made on him the (false) impression that he himself had already been consecrated.] Neander (*Life of Chrysostom* p. 22.) says: "In the first book of his work on the Priesthood Chrysostom defends the principle that a falsehood is permitted for a good object. An invention which has for its sole object the advantage of another is rather an οἰκονομία (the word he uses in expounding our passage.) This lax view respecting truth was not peculiar to Chrysostom but was consonant with the prevailing spirit of the Eastern Church. There were a few exceptions however to this view, among whom were John of Lycopolis in Egypt, and Basil of Cæsarea who says του κυρίου διαφορὰν ψεύδους οὐδεμαὶν εκφήναντος. Schaff says (*Prolegomena* p. 8): "Origen, Jerome and Chrysostom explain the offense of this collision away by turning it into a theatrical and hypocritical farce, shrewdly arranged by the Apostle for a purpose. In this respect the modern standard of ethics is far superior to that of the Fathers and more fully accords with the spirit of the New Testament." [We may add that Chrysostom's view gains nothing; for to save one Apostle from the charge of unpremeditated hypocrisy, he makes both guilty of premeditated hypocrisy.—G.A.]

that certain came from James,” who was the teacher at Jerusalem, “he did eat with the Gentiles, but when they came he drew back and separated himself, fearing them that were of the Circumcision:” his cause of fear was not his own danger, (for if he feared not in the beginning, much less would he do so then,) but their defection. As Paul himself says to the Galatians, “I am afraid of you, lest by any means I have bestowed labor upon you in vain:” (Gal. iv. 11.) and again, “I fear lest by any means as the serpent beguiled Eve, . . . so your minds should be corrupted.” (2 Cor. xi. 3.) Thus the fear of death they knew not, but the fear lest their disciples should perish, agitated their inmost soul.

Ver. 13. “Insomuch that even Barnabas was carried away with their dissimulation.”

Be not surprised at his giving this proceeding the name of dissimulation, for he is unwilling, as I said before, to disclose the true state of the case, in order to the correction of his disciples. On account of their vehement attachment to the Law, he calls the present proceeding “dissimulation,” and severely rebukes it, in order effectually to eradicate their prejudice. And Peter too, hearing this joins in the feint, as if he had erred, that they might be corrected by means of the rebuke administered to him. Had Paul reprov'd these Jews, they would have spurned at it with indignation, for they held him in slight esteem; but now, when they saw their Teacher silent under rebuke, they were unable to despise or resist Paul's sentence.

Ver. 14. “But when I saw that they walked not uprightly according to the truth of the Gospel.”

Neither let this phrase disturb you, for in using it he does not condemn Peter, but so expresses himself for the benefit of those who were to be reformed by the reproof of Peter.

Ver. 14. “I said unto Cephas before them all.”

Observe his mode of correcting the others; he speaks “before them all,” that the hearers might be alarmed thereby. And this is what he says,—

Ver. 14. “If thou, being a Jew, livest as do the Gentiles, and not as do the Jews, how compellest thou the Gentiles to live as do the Jews?”⁵⁷

But it was the Jews and not the Gentiles who were carried away together with Peter; why then does Paul impute what was not done, instead of directing his remarks, not against the Gentiles, but against the dissembling Jews? And why does he accuse Peter alone, when the rest also dissembled together with him? Let us consider the terms of his charge; “If thou, being a Jew, livest as do the Gentiles, and not as do the Jews, how compellest thou the Gentiles to live as do the Jews?” for in fact Peter alone had withdrawn himself. His object then is to remove suspicion from his rebuke; had he blamed Peter for observing the Law,

57 [For the bearing of this passage upon the Tübingen theory of Baur, “the most important of recent theological controversies” see Lightfoot's *Commentary on Galatians, Excursus on St. Paul and the Three*, pp. 191 ff., and Fisher's *Supernatural Origin of Christianity*, pp. 205-ff.—G.A.]

the Jews would have censured him for his boldness towards their Teacher. But now arraigning him in behalf of his own peculiar disciples, I mean the Gentiles, he facilitates thereby the reception of what he has to say which he also does by abstaining from reproof of the others, and addressing it all to the Apostle. "If thou," he says, "being a Jew, livest as do the Gentiles, and not as do the Jews;" which almost amounts to an explicit exhortation to imitate their Teacher, who, himself a Jew, lived after the manner of the Gentiles. This however he says not, for they could not have received such advice, but under color of reproving him in behalf of the Gentiles, he discloses Peter's real sentiments. On the other hand, if he had said, Wherefore do you compel these Jews to Judaize? his language would have been too severe. But now he effects their correction by appearing to espouse the part, not of the Jewish, but of the Gentile, disciples; for rebukes, which are moderately severe, secure the readiest reception. And none of the Gentiles could object to Paul that he took up the defense of the Jews. The whole difficulty was removed by Peter's submitting in silence to the imputation of dissimulation, in order that he might deliver the Jews from its reality. At first Paul directs his argument to the character which Peter wore, "If thou, being a Jew:" but he generalizes as he goes on, and includes himself in the phrase,⁵⁸

Ver. 15. "We being Jews by nature, and not sinners of the Gentiles."⁵⁹

These words are hortatory, but are couched in the form of a reproof, on account of those Jews. So elsewhere, under cover of one meaning he conveys another; as where he says in his Epistle to the Romans, "But now I go unto Jerusalem, ministering unto the saints." (Rom. xv. 25.) Here his object was not simply to inform them of the motive of his journey to Jerusalem, but to excite them to emulation in the giving of alms. Had he merely wished to explain his motive, it would have sufficed to say, "I go to ministering unto the saints;" but now observe what he says in addition; "For it hath been the good pleasure of Macedonia and Achaia to make a certain contribution for the poor among the saints that are at Jerusalem. Yea, it hath been their good pleasure and their debtors they are." And again, "For if the Gentiles have been made partakers of their spiritual things, they owe it to them, also to minister unto them in carnal things." (Rom. xv. 26, 27.)

Observe how he represses the high thoughts of the Jews; preparing for one thing by means of another, and his language is authoritative. "We being Jews by nature, and not sinners of the Gentiles." The phrase, "Jews by nature," implies that we, who are not proselytes,

58 [For the bearing of this passage upon the Tübingen theory of Baur, "the most important of recent theological controversies" see Lightfoot's *Commentary on Galatians, Excursus on St. Paul and the Three*, pp. 191 ff., and Fisher's *Supernatural Origin of Christianity*, pp. 205-ff.—G.A.]

59 [Schaff says: "The following verses to the end of the chapter are a summary report or dramatic sketch of Paul's address to Peter." So also Meyer who gives four good reasons for this view. So also Schmoller (in Lange) and Ellicott. Others think that vv. 15-21 are addressed to the Galatians.—G.A.]

but educated from early youth in the Law, have relinquished our habitual mode of life, and be taken ourselves to the faith which is in Christ.

Ver. 16. “Knowing that a man is not justified by the works of the Law, save through faith, in Jesus Christ, even we believed on Christ Jesus.”

Observe here too how cautiously he expresses himself; he does not say that they had abandoned the Law as evil, but as weak. If the law cannot confer righteousness, it follows that circumcision is superfluous; and so far he now proves; but he proceeds to show that it is not only superfluous but dangerous. It deserves especial notice, how at the outset he says that a man is not justified by the works of the Law; but as he proceeds he speaks more strongly;

Ver. 17. “But if, while we sought to be justified in Christ, we ourselves also were found sinners is Christ a minister of sin?”

If faith in Him, says he, avail not for our justification, but it be necessary again to embrace the Law, and if, having forsaken the Law for Christ’s sake, we are not justified but condemned for such abandonment,—then shall we find Him, for whose sake we forsook the Law and went over to faith the author of our condemnation.⁶⁰ Observe how, he has resolved the matter to a necessary absurdity. And mark how earnestly and strongly he argues. For if, he says, it behooved us not to abandon the Law, and we have so abandoned it for Christ’s sake, we shall be judged. Wherefore do you urge this upon Peter, who is more intimately acquainted with it than any one? Hath not God declared to him, that an uncircumcised man ought not to be judged by circumcision; and did he not in his discussion with the Jews rest his bold opposition upon the vision which he saw? Did he not send from Jerusalem unequivocal decrees upon this subject? Paul’s object is not therefore to correct Peter, but his animadversion required to be addressed to him, though it was pointed at the disciples; and not only at the Galatians, but also at others who labor under the same error with them. For though few are now circumcised, yet, by fasting and observing the sabbath with the Jews, they equally exclude themselves from grace. If Christ avails not to those who are only circumcised, much more is peril to be feared where fasting and sabbatizing are observed, and thus two commandments of the Law are kept in the place of one. And this is aggravated by a consideration of time: for they so acted at first while the city and temple and other institutions yet existed; but these who with the punishment of the Jews, and the destruction of the city before their eyes,⁶¹ observe more precepts of the Law than the others did, what apology can they find



60 [“Thus to be justified in Christ, it was necessary to sink to the level of Gentiles to become ‘sinners’ in fact. But are we not thus making Christ a minister of sin? Away with the profane thought! No, the guilt is not in abandoning the Law, but in seeking it again when abandoned. Thus alone we convict ourselves of transgression. On the other hand in abandoning the Law we did but follow the promptings of the Law.” Lightfoot.—G.A.]

61 [The Epistle to the Galatians was written in the year a.d. 56 or 57 and the destruction of Jerusalem occurred in a.d. 70.—G.A.]

for such observance, at the very time when the Jews themselves, in spite of their strong desire, cannot keep it? Thou hast put on Christ, thou hast become a member of the Lord, and been enrolled in the heavenly city, and dost thou still grovel in the Law? How is it possible for thee to obtain the kingdom? Listen to Paul's words, that the observance of the Law overthrows the Gospel, and learn, if thou wilt, how this comes to pass, and tremble, and shun this pitfall. Wherefore dost thou keep the sabbath, and fast with the Jews? Is it that thou fearest the Law and abandonment of its letter? But thou wouldest not entertain this fear, didst thou not disparage faith as weak, and by itself powerless to save. A fear to omit the sabbath plainly shows that you fear the Law as still in force; and if the Law is needful, it is so as a whole, not in part, nor in one commandment only; and if as a whole, the righteousness which is by faith is little by little shut out. If thou keep the sabbath, why not also be circumcised? and if circumcised, why not also offer sacrifices? If the Law is to be observed, it must be observed as a whole, or not at all. If omitting one part makes you fear condemnation, this fear attaches equally to all the parts. If a transgression of the whole is not punishable, much less is the transgression of a part; on the other hand, if the latter be punishable, much more is the former. But if we are bound to keep the whole, we are bound to disobey Christ, or by obedience to Him become transgressors of the Law. If it ought to be kept, those who keep it not are transgressors, and Christ will be found to be the cause of this transgression, for He annulled the Law as regards these things Himself, and bid others annul it. Do you not understand what these Judaizers are compassing? They would make Christ, who is to us the Author of righteousness, the Author of sin, as Paul says, "Therefore Christ is the minister of sin." Having thus reduced the proposition to an absurdity, he had nothing further to do by way of overthrowing it, but was satisfied with the simple protestation,

Ver. 17. "God forbid:" for shamelessness and irreverence need not be met by processes of reasoning, but a mere protest is enough.

Ver. 18. "For if I build up again those things which I destroyed, I prove myself a transgressor."⁶²

Observe the Apostle's discernment; his opponents endeavored to show, that he who kept not the Law was a transgressor, but he retorts the argument upon them, and shows that he who did keep the Law was a transgressor, not merely of faith, but of the Law itself. "I build up again the things which I destroyed," that is, the Law; he means as follows: the Law has confessedly ceased, and we have abandoned it, and betaken ourselves to the salvation which comes of faith. But if we make a point of setting it up again, we become by that very

62 ["I myself (Paul now politely chooses the first person but means Peter) stand convicted of transgression if I build again (as thou dost now at Antioch) the very law of Moses which I pulled down (as thou didst at Cæsarea by divine command and at first at Antioch) and thus condemn my own former conduct."—Schaff in *Pop. Com.*—G.A.]

act transgressors, striving to keep what God has annulled. Next he shows how it has been annulled.

Ver. 19. “For I⁶³ through the Law died unto the Law.”

This may be viewed in two ways; it is either the law of grace which he speaks of, for he is wont to call this a law, as in the words, “For the law of the Spirit of life made me free:” (Rom. viii. 2.) or it is the old Law, of which he says, that by the Law itself he has become dead to the Law. That is to say, the Law itself has taught me no longer to obey itself, and therefore if I do so, I shall be transgressing even its teaching.⁶⁴ How, in what way has it so taught? Moses says, speaking of Christ, “The Lord God will raise up unto thee a Prophet from the midst of thee of thy brethren, like unto me; unto Him shall ye hearken.” (Deut. xviii. 15.) Therefore they who do not obey Him, transgress the Law. Again, the expression, “I through the Law died unto the Law,” may be understood in another sense: the Law commands all its precepts to be performed, and punishes the transgressor; therefore we are all dead to it, for no man has fulfilled it. Here observe, how guardedly he assails it; he says not, “the Law is dead to me;” but, “I am dead to the Law;” the meaning of which is, that, as it is impossible for a dead corpse to obey the commands of the Law, so also is it for me who have perished by its curse, for by its word am I slain. Let it not therefore lay commands on the dead, dead by its own act, dead not in body only, but in soul, which has involved the death of the body. This he shows in what follows:

Ver. 19, 20. “That I might live unto God,⁶⁵ I have been crucified with Christ.”

Having said, “I am dead,” lest it should be objected, how then dost thou live? he adds the cause of his living, and shows that when alive the Law slew him, but that when dead Christ through death restored him to life. He shows the wonder to be twofold; that by Christ both the dead was begotten into life, and that by means of death. He here means the immortal life, for this is the meaning of the words, “That I might live unto God I am crucified with Christ.”⁶⁶ How, it is asked, can a man now living and breathing have been crucified? That Christ hath been crucified is manifest, but how canst thou have been crucified, and yet live? He explains it thus;

63 [ἐγὼ γὰρ—In my case the process has been this, using his own experience.—G.A.]

64 [“This second interpretation of Chrysostom is undoubtedly the correct one (though he errs in elucidating the relation of δὴ; by referring to Deut. xviii. 15.) comp. Rom. vii. 4, 6; The law itself led him to Christ, by developing the sense of sin and the need of redemption.”—Schaff in *Pop. Com.*—G.A.]

65 [“That I might live unto God” is not to be joined to “I have been crucified with Christ” as Chrysostom, for it belongs to the completeness of the thought introduced by γὰρ ver. 19.—Meyer.—G.A.]

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Ver. 20. “Yet⁶⁷ I live; and yet no longer I, but Christ liveth in me.”

In these words, “I am crucified with Christ,” he alludes to Baptism⁶⁸ and in the words “nevertheless I live, yet not I,” our subsequent manner of life whereby our members are mortified. By saying “Christ liveth in me,” he means nothing is done by me, which Christ disapproves; for as by death he signifies not what is commonly understood, but a death to sin; so by life, he signifies a delivery from sin. For a man cannot live to God, otherwise than by dying to sin; and as Christ suffered bodily death, so does Paul a death to sin. “Mortify,” says he, “your members which are upon the earth; fornication, uncleanness, passion;” (Col. iii. 5.), and again, “our old man was crucified,” (Rom. vi. 6.) which took place in the Bath.⁶⁹ After which, if thou remainest dead to sin, thou livest to God, but if thou let it live again, thou art the ruin of thy new life. This however did not Paul, but continued wholly dead; if then, he says, I live to God a life other than that in the Law, and am dead to the Law, I cannot possibly keep any part of the Law. Consider how perfect was his walk, and thou wilt be transported with admiration of this blessed soul. He says not, “I live,” but, “Christ liveth in me;” who is bold enough to utter such words? Paul indeed, who had harnessed himself to Christ’s yoke, and cast away all worldly things, and was paying universal obedience to His will, says not, “I live to Christ,” but what is far higher, “Christ liveth in me.” As sin, when it has the mastery, is itself the vital principle, and leads the soul whither it will, so, when it is slain and the will of Christ obeyed, this life is no longer earthly, but Christ liveth, that is, works, has mastery within us. His saying, “I am crucified with Him” “I no longer live,” but “am dead,” seeming incredible to many, he adds,

Ver. 20. “And that life which I now live in the flesh, I live in faith, the faith which is in the Son of God.”

The foregoing, says he, relates to our spiritual life, but this life of sense too, if considered, will be found owing to my faith in Christ. For as regards the former Dispensation and Law, I had incurred the severest punishment, and had long ago perished, “for all have sinned, and come short of the glory of God.” (Rom. iii. 23.) And we, who lay under sentence, have been liberated by Christ, for all of us are dead, if not in fact, at least by sentence; and He has delivered us from the expected blow. When the Law had accused, and God condemned us, Christ came, and by giving Himself up to death, rescued us all from death. So that “the life which I now live in the flesh, I live in faith.” Had not this been, nothing could have averted

67 [This is the rendering of the Rev. Ver. though the American Committee has, “And it is no longer I that live;” and correctly so. For as Dr. Schaff says, The reading of the Rev. Ver. (and the Author. Ver. too) conveys a beautiful and true idea, but it is grammatically incorrect, since the original has no “nevertheless” and no “yet.” *Pop. Com. on Gal. and Companion to the Greek Testament*, p. 453.—G.A.]

68 [Chrysostom held baptismal regeneration.—G.A.]

69 [Chrysostom held baptismal regeneration.—G.A.]

a destruction as general as that which took place at the flood, but His advent arrested the wrath of God, and caused us to live by faith. That such is his meaning appears from what follows. After saying, that “the life which I now live in the flesh, I live in faith,” he adds,

Ver. 20. “In the Son of God, Who loved me, and gave Himself up for me.”

How is this, O Paul! why dost thou appropriate a general benefit, and make thine own what was done for the whole world’s sake? for he says not, “Who loved us,” but, “Who loved me.” And besides the Evangelist says, “God so loved the world;” ([John iii. 16.](#)) and Paul himself, “He that spared not His own Son, but delivered Him up,” not for Paul only, but, “for us all;” ([Rom. viii. 32.](#)) and again, “that He might purify unto himself a people for his own possession,” ([Tit. ii. 14.](#)) But considering the desperate condition of human nature, and the ineffably tender solicitude of Christ, in what He delivered us from, and what He freely gave us, and kindled by the yearning of affection towards Him, he thus expresses himself. Thus the Prophets often appropriate to themselves Him who is God of all, as in the words, “O God, thou art my God, early will I seek Thee.” ([Psalm lxiii. 1.](#)) Moreover, this language teaches that each individual justly owes as a great debt of gratitude to Christ, as if He had come for his sake alone, for He would not have grudged this His condescension though but for one, so that the measure of His love to each is as great as to the whole world. Truly the Sacrifice was offered for all mankind,⁷⁰ and was sufficient to save all, but those who enjoy the blessing are the believing only. Nevertheless it did not deter Him from His so great condescension, that not all would come; but He acted after the pattern of the supper in the Gospel, which He prepared for all, ([Luke xiv. 16.](#)) yet when the guests came not, instead of withdrawing the viands, He called in others. So too He did not despise that sheep, though one only, which had strayed from the ninety and nine. ([Mat. xviii. 12.](#)) This too in like manner St. Paul intimates, when he says, speaking about the Jews, “For what if some were without faith, shall their want of faith make of none effect the faithfulness of God? God forbid: yea let God be found true, but every man a liar.” ([Rom. iii. 3, 4.](#)) When He so loved thee as to give Himself up to bring thee who wast without hope to a life so great and blessed, canst thou, thus gifted, have recourse to things gone by? His reasoning being completed, he concludes with a vehement asseveration, saying,

Ver. 21. “I do not make void the grace of God.”⁷¹

Let those, who even now Judaize and adhere to the Law, listen to this, for it applies to them.

70 [“Chrysostom teaches that God foreordained all men to holiness and salvation and that Christ died for all and is both willing and able to save all, but not against their will.”—Schaff, *Proleg.* p. 20.—G.A.]

71 [“Negative side of the life which Paul (from [ver. 19.](#)) has described as his own. By this negative, with the grave reason assigned for it in the latter part of the verse, the perverse conduct of Peter is completely condemned.”—Meyer.—G.A.]

Ver. 21. “For if righteousness is through the Law, then Christ died for naught.”

What can be more heinous than this sin?⁷² what more fit to put one to shame than these words? Christ’s death is a plain proof of the inability of the Law to justify us; and if it does justify, then is His death superfluous. Yet how could it be reasonable to say that has been done heedlessly and in vain which is so awful, so surpassing human reason, a mystery so ineffable, with which Patriarchs travailed, which Prophets foretold, which Angels gazed on with consternation, which all men confess as the summit of the Divine tenderness? Reflecting how utterly out of place it would be if they should say that so great and high a deed had been done superfluously, (for this is what their conduct came to,) he even uses violent language against them, as we find in the words which follow.

72 [“This blasphemous inference gives the finishing stroke to the false Judaizing gospel. “This collision between Peter and Paul furnished material to the Ebionites for an attack upon Paul, to the Gnostics for an attack upon the Jewish apostles and to Porphyry for an attack upon Christianity itself [as well as to Baur and the Tübingen school for an attack in modern times from a different standpoint]. But Christianity has surveyed all these attacks and gains new strength from every conflict.”—Schaff.—G.A.]

Chapter III.

Verse 1

“O foolish Galatians⁷³ who did bewitch you, before whose eyes Jesus Christ was openly set forth, crucified?”

Here he passes to another subject; in the former chapters he had shown himself not to be an Apostle of men, nor by men, nor in want of Apostolic instruction. Now, having established his authority as a teacher, he proceeds to discourse more confidently, and draws a comparison between faith and the Law. At the outset he said, “I marvel that ye are so quickly removing;” (*Gal. i. 6.*) but here, “O foolish Galatians;” then, his indignation was in its birth, but now, after his refutation of the charges against himself, and his proofs, it bursts forth. Let not his calling them “foolish” surprise you; for it is not a transgression of Christ’s command not to call one’s brother a fool, but rather a strict observance of it. For it is not said simply, “Whosoever shall say to his brother, Thou fool,” (*Mat. v. 22.*) but, whosoever shall do so, “without a cause.”⁷⁴ And who more fittingly than they could so be called, who after so great events, adhered to past things, as if nothing else had ever happened? If on this account Paul is to be called a “reviler,” Peter may likewise, on account of Annanias and Sapphira, be called a homicide; but as it would be wildness to do so in that case, much more in this. Moreover it is to be considered, that this vehemence is not used at the beginning, but after these evidences and proofs, which, rather than Paul himself, might now be held to administer the rebuke. For after he had shown that they rejected the faith, and made the death of Christ to be without a purpose, he introduces his reproof, which, even as it is, is less severe than they merited. Observe too how soon he stays his arm; for he adds not, Who has seduced you? who has perverted you? who has been sophistical with you? but, “Who hath cast an envious eye on you?” thus tempering his reprimand with somewhat of praise. For it implies that their previous course had excited jealousy,⁷⁵ and that the present occurrence arose from the malignity of a demon, whose breath had blasted their prosperous estate.

And when you hear of jealousy in this place, and in the Gospel, of an evil eye, which means the same, you must not suppose that the glance of the eye has any natural power to injure those who look upon it. For the eye, that is, the organ itself, cannot be evil; but Christ

73 [“Paul addresses himself again directly to the Galatians with an expression of indignant surprise at their relapse into Judaism and passes from the historical to the doctrinal part of the Epistle, from the apology of his apostolic authority to the defense of his apostolic teaching.”—Schaff in *Pop. Com.*—G.A.]

74 [The word εἰκῆ, ‘without a cause,’ occurs in the *textus receptus* on inferior authority in connection with the words ‘whosoever shall be angry with his brother’ (without a cause), but no where with the words, ‘whosoever shall say, Thou fool,’ as Chrys. here connects them.—G.A.]

75 [“The word means ‘to bewitch by words, to enchant,’ and is not to be explained with Chrysostom, ‘who has envied you?’ that is, your previous happy condition?”—Meyer.—G.A.]

in that place means jealousy by the term. To behold, simply, is the function of the eye, but to behold in an evil manner belongs to a mind depraved within. As through this sense the knowledge of visible objects enters the soul, and as jealousy is for the most part generated by wealth, and wealth and sovereignty and pomp are perceived by the eye, therefore he calls the eye evil; not as beholding merely, but as beholding enviously from some moral depravity. Therefore by the words, “Who hath looked enviously on you,” he implies that the persons in question acted, not from concern, not to supply defects, but to mutilate what existed. For envy, far from supplying what is wanting, subtracts from what is complete, and vitiates the whole. And he speaks thus, not as if envy had any power of itself, but meaning, that the teachers of these doctrines did so from envious motives.

Ver. 1. “Before whose eyes Jesus Christ was openly set forth, crucified.”

Yet was He not crucified in Galatia, but at Jerusalem. His reason for saying, “among you,”⁷⁶ is to declare the power of faith to see events which are at a distance. He says not, “crucified,” but, “openly set forth crucified,” signifying that by the eye of faith they saw more distinctly than some who were present as spectators. For many of the latter received no benefit, but the former, who were not eye-witnesses, yet saw it by faith more clearly. These words convey both praise and blame; praise, for their implicit acceptance of the truth; blame, because Him whom they had seen, for their sakes, stripped naked, transfixed, nailed to the cross, spit upon, mocked, fed with vinegar, upbraided by thieves, pierced with a spear; (for all this is implied in the words, “openly set forth, crucified,”)⁷⁷ Him had they left, and betaken themselves to the Law, unshamed by any of those sufferings. Here observe how Paul, leaving all mention of heaven, earth, and sea, every where preaches the power of Christ, bearing about as he did, and holding up His cross: for this is the sum of the Divine love toward us.

Ver. 2. “This only would I learn from you, Received ye the Spirit by the works of the Law, or by the hearing of faith?”

As ye do not attend, says he, to long discourses, nor are willing to contemplate the magnitude of this Economy, I am desirous, (seeing your extreme ignorance,) to convince you by concise arguments and a summary method of proof. Before, he had convinced them by what he said to Peter; now, he encounters them entirely with arguments, drawn not from what had occurred elsewhere, but from what had happened among themselves.⁷⁸ And his persuasives and proofs are adduced, not merely from what was given them in common with others, but from what was especially conferred on themselves. Therefore he says, “This only

76 [Ev ὀφθαλμῶν is spurious, being omitted by Aleph. A. B. C. versions, Fathers, and Rev. Ver. as well as by W. and H.—G.A.]

77 [“This signifies the life-like pictorial vivacity and effectiveness of Paul’s preaching of Christ and Him crucified. The Greek verb is used of placarding public notices and proclamations.”—Schaff.—G.A.]

78 [“See how effectually he treats the topic from (their own) experience.”—Luther, quoted by Meyer. G.A.]

would I learn from you, Received ye the Spirit by the works of the Law, or by the hearing of faith.” Ye have received, he says, the Holy Spirit, ye have done many mighty works, ye have effected miracles in raising the dead, in cleansing lepers, in prophesying, in speaking with tongues,—did the Law confer this great power upon you? was it not rather Faith, seeing that, before, ye could do no such things? Is it not then the height of madness for these who have received such benefits from Faith, to abandon it, and desert back to the Law which can offer you nothing of the same kind?

Ver. 3. “Are ye so foolish? having begun in the Spirit, are ye now perfected in the flesh?”

Here again he seasonably interposes a rebuke; time, he says, should have brought improvement; but, so far from advancing, ye have even retrograded. Those who start from small beginnings make progress to higher things; ye, who began with the high, have relapsed to the low. Even had your outset been carnal, your advance should have been spiritual, but now, after starting from things spiritual, ye have ended your journey in that which is carnal; for to work miracles is spiritual, but to be circumcised is carnal. And after miracles ye have passed to circumcision, after having apprehended the truth ye have fallen back to types, after gazing on the sun ye seek a candle, after having strong meat ye run for milk. He says, “made perfect,”⁷⁹ which means not “initiated” merely, but “sacrificed,” signifying that their teachers took and slew them like animals, while they resigned themselves to suffer what those teachers pleased. As if some captain, or distinguished man, after a thousand victories and trophies, were to subject himself to infamy as a deserter, and offer his body to be branded at the will of others.

Ver. 4. “Did ye suffer so many things in vain?⁸⁰ if it be indeed in vain.”

This remark is far more piercing than the former, for the remembrance of their miracles would not be so powerful as the exhibition of their contests and endurance of sufferings for Christ’s sake. All that you have endured, says he, these men would strip you of, and would rob you of your crown. Then, lest he should dismay and unnerve, he proceeds not to a

79 [This distinction between *τελέω* and *ἐπιτελέω* was not in the mind of the Apostle. The contrast with *ἐναρξάμενοι*, ‘having begun,’ shows that *ἐπὶ τελεῖσθε* simply means ‘are ye made perfect,’ ‘the compound involving the idea of bringing to a ‘complete and perfect’ end.’ (Ellicott.) There may be a slight tinge of irony in the compound word.—G.A.]

80 [“As we know nothing of persecutions endured by Galatians, it seems preferable to take the word in a neutral sense embracing all spiritual experiences (blessings and benefits as well) of the Galatians. (Comp. [v. 3](#) and [6](#).)”—Schaff. Lightfoot refers it to the persecutions endured by the Galatians from Jews citing [Gal. v. 11](#); and says “the *εἰ* yeaves a loophole for doubt which the *καί*, following, widens.” So Ellicott. Meyer says, “It refers to everything which the false apostles in their Judaistic zeal had troubled and burdened the Galatians with. The *εἰκῆ* then means “and all to no profit, all in vain,” if indeed it be only (*καί*) in vain and not to the positive risk of your Messianic salvation that ye have suffered.”—G.A.]

formal judgment, but subjoins, “if it be indeed in vain;” if you have but a mind to shake off drowsiness and recover yourselves, he says, it is not in vain. Where then be those who would cut off repentance⁸¹? Here were men who had received the Spirit, worked miracles, become confessors, encountered a thousand perils and persecutions for Christ’s sake, and after so many achievements had fallen from grace; nevertheless he says, if ye have the purpose, ye may recover yourselves.

Ver. 5. “He therefore that supplieth to you the Spirit, and worketh miracles among you, doeth he it by the works of the law, or by the hearing of faith?”

Have ye been vouchsafed, he says, so great a gift, and achieved such wonders, because ye observed the Law, or because ye adhered to Faith? plainly on account of Faith. Seeing that they played this argument to and fro, that apart from the Law, Faith had no force, he proves the contrary, viz., that if the Commandments be added, Faith no longer avails; for Faith then has efficacy when things from the Law are not added to it. “Ye who would be justified by the Law, ye are fallen away from grace:” (*Gal. v. 4.*) This he says later, when his language has grown bolder, employing the vantage-ground by that time gained; meanwhile while gaining it, he argues from their past experience. For it was when ye obeyed Faith, he says, not the Law, that ye received the Spirit and wrought miracles.

And here, as the Law was the subject of discussion, he moots another special point of controversy, and very opportunely and with much cogency introduces a notice of Abraham.

Ver. 6. “Even as Abraham believed God, and it was reckoned unto him for righteousness.”

Even the miracles done by themselves, he says, declare the power of Faith, but I shall attempt if you will suffer me to draw my proofs from ancient narratives also. Then, as they made great account of the Patriarch, he brings his example forward, and shows that he too was justified by Faith.⁸² And if he who was before grace, was justified by Faith, although plentiful in works, much more we. For what loss was it to him, not being under the Law? None, for his faith sufficed unto righteousness. The Law did not then exist, he says, neither does it now exist, any more than then. In disproving the need of the Law, he introduces one who was justified before the Law, lest an objection should also be made to him; for as then it was not yet given, so now, having been given, it was abrogated. And as they made much of their descent from Abraham, and feared lest, abandoning the Law, they should be considered strangers to his kin; Paul removes this fear by turning their argument against themselves, and proves that faith is especially concerned in connecting them with Abraham.



81 The Novatians, who said the revealed covenant of grace did not provide for the case of the lapsed.

82 [“The answer, obvious of itself, to the preceding question is ἐξ ἀκοῆς πίστεως, ‘from the hearing of faith,’ and to this Paul subjoins that great religious-historic argument for the righteousness of faith which is presented in the justification of the progenitor of the theocratic people.”—Meyer.—G.A.]

He draws out this argument more at length in the Epistle to the Romans; however he urges it also here in, the words,

Ver. 7. “Know therefore, that they which be of faith, the same are sons of Abraham.”

Which he proves by ancient testimony thus:

Ver. 8. “And the Scripture,⁸³ foreseeing that God would justify the Gentiles by faith, preached the Gospel beforehand unto Abraham, saying, In thee shall all the nations be blessed.”

If then those were Abraham’s sons, not, who were related to him by blood, but who follow his faith, for this is the meaning of the words, “In thee all the nations,” it is plain that the heathen are brought into kindred with him.

Hereby too is proved another important point. It perplexed them that the Law was the older, and Faith afterwards. Now he removes this notion by showing that Faith was anterior to the Law; as is evident from Abraham’s case, who was justified before the giving of the Law. He shows too that late events fell out according to prophecy; “The Scripture,” says he, “foreseeing that God would justify the Gentiles by faith, preached the Gospel beforehand unto Abraham.” Attend to this point. He Himself who gave the Law, had decreed, before He gave it, that the heathen should be justified by Faith. And he says not “revealed,” but, “preached the Gospel,” to signify that the patriarch was in joy at this method of justification, and in great desire for its accomplishment.

Further, they were possessed with another apprehension; it was written, “Cursed is every one that continueth not in all things that are written in the book of the Law, to do them.” (*Deut. xxvii. 26.*) And this he removes, with great skill and prudence, turning their argument against themselves, and showing that those who relinquish the Law are not only not cursed, but blessed; and they who keep it, not only not blessed but cursed. They said that he who kept not the Law was cursed, but he proves that he who kept it was cursed, and he who kept it not, blessed. Again, they said that he who adhered to Faith alone was cursed, but he shows that he who adhered to Faith alone, is blessed. And how does he prove all this? for it is no common thing which we have promised; wherefore it is necessary to give close attention to what follows. He had already shown this, by referring to the words spoken to the Patriarch, “In thee shall all nations be blessed,” (*Gen. xii. 4.*) at a time, that is, when Faith existed, not the Law; so he adds by way of conclusion,

Ver. 9. “So then they which be of faith are blessed with the faithful Abraham.”⁸⁴

83 [“The Scripture personified. The only case in N.T. where the personification of Scripture goes beyond λέγει or εἶπεν,” etc.—Lightfoot.—G.A.]

84 [“After having pointed out from Scripture *v. 6 and 7*, that none other than believers are sons of Abraham, Paul now shows further from Scripture that none other than believers have a share in Abraham’s blessing, i.e., are justified.”—Meyer.—G.A.]

Then, that they might not turn round, and object that, true it was Abraham was justified by Faith, for the Law was not then given, but what instance would be found of Faith justifying after the delivery of the Law? he addresses himself to this, and proves more than they required: namely, not only that Faith was justifying, but that the Law brought its adherents under a curse. To be sure of this, listen to the very words of the Apostle.

Ver. 10. “For⁸⁵ as many as are of the works of the Law are under a curse.”

This is what he lays down, before proving it; and what is the proof? it is from the Law itself:—

Ver. 10, 11. “For it is written, Cursed is every one that continueth not in all things that are written in the book of the Law to do them. Now that no man is justified by the Law is evident.”

For all have sinned, and are under the curse. However he does not say this yet, lest he should seem to lay it down of himself, but here again establishes his point by a text which concisely states both points; that no man has fulfilled the Law, (wherefore they are under the curse,) and, that Faith justifies. What then is the text? It is in the book of the prophet Habakkuk, “The just shall live by faith,” (**Hab. ii. 4.**) which not only establishes the righteousness that is of Faith, but also that there is no salvation through the Law. As no one, he says, kept the Law, but all were under the curse, on account of transgression, an easy way was provided, that from Faith, which is in itself a strong proof that no man can be justified by the Law. For the prophet says not, “The just shall live by the Law,” but, “by faith:”

Ver. 12. “And the Law is not of faith; but He that doeth them shall live in them.”

For the Law requires not only Faith but works also, but grace saves and justifies by Faith. (**Eph. ii. 8.**)

You see how he proves that they are under the curse who cleave to the Law, because it is impossible to fulfill it; next, how comes Faith to have this justifying power? for to this doctrine he already stood pledged, and now maintains it with great force of argument. The Law being too weak to lead man to righteousness, an effectual remedy was provided in Faith, which is the means of rendering that possible which was “impossible by the Law.” (**Rom. viii. 3.**) Now as the Scripture says, “the just shall live by faith,” thus repudiating salvation by the Law, and moreover as Abraham was justified by Faith, it is evident that its efficacy is very great. And it is also clear, that he who abides not by the Law is cursed, and that he who keeps to Faith is just. But, you may ask me, how I prove that this curse is not still of



85 [“Having shown by positive proof that justification is of faith, he adds the negative argument derived from the impossibility of maintaining its opposite, namely, justification by Law. This negative argument is twofold: First, it is impossible to fulfill the requirements of the law and nonfulfillment lays us under a curse (**Ver. 10.**); Secondly, supposing the fulfilment possible, still the spirit of the Law is antagonistic to faith, which is elsewhere spoken of as the source of life. (**Ver. 11 and 12.**)”—Lightfoot.—G.A.]

force? Abraham lived before the Law, but we, who once were subject to the yoke of bondage, have made ourselves liable to the curse; and who shall release us therefrom? Observe his ready answer to this; his former remark was sufficient; for, if a man be once justified, and has died to the Law and embraced a novel life, how can such a one be subject to the curse? however, this is not enough for him, so he begins with a fresh argument, as follows:—

Ver. 13. “Christ redeemed us from the curse of the Law, having become a curse for us: for it is written, Cursed is every one that hangeth on a tree.”⁸⁶

In reality, the people were subject to another curse, which says, “Cursed is every one that continueth not in the things that are written in the book of the Law.” ([Deut. xxvii. 26.](#)) To this curse, I say, people were subject, for no man had continued in, or was a keeper of, the whole Law; but Christ exchanged this curse for the other, “Cursed is every one that hangeth on a tree.” As then both he who hanged on a tree, and he who transgresses the Law, is cursed, and as it was necessary for him who is about to relieve from a curse himself to be free from it, but to receive another instead of it, therefore Christ took upon Him such another, and thereby relieved us from the curse. It was like an innocent man’s undertaking to die for another sentenced to death, and so rescuing him from punishment. For Christ took upon Him not the curse of transgression, but the other curse, in order to remove that of others. For, “He had done no violence neither was any deceit in His mouth.” ([Isa. liii. 9; 1 Peter ii. 22.](#)) And as by dying He rescued from death those who were dying, so by taking upon Himself the curse, He delivered them from it.

Ver. 14. “That upon the Gentiles might come the blessing of Abraham.”

How on the Gentiles? It is said, “In thy seed shall all the nations of the earth be blessed:” ([Gen. xxii. 18; xxvi. 4.](#)) that is to say, in Christ. If this were said of the Jews, how would it be reasonable that they who were themselves subject to the curse, on account of transgression, should become the authors of a blessing to others? an accursed person cannot impart to others that blessing of which he is himself deprived. Plainly then it all refers to Christ who was the Seed of Abraham, and through whom the Gentiles are blessed. And thus the promise of the Spirit is added, as Paul himself declares, “that we might receive the promise of the Spirit through faith.”⁸⁷ As the grace of the Spirit could not possibly descend on the graceless and offending, they are first blessed the curse having been removed; then being

86 [“A parenthetic justification from [Deut. xxi. 23.](#) of the startling expression just used. The passage refers to those criminals who, after being stoned, were hung upon a stake, but were not permitted to remain over night lest the holy land should be desecrated. Our Saviour fulfilled the legal curse by hanging dead on the cross. This is one of the strongest passages for the doctrine of a vicarious atonement. The vicarious efficacy lies not so much in the preposition, ὑπέρ, ‘for,’ as in the whole sentence.”—Schaff—G.A.]

87 [“After a wondrous chain of arguments * * the apostle comes back to the subject of [verse 2:](#) the gift of the Holy Ghost came through faith in Christ.”—Ellicott.—G.A.]

justified by faith, they draw unto themselves the grace of the Spirit. Thus the Cross removed the curse, Faith brought in righteousness, righteousness drew on the grace of the Spirit.

Ver. 15. “Brethren, I speak after the manner of men; Though it be but a man’s covenant, yet when it hath been confirmed, no one maketh it void or addeth thereto.”

“To speak after the manner of men” means to use human examples.⁸⁸ Having founded his argument on the Scriptures, on the miracles wrought among themselves, on the sufferings of Christ, and on the Patriarch, he proceeds to common usages; and this he does invariably, in order to sweeten his discourse, and render it more acceptable and intelligible to the duller sort. Thus he argues with the Corinthians, “Who feedeth a flock, and eateth not of the milk of the flock? Who planteth a vineyard, and eateth not the fruit thereof?” (1 Cor. ix. 7.) and again with the Hebrews, “For a testament is of force where there hath been death; for doth it ever avail while he that made it liveth?” (Heb. ix. 17.) One may find him dwelling with pleasure on such arguments. In the Old Testament God does the same thing in many instances, as, “Can a woman forget her sucking child?” (Isa. xlix. 15.) and again, “Shall the clay say to him that fashioneth it, What makest thou?” (Isa. xlv. 9.) and in Hosea, He represents a husband set at nought by his wife. (Hos. ii. 5, f) This use of human examples frequently occurs in types also, as when the prophet takes the girdle, (Jer. xiii. 1–9.) and goes down to the potter’s house (Jer. xviii. 1–6.) The meaning of the present example is, that Faith is more ancient than the Law, which is later and only temporary, and delivered in order to pave the way for Faith. Hence he says, “Brethren, I speak after the manner of men;” above he had called them “foolish,” now he calls them “brethren,” at once chiding and encouraging them. “Though it be but a man’s covenant, yet when it hath been confirmed.” If a man, says he, makes a covenant, does any one dare to come afterwards and overturn it, or subjoin ought to it? for this is the meaning of “or addeth thereto.” Much less then when God makes a covenant; and with whom did God make a covenant?

Ver. 16, 17, 18. “Now to Abraham were the promises spoken and to his seed. He saith not, And to seeds,⁸⁹ as of many; but as of One, And to thy seed, which is Christ.⁹⁰ Now this I say, A covenant, confirmed before hand by God the Law, which came four hundred and



88 [“Paul now assumes a milder tone and reasons from the common dealings of men.”—Schaff.—G.A.]

89 [“A difficulty arises here from the stress which Paul lays on the singular of the word ‘seed,’ which is a collective noun in Heb. and Greek, and includes the whole posterity. But it is not a question of grammar but of spiritual meaning. The Promise refers to Christ *par excellence*, and to all those and only those who are truly members of His body, united to Him by a living faith. If all the single descendants of Abraham were meant, the children of Hagar and Keturah and subsequently of Esau and his descendants, would have to be included.”—Schaff.—G.A.]

90 [“Not as a single individual but as Head of the church which is His body, Eph. 1: 23. The key to the passage is in ver. 28 and 29: ‘Ye are all *one* in Christ Jesus.’”—Schaff.—G.A.]

thirty years after, doth not disannul, so as to make the promise of none effect. For if the inheritance is of the Law, it is no more of promise: but God hath granted it to Abraham by promise.”

Thus God made a covenant with Abraham, promising that in his seed the blessing should come upon the heathen; and this blessing the Law cannot turn aside. As this example was not in all respects appropriate to the matter in hand, he introduces it thus, “I speak after the manner of men,” that nothing might be deduced from it derogatory to the majesty of God. But let us go to the bottom of this illustration. It was promised Abraham that by his seed the heathen should be blessed; and his seed according to the flesh is Christ; four hundred and thirty years after came the Law; now, if the Law bestows the blessings even life and righteousness, that promise is annulled. And so while no one annuls a man’s covenant, the covenant of God after four hundred and thirty years is annulled; for if not that covenant but another instead of it bestows what is promised, then is it set aside, which is most unreasonable.

Ver. 19. “What then is the Law? it was added because of transgressions.”

This remark again is not superfluous; observe too how he glances round at every thing, as if he had an hundred eyes. Having exalted Faith, and proved its elder claims, that the Law may not be considered superfluous, he sets right this side of the doctrine also, and proves that the Law was not given without a view, but altogether profitably. “Because of transgressions;” that is to say, that the Jews might not be let live carelessly, and plunge into the depth of wickedness,⁹¹ but that the Law might be placed upon them as a bridle, guiding, regulating, and checking them from transgressing, if not all, at least some of the commandments. Not slight then was the advantage of the Law; but for how long?

Ver. 19. “Till the seed should come to whom the promise hath been made.”

This is said of Christ; if then it was given until His advent, why do you protract it beyond its natural period?

Ver. 19. “And it was ordained through Angels by the hand of a Mediator.”

He either calls the priests Angels, or he declares that the Angels themselves ministered to the delivery of the Law. By Mediator here he means Christ,⁹² and shows that He was before it, and Himself the Giver of it.

91 [“This interpretation of Chrysostom must be rejected on lexical grounds. The law was in order to bring sin to light and make it appear in its true character and thus by a knowledge of the disease prepare its cure.”—Ellicott and Schaff.—G.A.]

92 [“We may reasonably wonder,” says Ellicott, “how the early expositors (Basil and Theodoret excepted) could have so generally coincided in the perplexing view of Origen that the Mediator here mentioned was Christ. On the contrary it is plain that it was Moses, [Deut. v. 5.](#)”—G.A.]

Ver. 20. “Now a mediator is not a mediator of one, but God is one.”⁹³

What can the heretics⁹⁴ say to this? for as, according to them, the expression “the Only True God” excludes the Son from being true God, so here the phrase “God is One,” excludes Him from being God in any sense. But if, although the Father is called “One God,” the Son is nevertheless God, it is very plain that though the Father is called “Very God,” the Son is very God likewise. Now a mediator, says he, is between two parties; of whom then is Christ the Mediator? plainly of God and of men. Observe, he says, that Christ also gave the Law; what therefore it was His to give, it is His to annul.

Ver. 21. “Is the Law then against the promises of God?”

For if the blessing is given in the seed of Abraham, but the Law brings in the curse, it must be contrary to the promises. This objection he meets, first, by a protest, in the words,

Ver. 21. “God forbid:”

And next he brings his proof;

Ver. 21. “For if there had been a law given which could make alive verily righteousness would have been of the Law.”

His meaning is as follows; If we had our hope of life in the Law, and our salvation depended on it, the objection might be valid. But if it save you, by means of Faith, though it brings you under the curse, you suffer nothing from it, gain no harm, in that Faith comes and sets all right. Had the promise been by the Law, you had reasonably feared lest, separating from the Law, you should separate from righteousness, but if it was given in order to shut up all, that is, to convince all and expose their individual sins, far from excluding you from the promises, it now aids you in obtaining them. This is shown by the words,

Ver. 22. “Howbeit the scripture⁹⁵ hath shut up all things under sin, that the promise by faith in Jesus Christ might be given to them that believe.”

93 [“This verse is counted the most difficult passage in the New Testament, and has given rise to about 300 interpretations.” That of Lightfoot seems to satisfy the context, and is thus forcibly put by him: “The law is of the nature of a contract between two parties. God on the one hand and the Jewish people on the other. It is valid only so long as both parties fulfil the terms of contract. It is therefore contingent and not absolute. Unlike the law the promise is absolute and unconditional. It depends on the sole decree of God. There are not two contracting parties. There is nothing of the nature of a stipulation. The giver is everything and the recipient nothing.”—Com. *in loco*.—G.A.]

94 The heretics referred to are the Anomœans, who held Arianism in its most developed form, against whom S. Chrysostom has written Homilies. For the particular objection answered in the text, vid. also Basil, in *Eunom*, iv. p. 294. *Athan. Or in Arian*, iii. 9. *Greg. Naz. Orat.* 36, p. 586.

95 [“The Law then though differing widely from the promise is not antagonistic to it, does not interfere with it. On the contrary, we might imagine such a law as would justify and give life. This was not the effect of the law of Moses, however; on the contrary (ἀλλὰ) the Scripture (that, namely, about the curse, [v. 10](#);) testifies that the Law condemned all alike, yet not finally and irrevocably but only as leading the way for the dispensation of

As the Jews were not even conscious of their own sins, and in consequence did not even desire remission; the Law was given to probe their wounds, that they might long for a physician. And the word “shut up” means “convinced” and conviction held them in fear. You see then it is not only not against, but was given for the promises. Had it arrogated to itself the work and the authority, the objection would stand; but if its drift is something else, and it acted for that, how is it against the promises of God? Had the Law not been given, all would have been wrecked upon wickedness, and there would have been no Jews to listen to Christ; but now being given, it has effected two things; it has schooled its followers in a certain degree of virtue, and has pressed on them the knowledge of their own sins. And this especially made them more zealous to seek the Son, for those who disbelieved, disbelieved from having no sense of their own sins, as Paul shows; “For being ignorant of God’s righteousness, and seeking to establish their own righteousness, they did not subject themselves to the righteousness of God.” (Rom. x. 3.)

Ver. 23. “But before faith came, we were kept inward under the Law, shut up unto the faith which should afterwards be revealed.”

Here he clearly puts forward what I have stated: for the expressions “we were kept” and “shut up,” signify nothing else than the security given by the commandments of the Law; which like a fortress fenced them round with fear and a life conformable to itself, and so preserved them unto Faith.

Ver. 24. “So that the Law hath been our tutor to bring us unto Christ, that we might be justified by faith.”

Now the Tutor is not opposed to the Preceptor, but cooperates with him, ridding the youth from all vice, and having all leisure to fit him for receiving instructions from his Preceptor. But when the youth’s habits are formed, then the Tutor leaves him, as Paul says.

Ver. 25, 26. “But now that faith is come which leads to perfect manhood we are no longer under a tutor⁹⁶. For ye are all sons of God through faith in Christ Jesus.”

The Law then, as it was our tutor, and we were kept shut up under it, is not the adversary but the fellow-worker of grace; but if when grace is come, it continues to hold us down, it becomes an adversary; for if it confines those who ought to go forward to grace, then it is

faith.”—Lightfoot. Meyer takes a different view of v. 21: “For if it had been opposed to the promises, the Law must have been in a position to procure life and if this were so, then would righteousness actually be from the Law, which according to the Scripture cannot be so (ver. 22.)”—G.A.]

96 [“The pædagogus or tutor, frequently a superior slave, was entrusted with the moral supervision of the child. Thus his office was quite distinct from that of the διδάσκαλος; so the word “Schoolmaster” conveys a wrong idea. As well in his inferior rank as in his recognized duty of enforcing discipline, this person was a fit emblem of the Mosaic law. There is a very complete illustration of the use which Paul makes of the metaphor in Plato (*Lysis*, p, 208 C).”—Lightfoot.—G.A.]

the destruction of our salvation. If a candle which gave light by night, kept us, when it became day, from the sun, it would not only not benefit, it would injure us; and so doth the Law, if it stands between us and greater benefits. Those then are the greatest traducers of the Law, who still keep it, just as the tutor makes a youth ridiculous, by retaining him with himself, when time calls for his departure. Hence Paul says, “But after faith is come, we are no longer under a tutor.” We are then no longer under a tutor, “for ye are all sons of God.” Wonderful! see how mighty is the power of Faith, and how he unfolds as he proceeds! Before, he showed that it made them sons of the Patriarch, “Know therefore,” says he, “that they which be of faith, the same are sons of Abraham;” now he proves that they are sons of God also, “For ye are all,” says he, “sons of God through faith, which is in Christ Jesus;” by Faith, not by the Law. Then, when he has said this great and wonderful thing, he names also the mode of their adoption,

Ver. 27. “For as many of you as were baptized into Christ, did put on Christ.”

Why does he not say, “For as many of you as have been baptized into Christ, have been born of God?” for this was what directly went to prove that they were sons;—because he states it in a much more awful point of view; If Christ be the Son of God, and thou hast put on Him, thou who hast the Son within thee, and art fashioned after His pattern, hast been brought into one kindred and nature with Him.

Ver. 28. “There can be neither Jew nor Greek, there can be neither bond nor free, there can be no male and female: for ye all are one in Christ Jesus.”

See what an insatiable soul! for having said, “We are all made children of God through Faith,” he does not stop there, but tries to find something more exact, which may serve to convey a still closer oneness with Christ. Having said, “ye have put on Christ,” even this does not suffice Him, but by way of penetrating more deeply into this union, he comments on it thus: “Ye are all One in Christ Jesus,” that is, ye have all one form and one mould, even Christ’s. What can be more awful than these words! He that was a Greek, or Jew, or bond-man yesterday, carries about with him the form, not of an Angel or Archangel, but of the Lord of all, yea displays in his own person the Christ.

Ver. 29. “And if ye are Christ’s, then are ye Abraham’s seed, heirs according to promise.”

Here, you observe, he proves what he had before stated concerning the seed of Abraham,—that to him and to his seed the promises were given.⁹⁷

97 [So Schaff: “Verse 16 must here be kept in view where Christ is declared to be the seed of Abraham. Union with Christ constitutes the true spiritual descent from Abraham and secures the inheritance of all the Messianic blessings by promise as against inheritance by law.” *Pop. Com. in loc.*—G.A.]

Chapter IV.

Verse 1-3

“But I say, that so long as the heir is a child, he differeth nothing from a bond-servant, though he is lord of all; but is under guardians and stewards, until the term appointed of the father. So we also when we were children, were held in bondage under the rudiments of the world.”

The word “child” in this place denotes not age but understanding;⁹⁸ meaning that God had from the beginning designed for us these gifts, but, as we yet continued childish, He let us be under the elements of the world, that is, new moons and sabbaths, for these days are regulated by the course of sun and moon.⁹⁹ If then also now they bring you under law they do nothing else but lead you backward now in the time of your perfect age and maturity. And see what is the consequence of observing days; the Lord, the Master of the house, the Sovereign Ruler, is thereby reduced to the rank of a servant.

Ver. 4, 5. “But when the fulness of the time came God sent forth His Son, born of a woman, under the Law that he might redeem them which were under the Law, that we might receive the adoption of sons.”

Here he states two objects and effects of the Incarnation, deliverance from evil and supply of good, things which none could compass but Christ. They are these; deliverance from the curse of the Law, and promotion to sonship. Fitly does he say, that we might “receive,” “[be paid,]” implying that it was due;¹⁰⁰ for the promise was of old time made for these objects to Abraham, as the Apostle has himself shown at great length. And how does it appear that we have become sons? he has told us one mode, in that we have put on Christ who is the Son; and now he mentions another, in that we have received the Spirit of adoption.

Ver. 6, 7. “And because ye are sons, God sent forth the Spirit of His Son into your hearts, crying, Abba, Father. So that thou art no longer a bond-servant, but a son; and if a son, then an heir through God.”

98 [“This reference of νήπιος to mental immaturity is quite in opposition to the context.”—Meyer. “The heir in his nonage represents the Jewish people and the state of the world before Christ.”—Schaff. So Meyer: “The κληρονόμος νήπιος represents the Christians as a body regarded in their earlier pre-Christian condition.”—G.A.]

99 [This interpretation is rejected by Schaff, Meyer, Ellicott, Lightfoot *et al.* Schaff says: “Elements’ here represents the religion before Christ as an elementary religion full of external rites and ceremonies. * * Comp. v. 10, for a specimen.”—G.A.]

100 [“The proposition here (ἀπό) simply means to receive from or at the hands of anyone.”—Meyer.—But Lightfoot holds that ἀπο λάβωμεν cannot be the same as λάβωμεν, the simple verb.—G.A.]

Had not we been first made sons, we could not have called Him Father. If then grace hath made us freemen instead of slaves, men instead of children, heirs and sons instead of aliens, is it not utter absurdity and stupidity to desert this grace, and to turn away backwards?

Ver. 8, 9. “Howbeit at that time not knowing God, ye were bondage to them which by nature are no gods.¹⁰¹ But now, that ye have come to know God, or rather to be known of God, how turn ye back again to the weak and beggarly rudiments whereunto ye desire to be in bondage over again.”

Here turning to the Gentile believers he says that it is an idolatry, this rigid observance of days, and now incurs a severe punishment. To enforce this, and inspire them with a deeper anxiety, he calls the elements “not by nature Gods.” And his meaning is,—Then indeed, as being benighted and bewildered, ye lay grovelling upon the earth, but now that ye have known God or rather are known of Him, how great and bitter will be the chastisement ye draw upon you, if, after such a treatment, ye relapse into the same disease. It was not by your own pains that ye found out God, but while ye continued in error, He drew you to Himself. He says “weak and beggarly rudiments,” in that they avail nothing towards the good things held out to us.

Ver. 10. “Ye observe days, and months, and seasons, and years.”

Hence is plain that their teachers were preaching to them not only circumcision, but also the feast-days and new-moons.

Ver. 11. “I am afraid of you, lest by any means I have bestowed labor upon you in vain.”

Observe the tender compassion of the Apostle; they were shaken and he trembles and fears. And hence he has put it so as thoroughly to shame them, “I have bestowed labor upon you,” saying, as it were, make not vain the labors which have cost me sweat and pain. By saying “I fear,” and subjoining the word “lest,” he both inspires alarm, and encourages good hope. He says not “I have labored in vain,” but “lest,” which is as much as to say, the wreck has not happened, but I see the storm big with it; so I am in fear, yet not in despair; ye have the power to set all right, and to return into your former calm. Then, as it were stretching out a hand to them thus tempest-tost,¹⁰² he brings himself into the midst, saying,

101 [“It is clear from the context that here the apostle is not speaking of the Jewish race alone but of the heathen world also before Christ. He distinctly refers to their previous idolatrous worship (v. 8.) and describes their adoption of Jewish ritualism as a ‘return’ to the weak and beggarly discipline of childhood. * * * Heathenism had been in respect to the ‘ritualistic’ element, which is the meeting-point of Judaism and heathenism, a disciplinary training like Judaism. They were made up of precepts and ordinances, as opposed to ‘grace’ and ‘promise,’ and in an imperfect way they might do the same work. They might by multiplying transgression and begetting a conviction of it prepare the way for liberty in Christ.”—Lightfoot.—G.A.]

102 [“Paul in the following paragraph (ver. 12–20.) interrupts his argument for a moment by an affectionate appeal to the feelings of the Galatians.”—Schaff.—G.A.]

Ver. 12. “I beseech you, brethren, be as I am; for I am as you are.”

This is addressed to his Jewish disciples, and he brings his own example forward, to induce them thereby to abandon their old customs. Though you had none other for a pattern, he says, to look at me only would have sufficed for such a change, and for your taking courage. Therefore gaze on me; I too was¹⁰³ once in your state of mind, especially so; I had a burning zeal for the Law; yet afterwards I feared not to abandon the Law, to withdraw from that rule of life. And this ye know full well how obstinately I clung hold of Judaism, and how with yet greater force I let it go. He does well to place this last in order: for most men, though they are given a thousand reasons, and those just ones, are more readily influenced by that which is like their own case, and more firmly hold to that which they see done by others.

Ver. 12. “Ye did me no wrong.”

Observe how he again addresses them by a title of honor, which was a reminder moreover of the doctrine of grace. Having chid them seriously, and brought things together from all quarters, and shown their violations of the Law, and hit them on many sides, he gives in and conciliates them speaking more tenderly. For as to do nothing but conciliate causes negligence, so to be constantly talked at with sharpness sours a man; so that it is proper to observe due proportion everywhere. See then how he excuses to them what he has said, and shows that it proceeded not simply because he did not like them, but from anxiety. After giving them a deep cut, he pours in this encouragement like oil; and, showing that his words were not words of hate or enmity, he reminds them of the love which they had evinced toward him, mixing his self-vindication with praises. Therefore he says, “ye did me no wrong.”

Ver. 13, 14. “But ye know that because of an infirmity of the flesh I preached the Gospel unto you the first time. And that which was a temptation in my flesh ye despised not, nor rejected.”

Not to have injured one is indeed no great thing, for no man whatever would choose to hurt wantonly and without object to annoy another who had never injured him. But for you, not only have ye not injured me, but ye have shown me great and inexpressible kindness, and it is impossible that one who has been treated with such attention should speak thus from any malevolent motive. My language then cannot be caused by ill-will; it follows, that

103 [“Ἐγενόμην must be supplied in the second clause and not ἤμην as Chrysostom would understand: Become as I, free from Judaism, for I also have become as you. For when I abandoned Judaism I became as a Gentile and put myself on the same footing with you.”—Meyer.—G.A.]

it proceeds from affection and solicitude.¹⁰⁴ “Ye did me no wrong; ye know that because of an infirmity of the flesh I preached the Gospel unto you.” What can be gentler than this holy soul, what sweeter, or more affectionate! And the words he had already used, arose not from an unreasoning anger, nor from a passionate emotion, but from much solicitude. And why do I say, ye have not injured me? Rather have ye evinced a great and sincere regard for me. For “ye know,” he says, “that because of an infirmity of the flesh I preached the Gospel unto you; and that which was a temptation to you in my flesh ye despised not, nor rejected.” What does he mean? While I preached to you, I was driven about, I was scourged, I suffered a thousand deaths, yet ye thought no scorn of me; for this is meant by “that which was a temptation to you in my flesh ye despised not, nor rejected.”¹⁰⁵ Observe his spiritual skill; in the midst of his self-vindication, he again appeals to their feelings by showing what he had suffered for their sakes. This however, says he, did not at all offend you, nor did ye reject me on account of my sufferings and persecutions; or, as he now calls them, his infirmity and temptation.

Ver. 14. “But ye received me as an Angel of God.”

Was it not then absurd in them to receive him as an Angel of God, when he was persecuted and driven about, and then not to receive him when pressing on them what was fitting?

Ver. 15, 16. “Where then is that gratulation of yourselves? for I bear you witness, that, if possible, ye would have plucked out your eyes, and given them to me. So then am I become your enemy, because I tell you the truth?”

Here he shows perplexity and amazement, and desires to learn of themselves the reason of their change. Who, says he, hath deceived you, and caused a difference in your disposition towards me? Are ye not the same who attended and ministered to me, counting me more precious than your own eyes? what then has happened? whence this dislike? whence this suspicion? Is it because I have told you the truth? You ought on this very account to pay me increased honor and attention; instead of which “I am become your enemy, because I tell you the truth,”—for I can find no other reason but this. Observe too what humbleness of mind appears in his defence of himself; he proves not by his conduct to them, but by theirs to him that his language could not possibly have proceeded from unkind feeling. For he says not; How is it supposable that one, who has been scourged and driven about, and ill-treated a thousand things for your sakes, should now have schemes against you? But he argues

104 [“Ye did me no wrong’ probably means: I have no personal ground of complaint.”—Schaff and Lightfoot.—G.A.]

105 [“On account of some weakness of the flesh,’ means he was compelled by reason of bodily weakness to make a stay there which did not form part of his plan, and during that forced sojourn he preached there.”—Meyer.—G.A.] “He was detained there by some bodily infirmity or sickness and was thus induced to preach the Gospel.”—Schaff.—G.A.]

from what they had reason to boast of, saying, How can one who has been honored by you, and received as an Angel, repay you by conduct the very opposite?

Ver. 17. “They zealously seek you in no good way; nay, they desire to shut you out that ye may seek them.”

It is a wholesome emulation¹⁰⁶ which leads to an imitation of virtue, but an evil one, which seduces from virtue him who is in the right path. And this is the object of those persons, who would deprive you of perfect knowledge,¹⁰⁷ and impart to you that which is mutilated and spurious, and this for no other purpose than that they may occupy the rank of teachers, and degrade you, who now stand higher than themselves, to the position of disciples. For this is the meaning of the words “that ye may seek them.” But I, says he, desire the reverse, that ye may become a model for them, and a pattern of a higher perfection: a thing which actually happened when I was present with you. Wherefore he adds,

Ver. 18. “But it is good to be zealously sought in a good matter at all times, and not only when I am present with you.”

Here he hints that his absence had been the cause of this, and that the true blessing was for disciples to hold right opinions not only in the presence but also in the absence of their master. But as they had not arrived at this point of perfection, he makes every effort to place them there.

Ver. 19. “My little children,¹⁰⁸ of whom I am again in travail until Christ be formed in you.”

Observe his perplexity and perturbation, “Brethren, I beseech you:” “My little children, of whom I am again in travail:” He resembles a mother trembling for her children. “Until Christ be formed in you.” Behold his paternal tenderness, behold this despondency worthy of an Apostle. Observe what a wail he utters, far more piercing than of a woman in travail;—Ye have defaced the likeness, ye have destroyed the kinship, ye have changed the form,

106 [This word does not here mean “they vie with you,” as Chrysostom interprets it, but “they zealously seek you or pay court to you,” (1 Cor. xii. 31).—G.A.]

107 [“They desire to shut you out” (not from a state of true knowledge, as Chrysostom interprets) but “from other teachers,” anti-judaizing teachers, (according to Meyer) or from me (Paul) and so virtually from Christ Himself (according to Schaff) or from Christ (Lightfoot).—G.A.]

108 [“A mode of address common in St. John but nowhere else found in St. Paul.”—Lightfoot. “It expresses Paul’s tenderness and their feebleness.”—Schaff.—G.A.]

ye need another regeneration and refashioning;¹⁰⁹ nevertheless I call you children, abortions and monsters though ye be. However, he does not express himself in this way, but spares them, unwilling to strike, and to inflict wound upon wound. Wise physicians do not cure those who have fallen into a long sickness all at once, but little by little, lest they should faint and die. And so is it with this blessed man; for these pangs were more severe in proportion as the force of his affection was stronger. And the offense was of no trivial kind. And as I have ever said and ever will say, even a slight fault mars the appearance and distorts the figure of the whole.

Ver. 20. “Yea, I could wish to be present with you now, and to change my voice.”

Observe his warmth, his inability to refrain himself, and to conceal these his feelings; such is the nature of love; nor is he satisfied with words, but desires to be present with them, and so, as he says, to change his voice, that is, to change to lamentation, to shed tears, to turn every thing into mourning. For he could not by letter show his tears or cries of grief, and therefore he ardently desires to be present with them.

Ver. 20. “For I am perplexed about you.” I know not, says he, what to say, or what to think. How is it, that ye who by dangers, which ye endured for the faith’s sake, and by miracles, which ye performed through faith, had ascended to the highest heaven, should suddenly be brought to such a depth of degradation as to be drawn aside to circumcision or sabbaths, and should rely wholly upon Judaizers? Hence in the beginning he says, “I marvel that ye are so quickly removing,” and here, “I am perplexed about you,” as if he said, What am I to speak? What am I to utter? What am I to think? I am bitterly perplexed. And so he must needs weep, as the prophets do when in perplexity; for not only admonition but mourning also is a form in which solicitous attention is often manifested. And what he said in his speech to those at Miletus, “By the space of three years I ceased not to warn every one... with tears,” he says here also, “and to change my voice.” (*Acts xx. 31.*) When we find ourselves overcome by perplexity and helplessness which come contrary to expectation, we are driven to tears; and so Paul admonished them sharply, and endeavored to shame them, then in turn soothed them, and lastly he wept. And this weeping is not only a reproof but a blandishment; it does not exasperate like reproof, nor relax like indulgent treatment, but is a mixed remedy, and of great efficacy in the way of exhortation. Having thus softened and powerfully engaged their hearts by his tears, he again advances to the contest,¹¹⁰ and lays down a larger proposition, proving that the Law itself was opposed to its being kept. Before,

109 [“I travailed with you once in bringing you to Christ. By your relapse you have renewed a mother’s pangs in me.”—Lightfoot. “‘Until Christ be formed in you,’ is not an inversion of the metaphor he has begun with, but means, ‘till you have taken the form of Christ as the embryo develops into the child.’”—Lightfoot.—G.A.]

110 [The digression which contains his “affectionate appeal” (see note above) ends with [verse 20](#), after which he resumes—G.A.]

he produced the example of Abraham, but now (what is more cogent) he brings forward the Law itself enjoining them not to keep itself, but to leave off. So that, says he, you must abandon the Law, if you would obey it, for this is its own wish: this however he does not say expressly, but enforces it in another mode, mixing up with it an account of facts.

Ver. 21. “Tell me,” he says, “ye that desire to be under the Law, do ye not hear the Law?”¹¹¹

He says rightly, “ye that desire,” for the matter was not one of a proper and orderly succession of things but of their own unseasonable contentiousness. It is the Book of Creation which he here calls the Law, which name he often gives to the whole Old Testament.

Ver. 22. “For it is written, (*Gen. xv. 16.*) that Abraham had two sons, one by the handmaid and the other by the freewoman.”

He returns again to Abraham, not in the way of repetition, but, inasmuch as the Patriarch’s fame was great among the Jews, to show that the types had their origin from thence, and that present events were pictured aforetime in him. Having previously shown that the Galatians were sons of Abraham, now, in that the Patriarch’s sons were not of equal dignity, one being by a bondwoman, the other by a free-woman, he shows that they were not only his sons, but sons in the same sense as he that was freeborn and noble. Such is the power of Faith.

Ver. 23. “Howbeit the son by the handmaid is born after the flesh; but the son by the freewoman is born through promise.”

What is the meaning of “after the flesh?” Having said that Faith united us to Abraham, and it having seemed incredible to his hearers, that those who were not begotten by Abraham should be called his sons, he proves that this paradox had actually happened long ago; for that Isaac, born not according to the order of nature, nor the law of marriage, nor the power of the flesh, was yet truly his own son. He was the issue of bodies that were dead, and of a womb that was dead; his conception was not by the flesh, nor his birth by the seed, for the womb was dead both through age and barrenness, but the Word of God fashioned Him. Not so in the case of the bondman; He came by virtue of the laws of nature, and after the manner of marriage. Nevertheless, he that was not according to the flesh was more honorable than he that was born after the flesh. Therefore let it not disturb you that ye are not born after the flesh; for from the very reason that ye are not so born, are ye most of all Abraham’s kindred. The being born after the flesh renders one not more honorable, but less so, for a birth not after the flesh is more marvellous and more spiritual. And this is plain from the case of those who were born of old time; Ishmael, for instance, who was born according to



111 [“The Apostle resumes his argument for the superiority of the Gospel over the Law and illustrates the difference of the two by an allegorical interpretation of the history of Hagar and Sarah.”—Schaff.—G.A.]

the flesh, was not only a bondman, but was cast out of his father's house; but Isaac, who was born according to the promise, being a true son and free, was lord of all.

Ver. 24. "Which things contain an allegory."¹¹²

Contrary to usage, he calls a type an allegory; his meaning is as follows; this history not only declares that which appears on the face of it, but announces somewhat farther, whence it is called an allegory. And what hath it announced? no less than all the things now present.

Ver. 24. "For these women," he says, "are two covenants; one from mount Sinai, bearing children unto bondage, which is Hagar."

"These:" who? the mothers of those children, Sarah and Hagar; and what are they? Two covenants, two laws. As the names of the women were given in the history, he abides by this designation of the two races, showing how much follows from the very names. How from the names?

Ver. 25. "Now this Hagar is Mount Sinai in Arabia:"

The bond-woman was called Hagar, and "Hagar" is the word for Mount Sinai in the language of that country.¹¹³ So that it is necessary that all who are born of the Old Covenant should be bondmen, for that mountain where the Old Covenant was delivered hath a name in common with the bondwoman. And it includes Jerusalem, for this is the meaning of,

Ver. 25. "And answereth to Jerusalem that now is."

That is, it borders on, and is contiguous to it.¹¹⁴

Ver. 25. "For she is in bondage with her children."

What follows from hence? Not only that she was in bondage and brought forth bondmen, but that this Covenant is so too, whereof the bondwoman was a type. For Jerusalem is adja-

112 ["The story of Hagar and Sarah has another (namely a figurative, typical) meaning besides (not instead of) the literal or historical. Paul does not deny the fact but makes it the bearer of a general idea which was more fully expressed in two covenants. He uses allegorical here in a sense similar to the word "typical" in *1 Cor. x. 11.*—Schaff.—G.A.] [See on this difficult passage Schaff's *Excursus in Com.* and Lightfoot's *Excursus* xiii. *Com.* p. 368.—G.A.]

113 [So Meyer: "In Arabia the name Hagar (τὸ Ἄγαρ) signifies Mt. Sinai." But Schaff says: "It cannot be satisfactorily proven that the name Hagar was an Arabic designation for Mt. Sinai, as the testimonies of Chrysostom and the traveler Harant are isolated and unconfirmed. The shorter reading, 'For Sinai is a mountain in Arabia' (το γὰρ Σινᾶ ὄρος ἐστὶν ἐν τῇ Ἀραβίᾳ 139) given by the Sinaitic and other mss. and preferred by Lachmann, Tischendorf and Lightfoot (*Excursus* p. 361 of *Com.*) is quite intelligible and easily gives rise to the longer reading."—G.A.]

114 ["This interpretation of Chrysostom is hardly the right one. The subject of συνστοιχεῖ is Hagar and not Mt. Sinai—a view which runs counter to the context. It means that Hagar belongs to the same category with the present Jerusalem, is like it in that she was a bondwoman as Jerusalem with its children is also in bondage." Meyer.—G.A.]

cent to the mountain of the same name with the bondwoman, and in this mountain the Covenant was delivered. Now where is the type of Sarah?

Ver. 26. “But Jerusalem that is above is free.”

Those therefore, who are born of her are not bondmen. Thus the type of the Jerusalem below was Hagar, as is plain from the mountain being so called; but of that which is above is the Church. Nevertheless he is not content with these types, but adds the testimony of Isaiah to what he has spoken. Having said that Jerusalem which is above “is our Mother,” and having given that name to the Church, he cites the suffrage of the Prophet in his favor,

Ver. 27. “Rejoice, thou barren that bearest not, break forth and cry, thou that travailest not, for more are the children of the desolate than of her which hath the husband.” (*Isa. liv. 1.*)

Who is this who before was “barren,” and “desolate?” Clearly it is the Church of the Gentiles,¹¹⁵ that was before deprived of the knowledge of God? Who, “she which hath the husband?” plainly the Synagogue. Yet the barren woman surpassed her in the number of her children, for the other embraces one nation, but the children of the Church have filled the country of the Greeks and of the Barbarians, the earth and sea, the whole habitable world. Observe how Sarah by acts, and the Prophet by words, have described the events about to befall us. Observe too, that he whom Isaiah called barren, Paul hath proved to have many children, which also happened typically in the case of Sarah. For she too, although barren, became the mother of a numerous progeny. This however does not suffice Paul, but he carefully follows out the mode whereby the barren woman became a mother, that in this particular likewise the type might harmonize with the truth. Wherefore he adds

Ver. 28. “Now we, brethren, as Isaac was, are children of promise.”

It is not merely that the Church was barren like Sarah, or became a mother of many children like her, but she bore them in the way Sarah did. As it was not nature but the promise of God which rendered Sarah a mother, [for the word of God which said, “At the time appointed I will return unto thee, and Sarah shall have a son,” (*Gen. xviii. 14.*) this entered into the womb and formed the babe,] so also in our regeneration it is not nature, but the Words of God spoken by the Priest,¹¹⁶ (the faithful know them,) which in the Bath of water as in a sort of womb, form and regenerate him who is baptized.

Wherefore if we are sons of the barren woman, then are we free. But what kind of freedom, it might be objected, is this, when the Jews seize and scourge the believers, and those

115 [“Against this view of Chrysostom it may be urged that ἡτις ἐστὶ μήτηρ ἡμῶν (which is our mother) is proved by (γὰρ). The passage of the O.T. quoted in v. 27 and the ἡμῶν includes ‘all’ Christians.”—Meyer. (See his long and good note *in loc.*)—G.A.]

116 [“Chrysostom assumes the prevailing conception of a real priesthood and sacrifice, baptismal regeneration, etc.”—Schaff, *Prolegomena*, p. 8.—G.A.]

who have this pretence of liberty are persecuted? for these things then occurred, in the persecution of the faithful. Neither let this disturb you, he replies, this also is anticipated in the type, for Isaac, who was free, was persecuted by Ishmael the bondman. Wherefore he adds,

Ver. 29, 30. “But as then he that was born after the flesh persecuted him that was born after the Spirit, even so it is now. Howbeit what saith the Scripture? (**Gen. xxi. 10.**) Cast out the handmaid and her son: for the son of the handmaid shall not inherit with the son of the freewoman.”

What! does all this consolation consist in showing that freemen are persecuted by bondmen? By no means, he says, I do not stop here, listen to what follows, and then, if you be not pusillanimous under persecution, you will be sufficiently comforted. And what is it that follows? “Cast out the son of the handmaid, for he shall not inherit with the son of the freewoman.” Behold the reward of tyranny for a season, and of recklessness out of season! the son is cast out of his father’s house, and becomes, together with his mother, an exile and a wanderer. And consider too the wisdom of the remark; for he says not that he was cast forth merely because he persecuted, but that he should not be heir. For this punishment was not exacted from him on account of his temporary persecution, (for that would have been of little moment, and nothing to the point,) but he was not suffered to participate in the inheritance provided for the son. And this proves that, putting the persecution aside, this very thing had been typified from the beginning, and did not originate in the persecution, but in the purpose of God. Nor does he say, “the son of Abraham shall not be heir,” but, “the son of the handmaid,” distinguishing him by his inferior descent. Now Sarah was barren, and so is the Gentile Church;¹¹⁷ observe how the type is preserved in every particular, as the former, through all the by-gone years, conceived not, and in extreme old age became a mother, so the latter, when the fulness of time is come, brings forth. And this the prophets have proclaimed, saying, “Rejoice, thou barren that bearest not; break forth and cry, thou that travailest not; for more are the children of the desolate than of her which hath the husband.” And hereby they intend the Church; for she knew not God, but as soon as she knew Him, she surpassed the fruitful synagogue.¹¹⁸

Ver. 31. “Wherefore, brethren, we are not children of a handmaid but of the freewoman.”

He turns and discusses this on all sides, desiring to prove that what had taken place was no novelty, but had been before typified many ages ago. How then can it be otherwise than

117 [See note above on this interpretation.—G.A.]

118 [“Before the emergence of the Christian people of God, the heavenly Jerusalem was still unpeopled, childless, στειῖρα, ‘barren,’ οὐ τίκτουσα ‘not bearing,’ and so like Sarah before she became the mother of Isaac. But with the emergence of the Christian people of God this heavenly Jerusalem has become a fruitful mother richer in children than the Jerusalem that now is.”—Meyer.—G.A.]

absurd for those who had been set apart so long and who had obtained freedom, willingly to subject themselves to the yoke of bondage?

Next he states another inducement to them to abide in his doctrine.

Chapter V.

Verse 1

“With freedom did Christ set us free; stand fast therefore¹¹⁹.”

Have ye wrought your own deliverance, that ye run back again to the dominion ye were under before? It is Another who hath redeemed you, it is Another who hath paid the ransom for you. Observe in how many ways he leads them away from the error of Judaism; by showing, first, that it was the extreme of folly for those, who had become free instead of slaves, to desire to become slaves instead of free; secondly, that they would be convicted of neglect and ingratitude to their Benefactor, in despising Him who had delivered, and loving him who had enslaved them; thirdly, that it was impossible. For Another having once for all redeemed all of us from it, the Law ceases to have any sway. By the word, “stand fast,” he indicates their vacillation.

Ver. 1. “And be not entangled again in a yoke of bondage.”

By the word “yoke” he signifies to them the burdensomeness of such a course, and by the word “again” he points out their utter senselessness. Had ye never experienced this burden, ye would not have deserved so severe a censure, but for you who by trial have learnt how irksome this yoke is, again to subject yourself to it, is justly unpardonable.

Ver. 2. “Behold, I Paul say unto you, that if ye receive circumcision, Christ will profit you nothing.”

Lo, what a threat! reasonably then did he anathematize even angels. How then shall Christ profit them nothing? for he has not supported this by argument, but only declared it, the credence due to his authority, compensating, as it were, for all subsequent proof. Wherefore he sets out by saying, “Behold, I Paul say unto you,” which is the expression of one who has confidence in what he asserts. We will subjoin what we can ourselves as to how Christ shall profit nothing them who are circumcised.

He that is circumcised is circumcised for fear of the Law, and he who fears the Law, distrusts the power of grace, and he who distrusts can receive no benefit from that which is distrusted. Or again thus, he that is circumcised makes the Law of force; but thus considering it to be of force and yet transgressing it in the greater part while keeping it in the lesser, he puts himself again under the curse. But how can he be saved who submits himself to the curse, and repels the liberty which is of Faith? If one may say what seems a paradox, such

119 [The text of this verse is not settled. The *textus receptus* has τῆ ἐλευθερίᾳ 139· οὖν ἡ χριστὸς ἡμᾶς ἠλευθέρωσε στήκετε, etc. Chrysostom has τῆ γὰρ ἐλευθερίᾳ 139· ἡ χριστὸς ὑμᾶς ἐξηγόρασε, στήκετε, etc. W. & H. have τῆ ἐλευθερίᾳ 139· ἡμᾶς χριστὸς ἠλευθέρωσεν στήκετε οὖν καὶ, etc., with Aleph, A. B. C. Rev. Ver. But W. & H. suspect there is some primitive error. Lightfoot joins τῆ ἐλευθερίᾳ 139·, with τῆς ἐλευθέρας of the preceding verse and retains the relative ἧ, making it read; We are sons of the free woman with the freedom wherewith Christ freed us. *Com. in loc.* and *Excursus* p. 371.

an one believes neither Christ nor the Law, but stands between them, desiring to benefit both by one and the other, whereas he will reap fruit from neither. Having said that Christ shall profit them nothing, he lays down the proof¹²⁰ of it shortly and sententiously, thus:

Ver. 3. “Yea, I testify again¹²¹ to every man that receiveth circumcision that he is a debtor to do the whole Law.”

That you may not suppose that this is spoken from ill-will¹²², I say not to you alone, he says, but to every one who receiveth circumcision, that he is a debtor to do the whole Law. The parts of the Law are linked one to the other. As he who from being free has enrolled himself as a slave, no longer does what he pleases, but is bound by all the laws of slavery, so in the case of the Law, if you take upon you a small portion of it, and submit to the yoke, you draw down upon yourself its whole domination. And so it is in a worldly inheritance: he who touches no part of it, is free from all matters which are consequent on the heirship to the deceased, but if he takes a small portion, though not the whole, yet by that part he has rendered himself liable for every thing. And this occurs in the Law, not only in the way I have mentioned, but in another also, for Legal observances are linked together. For example; Circumcision has sacrifice connected with it, and the observance of days; sacrifice again has the observance both of day and of place; place has the details of endless purifications; purifications involve a perfect swarm of manifold observances. For it is unlawful for the unclean to sacrifice, to enter the holy shrines, to do any other such act. Thus the Law introduces many things even by the one commandment. If then thou art circumcised, but not on the eighth day, or on the eighth day, but no sacrifice is offered, or a sacrifice is offered, but not in the prescribed place, or in the prescribed place, but not the accustomed objects, or if the accustomed objects, but thou be unclean, or if clean yet not purified by proper rules, every thing is frustrated. Wherefore¹²³ he says, “that he is a debtor to the whole Law.” Fulfil not a part, but the whole, if the Law is of force; but if it be not of force, not even a part.

Ver. 4. “Ye are severed from Christ, ye who would be justified by the Law; ye are fallen away from grace.”

120 [The following verse does not introduce proof that Christ shall profit them nothing, but leads on to more detailed information and so is introduced by *δέ, autem*. So Meyer; though Lightfoot makes *δέ* adversative to the idea of *ὠφελήσει*, and so Ellicott. Rev. Ver. agrees with Meyer’s view.—G.A.]

121 [“Again refers to ‘I say’ in preceding sentences.” Schaff, Lightfoot, Ellicott. Meyer says, “It calls to the remembrance of his readers his last presence,” (second visit.)—G.A.]

122 [“‘To every man’ stands in a climactic relation to foregoing *ὅμιν* remorselessly embracing all; that no one may think himself excluded. Hence Chrysostom’s view is wrong.”—Meyer.—G.A.]

123 [Perhaps Paul’s reason for his statement that every one who suffers himself to be circumcised is a debtor to keep the whole Law is this Scripture which he quotes in *iii. 10*: Cursed is he that continueth not in all the things that are written etc.—G.A.]

Having established his point, he at length declares their danger of the severest punishment. When a man recurs to the Law, which cannot save him, and falls from grace, what remains but an inexorable retribution, the Law being powerless, and grace rejecting him?

Thus having aggravated their alarm, and disquieted their mind, and shown them all the shipwreck they were about to suffer, he opens to them the haven of grace which was near at hand. This is ever his wont, and he shows that in this quarter salvation is easy and secure, subjoining the words,

Ver. 5. “For we through the Spirit by faith wait for the hope of righteousness.”¹²⁴

We need none of those legal observances, he says; faith suffices to obtain for us the Spirit, and by Him righteousness, and many and great benefits.

Ver. 6. “For in Jesus Christ neither circumcision availeth any thing, nor uncircumcision;¹²⁵ but faith working through love.”

Observe the great boldness with which he now encounters them; Let him that hath put on Christ, he says, no longer be careful about such matters. Having before said that Circumcision was hurtful, how is it that he now considers it indifferent? It is indifferent as to those who had it previously to the Faith, but not as to those who are circumcised after the Faith was given. Observe too the view in which he places it, by setting it by the side of Uncircumcision; it is Faith that makes the difference. As in the selection of wrestlers, whether they be hook-nosed or flat-nosed, black or white, is of no importance in their trial, it is only necessary to seek that they be strong and skilful; so all these bodily accidents do not injure one who is to be enrolled under the New Covenant, nor does their presence assist him.

What is the meaning of “working through love?”¹²⁶ Here he gives them a hard blow, by showing that this error had crept in because the love of Christ had not been rooted within them. For to believe is not all that is required, but also to abide in love. It is as if he had said, Had ye loved Christ as ye ought, ye would not have deserted to bondage, nor abandoned Him who redeemed you, nor treated with contumely Him who gave you freedom. Here he also hints at those who have plotted against them, implying that they would not

124 [“The Holy Spirit is the divine ‘agent’ and faith is the subjective ‘source’ of our expectation.”—Meyer.—G.A.]

125 [“Circumcision and uncircumcision are circumstances of no effect or avail in Christianity; and yet they were in Galatia the points on which the disturbance turned,”—Meyer,—G.A.]

126 [“How necessary it was for the Galatians that prominence should be given to the activity of faith ‘in love’ may be seen from [verses 15, 20, 26](#). The passive view of ἐνεργουμένη (wrought through love) as held by some Fathers and by Catholics is erroneous. In New Test. ἐνεργεῖσθαι is always middle: faith ‘which is operative through love.’”—Meyer.—G.A.] Lightfoot says: “The words δι’ ἀγάπης ενεργουμένη bridge over the gulf which seems to separate the language of St. Paul and St. James. Both assert a principle of practical energy as opposed to a barren theory.”—G.A.]

have dared to do so, had they felt affection towards them. He wishes too by these words to correct their course of life.

Ver. 7. “Ye were running well; who did hinder you?”¹²⁷

This is not an interrogation, but an expression of doubt and sorrow. How hath such a course been cut short? who hath been able to do this? ye who were superior to all and in the rank of teachers, have not even continued in the position of disciples. What has happened? who could do this? these are rather the words of one who is exclaiming and lamenting, as he said before, “Who did bewitch you?” (Gal. iii. 1.)

Ver. 8. “This persuasion came not of him that calleth you.”

He who called you, called you not to such fluctuations, he did not lay down a Law, that you should judaize. Then, that no one might object, “Why do you thus magnify and aggravate the matter by your words; one commandment only of the Law have we kept, and yet you make this great outcry?” hear how he terrifies them, not by things present but future in these words:

Ver. 9. “A little leaven leaveneth the whole lump.”

And thus this slight error, he says, if not corrected, will have power (as the leaven has with the lump) to lead you into complete Judaism.

Ver. 10. “I have confidence to you-ward in the Lord, that ye will be none otherwise minded.”

He does not say, “ye are not minded,” but, “ye will not be minded;” that is, you will be set right. And how does he know this? he says not “I know,” but “I trust in God, and invoking His aid in order to your correction, I am in hopes;” and he says, not merely, “I have confidence in the Lord,” but, “I have confidence towards you in the Lord.” Every where he connects complaint with his praises; here it is as if he had said, I know my disciples, I know your readiness to be set right. I have good hopes, partly because of the Lord who suffers nothing, however trivial, to perish, partly because of you who are quickly to recover yourselves. At the same time he exhorts them to use diligence on their own parts, it not being possible to obtain aid from God, if our own efforts are not contributed.

Ver. 10. “But he that troubleth you shall bear his judgment, whosoever he be.”

Not only by words of encouragement, but by uttering a curse or a prophecy against their teachers, he applies to them an incentive. And observe that he never mentions the name of these plotters, that they might not become more shameless. His meaning is as follows. Not because “ye will be none otherwise minded,” are the authors of your seduction relieved from punishment. They shall be punished; for it is not proper that the good conduct of the one should become an encouragement to the evil disposition of the other. This is said that

127 [The words ἀληθεία μὴ πείθεσθᾶι are wanting in Chrysostom’s text.—G.A.]

they might not make a second attempt upon others. And he says not merely, “he that troubleth,” but, “whosoever he be,” in the way of aggravation.

Ver. 11. “But I, brethren, if I still preach circumcision, why am I still persecuted?”

Observe how clearly he exonerates himself from the charge,¹²⁸ that in every place he judaized and played the hypocrite in his preaching. Of this he calls them as witnesses; for ye know, he says, that my command to abandon the Law was made the pretext for persecuting me. “If I still preach circumcision, why am I still persecuted? for this is the only charge which they of the Jewish descent have to bring against me. Had I permitted them to receive the Faith, still retaining the customs of their fathers, neither believers nor unbelievers would have laid snares for me, seeing that none of their own usages were disturbed. What then! did he not preach circumcision? did he not circumcise Timothy? Truly he did. How then can he say, “I preach it not?” Here observe his accuracy; he says not, “I do not perform circumcision,” but, “I preach it not,” that is, I do not bid men so to believe. Do not therefore consider it any confirmation of your doctrine, for though I circumcised, I did not preach circumcision.

Ver. 11. “Then hath the stumbling block of the cross been done away.”

That is, if this which ye assert be true, the obstacle, the hindrance, is removed; for not even the Cross was so great an offence to the Jews, as the doctrine that their father’s customs ought not to be obeyed. When they brought Stephen before the council, they said not that this man adores the Crucified, but that he speaks “against this holy place and the Law.” (*Acts vi. 13.*) And it was of this they accused Jesus, that He broke the Law. Wherefore Paul says, If Circumcision be conceded, the strife you are involved in is appeased; hereafter no enmity to the Cross and our preaching remains. But why do they bring this charge against us, while waiting day after day to murder us? it is because I brought an uncircumcised man into the Temple (*Acts xxi. 29.*) that they fell upon me. Am I then, he says, so senseless, after giving up the point of Circumcision, vainly and idly to expose myself to such injuries, and to place such a stumbling-block before the Cross? For ye observe, that they attack us for nothing with such vehemence as about Circumcision. Am I then so senseless as to suffer affliction for nothing at all, and to give offence to others? He calls it the offence of the Cross, because it was enjoined by the doctrine of the Cross; and it was this which principally offended the Jews, and hindered their reception of the Cross, namely, the command to abandon the usages of their fathers.

Ver. 12. “I would that they which unsettle you, would even cut themselves off.”

128 [“The false teachers had spread the malicious report that Paul himself preached circumcision because he practiced it in the case of Timothy. But this was a measure of expediency and charity and not a surrender of principle.”—Schaff. “This calumny was sufficiently absurd to admit of his dismissing it, as he does here, with all brevity and with what a striking experimental proof!”—Meyer.—G.A.]

Observe how bitterly he speaks here against their deceivers.¹²⁹ At the outset he directed his charge against those who were deceived, and called them foolish, once and again. Now, having sufficiently corrected and instructed them, he turns to their deceivers. And you should remark his wisdom in the manner in which he admonishes and chastens the former as his own children, and as capable of receiving correction, but their deceivers he cuts off, as aliens and incurably depraved. And this he does, partly, when he says, “he shall bear his judgment whosoever he be;” partly when he utters the imprecation against them, “I would that they which unsettle you would even cut themselves off.” And he says well “that unsettle you.” For they had compelled them to abandon their own fatherland, their liberty, and their heavenly kindred, and to seek an alien and foreign one; they had cast them out of Jerusalem which is above and free, and compelled them to wander forth as captives and emigrants. On this account he curses them; and his meaning is as follows, For them I have no concern, “A man that is heretical after the first and second admonition refuse.” (Tit. iii. 10.) If they will, let them not only be circumcised, but mutilated. Where then are those who dare to mutilate themselves¹³⁰; seeing that they draw down the Apostolic curse, and accuse the workmanship of God, and take part with the Manichees? For the latter call the body a treacherous thing, and from the evil principle; and the former by their acts give countenance to these wretched doctrines, cutting off the member as being hostile and treacherous. Ought they not much rather to put out the eyes, for it is through the eyes that desire enters the soul? But in truth neither the eye nor any other part of us is to blame, but the depraved will only. But if you will not allow this, why do you not mutilate the tongue for blasphemy, the hands for rapine, the feet for their evil courses, in short, the whole body? For the ear enchanted by the sound of a flute hath often enervated the soul; and the perception of a sweet perfume by the nostrils hath bewitched the mind, and made it frantic for pleasure. Yet this would be extreme wickedness and satanic madness. The evil spirit, ever delighting in slaughter, hath seduced them to crush the instrument, as if its Maker had erred, whereas it was only necessary to correct the unruly passion of the soul. How then does it happen, one



129 [“The vivid realization of the doings of his opponents, who were not ashamed to resort even to such falsehood, now wrings from his soul a strong and bitterly sarcastic wish of holy indignation.”—Meyer. Paul wishes that the circumcisers would not stop with circumcision but go beyond it to mutilation (make themselves eunuchs) like the priests of Cybele. A severe irony and similar to the one in [Philip. iii. 2, 3](#), where Paul calls the boasters of circumcision “the Concision.” Self mutilation was a recognized form of heathen worship especially in Pessinus in Galatia and therefore quite familiar to the readers. Thus by their glorying in the flesh the Galatians relapsed into their former heathenism,—Schaff and Lightfoot. The Revised Version here has, “would even cut themselves off,” the American Committee has, “would go beyond circumcision.”—G.A.]

130 [Ἀποκοπτειν ἑαυτοῦς. Chrysostom here, as often, “goes off at a word” into a digression on a subject which is only remotely suggested by the passage in hand.—G.A.]

may say, that when the body is pampered, lust is inflamed? Observe here too that it is the sin of the soul, for to pamper the flesh is not an act of the flesh but of the soul, for if the soul choose to mortify it, it would possess absolute power over it. But what you do is just the same as if one seeing a man lighting a fire, and heaping on fuel, and setting fire to a house, were to blame the fire, instead of him who kindled it, because it had caught this heap of fuel, and risen to a great height. Yet the blame would attach not to the fire but to the one who kindled it; for it was given for the purpose of dressing food, affording light, and other like ministries, not for burning houses. In like manner desire is implanted for the rearing of families and the ensuring of life, not for adultery, or fornication, or lasciviousness; that a man may become a father, not an adulterer; a lawful husband, not a seducer; leaving heirs after him, not doing damage to another man's. For adultery arises not from nature, but from wantonness against nature, which prescribes the use not the misuse. These remarks I have not made at random, but as a prelude to a dispute, as skirmishing against those who assert that the workmanship of God is evil, and who neglecting the sloth of the soul, madly inveigh against the body, and traduce our flesh, whereof Paul afterwards discourses, accusing not the flesh, but devilish thoughts.

Ver. 13. "For ye, brethren, were called for freedom; only use not your freedom for an occasion to the flesh."

Henceforward he appears to digress¹³¹ into a moral discourse, but in a new manner, which does not occur in any other of his Epistles. For all of them are divided into two parts, and in the first he discusses doctrine, in the last the rule of life, but here, after having entered upon the moral discourse, he again unites with it the doctrinal part. For this passage has reference to doctrine in the controversy with the Manichees.¹³² What is the meaning of, "Use not your freedom for an occasion to the flesh?" Christ hath delivered us, he says, from the yoke of bondage, He hath left us free to act as we will, not that we may use our liberty for evil, but that we may have ground for receiving a higher reward, advancing to a higher philosophy. Lest any one should suspect, from his calling the Law over and over again a yoke of bondage, and a bringing on of the curse, that his object in enjoining an abandonment of the Law, was that one might live lawlessly, he corrects this notion, and states his object to be, not that our course of life might be lawless, but that our philosophy might surpass the Law. For the bonds of the Law are broken, and I say this not that our standard may be lowered, but that it may be exalted. For both he who commits fornication, and he who leads

131 [This is not a digression. It is in strict continuity with the preceding context and gives a reason for the indignant expression of the foregoing sentence. "They are defeating the very purpose of your calling: ye were called for liberty and not for bondage."—Lightfoot.—G.A.]

132 [On the doctrine of the Manichees see Schaff *Church History* vol. ii. p. 498–508, where a full account of the literature is given also.—G.A.]

a virgin life, pass the bounds of the Law, but not in the same direction; the one is led away to the worse, the other is elevated to the better; the one transgresses the Law, the other transcends it. Thus Paul says that Christ hath removed the yoke from you, not that ye may prance and kick, but that though without the yoke ye may proceed at a well-measured pace. And next he shows the mode whereby this may be readily effected; and what is this mode? he says,

Ver. 13. “But through love be servants one to another.”¹³³

Here again he hints that strife and party-spirit, love of rule and presumptuousness, had been the causes of their error, for the desire of rule is the mother of heresies. By saying, “Be servants one to another,” he shows that the evil had arisen from this presumptuous and arrogant spirit, and therefore he applies a corresponding remedy. As your divisions arose from your desire to domineer over each other, “serve one another;” thus will ye be reconciled again. However, he does not openly express their fault, but he openly tells them its corrective, that through this they may become aware of that; as if one were not to tell an immodest person of his immodesty, but were continually to exhort him to chastity. He that loves his neighbor as he ought, declines not to be servant to him more humbly than any servant. As fire, brought into contact with wax, easily softens it, so does the warmth of love dissolve all arrogance and presumption more powerfully than fire. Wherefore he says not, “love one another,” merely, but, “be servants one to another,” thus signifying the intensity of the affection. When the yoke of the Law was taken off them that they might not caper off and away another was laid on, that of love, stronger than the former, yet far lighter and pleasanter; and, to point out the way to obey it, he adds;

Ver. 14. “For the whole law is fulfilled in one word, even in this; Thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself.”

Seeing that they made so much of the Law, he says, “If you wish to fulfill it, do not be circumcised, for it is fulfilled not in circumcision but in love.” Observe how he cannot forget his grief, but constantly touches upon what troubled him, even when launched into his moral discourse.

Ver. 15. “But if ye bite and devour one another, take heed that ye be not consumed one of another.”

That he may not distress them, he does not assert this, though he knew it was the case,¹³⁴ but mentions it ambiguously. For he does not say, “Inasmuch as ye bite one another,” nor again does he assert, in the clause following, that they shall be consumed by each other; but “take heed that ye be not consumed one of another,” and this is the language of apprehension

133 [“An ingenious juxtaposition of ‘freedom’ and brotherly ‘service’ in that freedom,”—Meyer. “Ye were called for ‘freedom,’ but through love make yourselves willing ‘bond-servants’ to each other.”—G.A.]

134 [See Lightfoot, Introduction, p. 39. Note 3.—G.A.]

and warning, not of condemnation. And the words which he uses are expressly significant; he says not merely, “ye bite,” which one might do in a passion, but also “ye devour,” which implies a bearing of malice. To bite is to satisfy the feeling of anger, but to devour is a proof of the most savage ferocity. The biting and devouring he speaks of are not bodily, but of a much more cruel kind; for it is not such an injury to taste the flesh of man, as to fix one’s fangs in his soul. In proportion as the soul is more precious than the body, is damage to it more serious. “Take heed that ye be not consumed one of another.” For those who commit injury and lay plots, do so in order to destroy others; therefore he says, Take heed that this evil fall not on your own heads. For strife and dissensions are the ruin and destruction as well of those who admit as of those who introduce them, and eats out every thing worse than a moth does.

Ver. 16. “But I say, Walk by the Spirit, and ye shall not fulfil the lust of the flesh.”

Here he points out another¹³⁵ path which makes duty easy, and secures what had been said, a path whereby love is generated, and which is fenced in by love. For nothing, nothing I say, renders us so susceptible of love, as to be spiritual, and nothing is such an inducement to the Spirit to abide in us, as the strength of love. Therefore he says, “Walk by the Spirit and ye shall not fulfil the lust of the flesh:” having spoken of the cause of the disease, he likewise mentions the remedy which confers health. And what is this, what is the destruction of the evils we have spoken of, but the life in the Spirit? hence he says, “Walk by the Spirit and ye shall not fulfil the lust of the flesh.”

Ver. 17. “For the flesh lusteth against the Spirit, and the Spirit against the flesh, for these are contrary the one to the other: that ye may not do the things that ye would.”

Here some make the charge that the Apostle has divided man into two parts, and that he states the essence of which he is compounded to be conflicting with itself, and that the body has a contest with the soul. But this is not so, most certainly; for by “the flesh,” he does not mean the body; if he did, what would be the sense of the clause immediately following, “for it lusteth,” he says, “against the Spirit?” yet the body moves not, but is moved, is not an agent, but is acted upon. How then does it lust, for lust belongs to the soul not to the body, for in another place it is said, “My soul longeth,” (*Ps. lxxxiv. 2.*) and, “Whatsoever thy soul desireth, I will even do it for thee,” (*1 Sam. xx. 4.*) and, “Walk not according to the desires of thy heart,” and, “So panteth my soul.” (*Ps. xlii. 1.*) Wherefore then does Paul say, “the flesh lusteth against the Spirit?” he is wont to call the flesh, not the natural body but the depraved will, as where he says, “But ye are not in the flesh, but in the Spirit,” (*Rom. viii. 8,*



135 [“Paul returns to the warning in [ver. 13](#), not to abuse their freedom for an occasion to the ‘flesh’”—Schaff. “In [verse 13](#) he had warned them against using liberty for an occasion to the flesh; now, [ver. 16](#), he shows them how they are to accomplish that end and this introduces the deadly and interminable antagonism between the spirit and the flesh.”—Lightfoot.—G.A.]

9.) and again, “They that are in the flesh cannot please God.” What then? Is the flesh to be destroyed? was not he who thus spoke clothed with flesh? such doctrines are not of the flesh, but from the Devil, for “he was a murderer from the beginning.” (John viii. 44.) What then is his meaning? it is the earthly mind, slothful and careless, that he here calls the flesh, and this is not an accusation of the body, but a charge against the slothful soul. The flesh is an instrument, and no one feels aversion and hatred to an instrument, but to him who abuses it. For it is not the iron instrument but the murderer, whom we hate and punish. But it may be said that the very calling of the faults of the soul by the name of the flesh is in itself an accusation of the body. And I admit that the flesh is inferior to the soul, yet it too is good, for that which is inferior to what is good may itself be good, but evil is not inferior to good, but opposed to it. Now if you are able to prove to me that evil originates from the body, you are at liberty to accuse it; but if your endeavor is to turn its name into a charge against it, you ought to accuse the soul likewise. For he that is deprived of the truth is called “the natural man.” (1 Cor. ii. 14.)¹³⁶ and the race of demons “the spirits of wickedness.” (Eph. vi. 12.)

Again, the Scripture is wont to give the name of the Flesh to the Mysteries of the Eucharist, and to the whole Church, calling them the Body of Christ. (Col. i. 24.) Nay, to induce you to give the name of blessings to the things of which the flesh is the medium, you have only to imagine the extinction of the senses, and you will find the soul deprived of all discernment, and ignorant of what it before knew. For if the power of God is since “the creation of the world clearly seen, being perceived through the things that are made,” (Rom. i. 20.) how could we see them without eyes? and if “faith cometh of hearing,” (Rom. x. 17.) how shall we hear without ears? and preaching depends on making circuits wherein the tongue and feet are employed. “For how shall they preach, except they be sent?” (Rom. x. 15.) In the same way writing is performed by means of the hands. Do you not see that the ministry of the flesh produces for us a thousand benefits? In his expression, “the flesh lusteth against the Spirit,” he means two mental states. For these are opposed to each other, namely virtue and vice, not the soul and the body. Were the two latter so opposed they would be destructive of one another, as fire of water, and darkness of light. But if the soul cares for the body, and takes great forethought on its account, and suffers a thousand things in order not to leave it, and resists being separated from it, and if the body too ministers to the soul, and conveys to it much knowledge, and is adapted to its operations, how can they be contrary, and conflicting with each other? For my part, I perceive by their acts that they are not only not contrary but closely accordant and attached one to another. It is not therefore of these that he speaks as opposed to each other, but he refers to the contest of bad and good principles. (Compare Rom. vii. 23.) To will and not to will belongs to the soul; wherefore he

136 [That is, the “psychical” man, from ψυχί, the soul.—G.A.]

says, “these are contrary the one to the other,” that you may not suffer the soul to proceed in its evil desires. For he speaks this like a Master and Teacher in a threatening way.

Ver. 18. “But if ye are led by the Spirit, ye are not under the Law.”¹³⁷

If it be asked in what way are these two connected, I answer, closely and plainly; for he that hath the Spirit as he ought, quenches thereby every evil desire, and he that is released from these needs no help from the Law, but is exalted far above its precepts. He who is never angry, what need has he to hear the command, Thou shalt not kill? He who never casts unchaste looks, what need hath he of the admonition, Thou shalt not commit adultery? Who would discourse about the fruits of wickedness with him who had plucked up the root itself? for anger is the root of murder, and of adultery the inquisitive gazing into faces. Hence he says, “If ye are led by the Spirit, ye are not under the Law;” wherein he appears to me to have pronounced a high and striking eulogy of the Law, if, at least, the Law stood, according to its power, in the place of the Spirit before the Spirit’s coming upon us. But we are not on that account obliged to continue apart with our schoolmaster. Then we were justly subject to the Law, that by fear we might chasten our lusts, the Spirit not being manifested; but now that grace is given, which not only commands us to abstain from them, but both quenches them, and leads us to a higher rule of life, what more need is there of the Law? He who has attained an exalted excellence from an inner impulse, has no occasion for a schoolmaster, nor does any one, if he is a philosopher, require a grammarian. Why then do ye so degrade yourselves, as now to listen to the Law, having previously given yourselves to the Spirit?

Ver. 19, 20, 21. “Now the works of the flesh are manifest,¹³⁸ which are these; fornication,¹³⁹ uncleanness, lasciviousness, idolatry, sorcery, enmities, strife, jealousies, wrath, factions, divisions, heresies, envyings, drunkenness, revellings, and such like: of the which I forewarn you even as I did forewarn you, that they which practice such things shall not inherit the kingdom of God.”

Answer me now, thou that accusest thine own flesh, and supposest that this is said of it as of an enemy and adversary. Let it be allowed that adultery and fornication proceed, as you assert, from the flesh; yet hatred, variance, emulations, strife, heresies, and witchcraft, these arise merely from a depraved moral choice. And so it is with the others also, for how



137 [“If you adopt the rule of the Spirit, you thereby renounce your allegiance to the Law. In this passage the Spirit is doubly contrasted; first with the flesh, and secondly, with the Law, both of which are closely allied.”—Lightfoot.—G. A.]

138 [“Would you ascertain whether you are walking by the Spirit or the flesh? Then apply the plain practical test.”—Lightfoot.—G.A.]

139 [“The sins here mentioned seem to fall into four classes: (1) Sensual sins; fornication, uncleanness, lasciviousness; (2) Unlawful dealings in things spiritual; idolatry, sorcery; (3) Violations of brotherly love; enmities...envyings; (4) Excesses, drunkenness and revellings.”—Lightfoot.—G.A.]

can they belong to the flesh? you observe that he is not here speaking of the flesh, but of earthly thoughts, which trail upon the ground. Wherefore also he alarms them by saying, that “they which practice such things shall not inherit the kingdom of God.” If these things belonged to nature and not to a bad moral choice, his expression, “they practice,” is inappropriate, it should be, “they suffer.” And why should they be cast out of the kingdom, for rewards and punishments relate not to what proceeds from nature but from choice?

Ver. 22. “But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace.”

He says not, “the work of the Spirit,” but, “the fruit of the Spirit.” Is the soul, however, superfluous? the flesh and the Spirit are mentioned, but where is the soul? is he discoursing of beings without a soul? for if the things of the flesh be evil, and those of the Spirit good, the soul must be superfluous. By no means, for the mastery of the passions belongs to her, and concerns her; and being placed amid vice and virtue, if she has used the body fitly, she has wrought it to be spiritual, but if she separate from the Spirit and give herself up to evil desires, she makes herself more earthly. You observe throughout that his discourse does not relate to the substance of the flesh, but to the moral choice, which is or is not vicious. And why does he say, “the fruit¹⁴⁰ of the Spirit?” it is because evil works originate in ourselves alone, and therefore he calls them “works,” but good works require not only our diligence but God’s loving kindness. He places first the root of these good things, and then proceeds to recount them, in these words, “Love, joy, peace, long-suffering, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, meekness, temperance; against such there is no law.” For who would lay any command on him who hath all things within himself, and who hath love for the finished mistress of philosophy? As horses, who are docile and do every thing of their own accord, need not the lash, so neither does the soul, which by the Spirit hath attained to excellence, need the admonitions of the Law. Here too he completely and strikingly casts out the Law, not as bad, but as inferior to the philosophy given by the Spirit.

Ver. 24. “And they that are of Christ Jesus¹⁴¹ have crucified the flesh with the passions and the lusts thereof.”

That they might not object, “And who is such a man as this?” he points out by their works those who have attained to this perfection, here again giving the name of the “flesh” to evil actions. He does not mean that they had destroyed their flesh, otherwise how were they going to live? for that which is crucified is dead and inoperative, but he indicates the

140 [“Used apparently with a significant reference to the organic development, from their root, the Spirit.”—Ellicott. So substantially Lightfoot and Schaff. But Meyer demurs and says no marked distinction is intended. He refers it to Paul’s fondness for variety of expression.—G.A.]

141 [Having now enumerated the distinctive works of the flesh and fruit of the Spirit he says, Now if you are Christ’s you have decided between these, the Spirit and the flesh, and have crucified the flesh, with its passions (passive) and lusts (active).—G.A.]

perfect rule of life. For the desires, although they are troublesome, rage in vain. Since then such is the power of the Spirit, let us live therein and be content therewith, as he adds himself,

Ver. 25. “If we live¹⁴² by the Spirit, by the Spirit let us also walk,”

—being governed by His laws. For this is the force of the words “let us walk,” that is, let us be content with the power of the Spirit, and seek no help from the Law. Then, signifying that those who would fain have introduced circumcision were actuated by ambitious motives, he says,

Ver. 26. “Let us not be vainglorious,”¹⁴³ which is the cause of all evils, “provoking¹⁴⁴ one another” to contentions and strife, “envying one another,” for from vainglory comes envy and from envy all these countless evils.

142 [Therefore if having crucified the flesh we are dead to it and live by the Spirit, let us conform our conduct to our new life, let us also walk by the Spirit.—Lightfoot, substantially.—G.A.]

143 [“Paul works round again to the subject of ver. 15 and repeats his warning. It is clear that something had occurred which alarmed him on this point.”—Lightfoot.—G.A.]

144 [“‘Provoking’ (προκαλούμενοι) on the part of the strong, ‘envying,’ (φθονοῦντες) on the part of the weak. The strong vauntingly challenged their weaker brethren; the weak could only retaliate with envy,”—Elliott.—G.A.].

Chapter VI.

Verse 1

“Brethren,¹⁴⁵ *even if a man be overtaken in any trespass.*”¹⁴⁶

Forasmuch as under cover of a rebuke they gratified their private feelings, and professing to do so for faults which had been committed, were advancing their own ambition, he says, “Brethren, if a man be overtaken.” He said not if a man commit but if he be “overtaken” that is, if he be carried away.¹⁴⁷

“Ye which are spiritual¹⁴⁸ restore such a one,”

He says not “chastise” nor “judge,” but “set right.” Nor does he stop here, but in order to show that it behoved them to be very gentle towards those who had lost their footing, he subjoins,

“In a spirit of meekness.”

He says not, “in meekness,” but, “in a spirit of meekness,” signifying thereby that this is acceptable to the Spirit, and that to be able to administer correction with mildness is a spiritual gift. Then, to prevent the one being unduly exalted by having to correct the other, puts him under the same fear, saying,

“Looking to thyself, lest thou also be tempted.”

For as rich men convey contributions to the indigent, that in case they should be themselves involved in poverty they may receive the same bounty, so ought we also to do. And therefore he states this cogent reason, in these words, “looking to thyself, lest thou also be tempted.” He apologizes for the offender, first, by saying “if ye be overtaken;” next, by employing a term indicative of great infirmity¹⁴⁹; lastly, by the words “lest thou also be tempted,” thus arraiging the malice of the devil rather than the remissness of the soul.

Ver. 2. “Bear ye one another’s burdens.”

It being impossible for man to be without failings, he exhorts them not to scrutinize severely the offences of others, but even to bear their failings, that their own may in turn be borne by others. As, in the building of a house, all the stones hold not the same position, but one is fitted for a corner but not for the foundations, another for the foundations, and

145 [“I have just charged you to shun provocation and envy. I now ask you to do more—to be gentle even to those whose guilt is flagrant.”—Lightfoot.—G.A.]

146 Ἐν τινι παραπτώματι, “in a false step or slip,” omitted, in the text yet commented on.

147 [Meyer holds the same view of this word (προλημφθῆ) and says, “If he be overtaken,” means if the sin has reached him more rapidly than he could flee from it. Ellicott, however, says this view of the πρό would tend to excuse and qualify, whereas καὶ seems to point to an aggravation of the offense. The meaning then is “be caught before he could escape.”—So Lightfoot but not Schaff.—G.A.]

148 [“Paul leaves it with every reader to regard himself included or not.”—Meyer—G.A.]

149 Viz., in a false step, ἐν τινι παραπτώματι.

not for the corner so too is it in the body of the Church. The same thing holds in the frame of our own flesh; notwithstanding which, the one member bears with the other, and we do not require every thing from each, but what each contributes in common constitutes both the body and the building.

Ver. 2. “And so fulfil the law of Christ.”

He says not “fulfil,” but, “complete¹⁵⁰,” that is, make it up all of you in common,¹⁵¹ by the things wherein ye bear with one another. For example, this man is irascible, thou art dull-tempered; bear therefore with his vehemence that he in turn may bear with thy sluggishness; and thus neither will he transgress, being supported by thee, nor wilt thou offend in the points where thy defects lie, because of thy brother’s forbearing with thee. So do ye by reaching forth a hand one to another when about to fall, fulfil the Law in common, each completing what is wanting in his neighbor by his own endurance. But if ye do not thus, but each of you will investigate the faults of his neighbor, nothing will ever be performed by you as it ought. For as in the case of the body, if one were to exact the same function from every member of it, the body could never consist, so must there be great strife among brethren if we were to require all things from all.

Ver. 3. “For if a man thinketh himself to be something, when he is nothing, he deceiveth himself.”

Here again he reflects on their arrogance. He that thinks himself to be something is nothing, and exhibits at the outset a proof of his worthlessness by such a disposition.

Ver. 4. “But let each man prove his own work.”

Here he shows that we ought to be scrutinizers of our lives, and this not lightly, but carefully to weigh our actions; as for example, if thou hast performed a good deed, consider whether it was not from vain glory, or through necessity, or malevolence, or with hypocrisy, or from some other human motive. For as gold appears to be bright before it is placed in the furnace, but when committed to the fire, is closely proved, and all that is spurious is separated from what is genuine, so too our works, if closely examined, will be distinctly made manifest, and we shall perceive that we have exposed ourselves to much censure.

Ver. 4. “And then shall he have his glorying in regard of himself alone and not of his neighbor.”

150 Not πληρώσατε, but ἀναπληρώσατε.

151 [“This explanation of Chrysostom is not satisfactory. The word in all cases appears to denote a complete filling up.”—Ellicott. “By lending a hand to bear your neighbor’s burden, you will fulfil the most perfect of all laws—the law of Christ. But if (ver. 3.) any one asserts his superiority, if any one exalts himself above others, he is nothing worth and is a vain self-deceiver. Nay (ver. 4.) rather let each man test his own work (ἔργον being in an emphatic position) and then his boast will be his own and not depend on comparison with others.”—Lightfoot.—G.A.]

This he says, not as laying down a rule, but in the way of concession; and his meaning is this,¹⁵²—Boasting is senseless, but if thou wilt boast, boast not against thy neighbor, as the Pharisee did. For he that is so instructed will speedily give up boasting altogether; and therefore he concedes a part that he may gradually extirpate the whole. He that is wont to boast with reference to himself only, and not against others, will soon reform this failing also. For he that does not consider himself better than others, for this is the meaning of “not in regard of his neighbor,” but becomes elated by examining himself by himself, will afterwards cease to be so. And that you may be sure this is what he desires to establish, observe how he checks him by fear, saying above, “let every man prove his own work,” and adding here,

Ver. 5. “For each man shall bear his own burden.”

He appears to state a reason prohibitory of boasting against another; but at the same time he corrects the boaster, to that he may no more entertain high thoughts of himself by bringing to his remembrance his own errors, and pressing upon his conscience the idea of a burden, and of being heavily laden.¹⁵³

Ver. 6. “But let him that is taught in the word communicate unto him that teacheth in all good things.”

Here he proceeds to discourse concerning Teachers, to the effect that they ought to be tended with great assiduity by their disciples. Now what is the reason that Christ so commanded? For this law, “that they which preach the Gospel should live of the Gospel,” (1 Cor. ix. 14.) is laid down in the New Testament; and likewise in the Old, (Num. xxxi. 47; xxxv. 1–8.) many revenues accrued to the Levites from the people; what is the reason, I say, that He so ordained? Was it not for the sake of laying a foundation beforehand of lowliness and love? For inasmuch as the dignity of a teacher oftentimes elates him who possesses it, He, in order to repress his spirit, hath imposed on him the necessity of requiring aid at the hands of his disciples. And to these in turn he hath given¹⁵⁴ means of cultivating kindly feelings, by training them, through the kindness required of them to their Teacher, in gentleness towards others also. By this means no slight affection is generated on both sides. Were not the cause of this what I have stated it to be, why should He, who fed the dull-minded Jews with manna, have reduced the Apostles to the necessity of asking for aid? Is

152 [“If any one wishes to find matter for boasting, let it be truly searched for in his own actions and not derived from a contrast of his own fancied virtues with the faults of others.”—Ellicott.—G.A.]

153 [Ellicott says, “The qualitative and humbling distinction of Chrysostom does not appear natural or probable, nor does it refer to that which will take place in every man after the examination (Meyer); but is apparently used ethically in reference to what according to the nature of things must be the case.”—G.A.]

154 [Those philosophers among the Greeks who received pay from their pupils were looked down upon, and called Sophists, vid. Xen. Mem. 1. 6. §. 13.]

it not manifest He aimed at the great benefits of humility and love, and that those who were under teaching might not be ashamed of Teachers who were in appearance despicable? To ask for aid bears the semblance of disgrace, but it ceased to be so, when their Teachers with all boldness urged their claim, so that their disciples derived from hence no small benefit, taught hereby to despise all appearances. Wherefore he says, “But¹⁵⁵ let him that is taught in the word communicate unto him that teacheth in all good things,” that is, let him show to him all generosity; this he implies by the words, “in all good things.” Let the disciple, says he, keep nothing to himself, but have every thing in common, for what he receives is better than what he gives,—as much better as heavenly are better than earthly things. This he expresses in another place, “If we sowed unto you spiritual things, is it a great matter if we shall reap your carnal things?” (1 Cor. ix. 11.) Wherefore he gives the procedure the name of a “communication,” showing that an interchange takes place. Hereby too love is greatly fostered and confirmed. If the teacher asks merely for competency, he does not by receiving it derogate from his own dignity. For this is praiseworthy, so assiduously to apply to the Word, as to require the aid of others, and to be in manifold poverty, and to be regardless of all the means of subsistence. But if he exceed the due measure, he injures his dignity, not by mere receiving, but by receiving too much. Then, lest the vice of the Teacher should render the disciple more remiss in this matter, and he should frequently pass him by, though poor, on account of his conduct, he proceeds to say,

Ver. 9. “And let us not be weary in well doing.”¹⁵⁶

And here he points out the difference between ambition of this kind, and in temporal affairs, by saying, “Be not deceived¹⁵⁷; God is not mocked; for whatsoever a man soweth, that shall he also reap. For he that soweth unto his own flesh shall of the flesh reap corruption;

155 [Different views are held as to the connection of this with the preceding. Lightfoot says the connection is this: “I spoke of bearing one another’s burdens. There is one special application I would make of this rule; provide for the wants of your teachers. Δέ arrests a former topic before it passes out of sight.” (Compare 4: 20.) But Ellicott takes a different view and says: “The duty of sharing their temporal blessings with their teacher is placed in contrast with the foregoing declaration of individual responsibility in spiritual matter.” So also Meyer who, however, refers it to moral good.—G.A.]

156 [Dislocated by Chrysostom. This is a part of [verse 9](#), and is an encouragement not to become weary in below sowing to the Spirit.— Meyer.—G.A.]

157 [Meyer, understanding “all good things” to mean every thing that is morally good, says, that this is a warning to the readers, in respect to this necessary moral fellowship not to allow themselves to be led astray (by the teachers of error or otherwise). Lightfoot and Schaff refer this warning to the consequences of failure to share their temporal blessings with their teachers. Ellicott says, “[Verse 7](#) is a continuation of the subject in a more general and extended way but not without reference to the special command which immediately precedes.”—G.A.]

but he that soweth unto the Spirit shall of the Spirit reap eternal life.” As in the case of seeds, one who sows pulse cannot reap corn, for what is sown and what is reaped must both be of one kind, so is it in actions, he that plants in the flesh, wantonness, drunkenness, or inordinate desire, shall reap the fruits of these things. And what are these fruits? Punishment, retribution, shame, derision, destruction. For of sumptuous tables and viands the end is no other than destruction; for they both perish themselves, and destroy the body too. But the fruit of the Spirit is of a nature not similar but contrary in all respects to these. For consider; hast thou sown alms-giving? the treasures of heaven and eternal glory await thee: hast thou sown temperance? honor and reward, and the applause of Angels, and a crown from the Judge await thee.

Ver. 9, 10. “And let us not be weary in well-doing; for in due season we shall reap, if we faint not. So then as we have opportunity, let us work that which is good toward all men, especially toward them that are of the household of faith.”

Lest any one should suppose that their Teachers were to be cared for and supported, but that others might be neglected, he makes his discourse general, and opens the door of this charitable zeal to all; nay, he carries it to such a height, as to command us to show mercy both to Jews and Greeks, in the proper gradation indeed, but still to show mercy. And what is this gradation? it consists in bestowing greater care upon the faithful. His endeavor here is the same as in his other Epistles; he discourses not merely of showing mercy, but of doing it with zeal and perseverance, for the expressions of “sowing” and of “not fainting” imply this. Then, having exacted a great work, he places its reward close at hand, and makes mention of a new and wondrous harvest. Among husbandmen, not only the sower but also the reaper endures much labor, having to struggle with drought and dust and grievous toil, but in this case none of these exist, as he shows by the words, “for in due season we shall reap, if we faint not.” By this means he stimulates and draws them on; and he also urges and presses them forward by another motive, saying, “As we have therefore opportunity, let us do good.” As it is not always in our power to sow, so neither is it to show mercy; for when we have been carried hence, though we may desire it a thousand times, we shall be able to effect nothing more. To this argument of ours the Ten Virgins (*Mat. xxv. 1. ff.*) bear witness, who although they wished it a thousand times, yet were shut out from the bridegroom, because they brought with them no bountiful charity. And so does the rich man who neglected Lazarus (*Luke xvi. 19.*) for he, being destitute of this succor, although he wept and made many entreaties, won no compassion from the Patriarch, or any one else, but continued destitute of all forgiveness, and tormented with perpetual fire. Therefore he says, “as we have opportunity, let us work that which is good toward all men,” hereby especially also setting them free from the narrow-mindedness of the Jews. For the whole of their benevolence was confined to their own race, but the rule of life which Grace gives invites both land and sea to the board of charity, only it shows a greater care for its own household.

Ver. 11, 12. “See with how large letters I have written unto you with mine own hand. As many as desire to make a fair show in the flesh, they compel you to be circumcised.”

Observe what grief possesses his blessed soul. As those who are oppressed with some sorrow, who have lost one of their own kindred, and suffered an unexpected calamity, rest neither by night nor day, because their grief besieges their soul, so the blessed Paul, after a short moral discourse, returns again to that former subject which chiefly disturbed his mind, saying as follows: “see with how large letters I have written unto you with mine own hand.” By this he signifies that he had written the whole letter¹⁵⁸ himself, which was a proof of great sincerity. In his other Epistles he himself only dictated, another wrote, as is plain from the Epistle to the Romans, for at its close it is said, “I Tertius, who write the Epistle, salute you;” (Rom. xvi. 22.) but in this instance he wrote the whole himself. And this he did by necessity, not from affection merely, but in order to remove an injurious suspicion. Being charged with acts wherein he had no part, and being reported to preach Circumcision yet to pretend to preach it not, he was compelled to write the Epistle with his own hand, thus laying up beforehand a written testimony. By the expression “what sized,” he appears to me to signify, not the magnitude, but, the misshapen appearance¹⁵⁹ of the letters, as if he had said, “Although not well skilled in writing, I have been compelled to write with my own hand to stop the mouth of these traducers.”

Ver. 12, 13. “As many as desire to make a fair show in the flesh, they compel you to be circumcised; only that they may not be persecuted for the cross of Christ. For not even they who receive circumcision do themselves keep the Law; but they desire to have you circumcised, that they may glory in your flesh.”

Here he shows that they suffered this, not willingly but of necessity, and affords them an opportunity of retreat, almost speaking in their defence, and exhorting them to abandon their teachers with all speed. What is the meaning of “to make a fair show in the flesh?” it means, to be esteemed by men. As they were reviled by the Jews for deserting the customs of their fathers, they desire, says he, to injure you, that they may not have this charged against them, but vindicate themselves by means of your flesh.¹⁶⁰ His object here is to show that

158 [Ellicott hesitatingly adopts this view also. So Alford and Riddle (in Lange). But Meyer, Schaff, Schmoller (in Lange) and Lightfoot say that ἔγραψα (Philem. 19.) is the epistolary aorist and marks the point at which Paul takes the pen from the amanuensis; and that only this concluding paragraph was written with his own hand. So the American Committee also in the Rev. Ver.—G.A.]

159 [“The word used, πηλίκοις, denotes size not irregularity. Nor is it probable that Paul who was educated at Jerusalem and Tarsus, the great centre of Jewish and Greek learning, was ignorant and unskillful in writing Greek. The boldness of the handwriting answers to the force of the Apostle’s convictions.”—Lightfoot.—G.A.]

160 [“Certain men have an ‘object’ in displaying their zeal for carnal ordinances. They hope thereby to save themselves from persecution for professing the cross of Christ.”—Lightfoot.—G.A.]

they did not so act from respect to God; it is as if he said, This procedure is not founded in piety, all this is done through human ambition; in order that the unbelievers may be gratified by the mutilation of the faithful, they choose to offend God that they may please men; for this is the meaning of, “to make a fair show in the flesh.” Then, as a proof that for another reason too they are unpardonable, he again convinces them that, not only in order to please others, but for their own vain glory,¹⁶¹ they had enjoined this. Wherefore he adds, “that they may glory in your flesh,” as if they had disciples, and were teachers. And what is the proof of this? “For not even they themselves,” he says, “keep the Law;” even if they did keep it, they would incur grave censure, but now their very purpose is corrupt.

Ver. 14. “But far be it from me to glory, save in the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ.”

Truly this symbol is thought despicable; but it is so in the world’s reckoning, and among men; in Heaven and among the faithful it is the highest glory. Poverty too is despicable, but it is our boast; and to be cheaply thought of by the public is a matter of laughter to them, but we are elated by it. So too is the Cross our boast. He does not say, “I boast not,” nor, “I will not boast,” but, “Far be it from me that I should,” as if he abominated it as absurd, and invoked the aid of God in order to his success therein. And what is the boast of the Cross? That Christ for my sake took on Him the form of a slave, and bore His sufferings for me the slave, the enemy, the unfeeling one; yea He so loved me as to give Himself up to a curse for me. What can be comparable to this! If servants who only receive praise from their masters, to whom they are akin by nature, are elated thereby, how must we not boast when the Master who is very God is not ashamed of the Cross which was endured for us. Let us then not be ashamed of His unspeakable tenderness; He was not ashamed of being crucified for thy sake, and wilt thou be ashamed to confess His infinite solicitude? It is as if a prisoner who had not been ashamed of his King, should, after that King had come to the prison and himself loosed the chains, become ashamed of him on that account. Yet this would be the height of madness, for this very fact would be an especial ground for boasting.

Ver. 14. “Through which the world hath been crucified unto me, and I unto the world.”¹⁶²

161 [“They advocate circumcision and yet they themselves neglect the ordinances of the Law. They could not face the obloquy to which their abandonment of the Mosaic Law would expose them. So they tried to keep on good terms with their unconverted fellow-Jews by imposing circumcision on the Gentile converts also thus getting the credit of zeal for the law.”—Lightfoot.—G.A.]

162 [“For myself, on the other hand, far be it from me, etc.: By way of contrast to the boasting of the pseudo-apostles, Paul now presents his own ground of boasting, namely, the crucifixion of Christ, by whose crucifixion is produced the result that no fellowship of life longer exists between him and the world: it is dead for him and he is dead for it.”—Meyer.—*Alter pro mortuo habet alterum.* (Schott.)—G.A.]

What he here calls the world is not the heaven nor the earth, but the affairs of life, the praise of men, retinues, glory, wealth, and all such things as have a show of splendor. To me these things are dead. Such an one it behooves a Christian to be, and always to use this language. Nor was he content with the former putting to death, but added another, saying, “and I unto the world,” thus implying a double putting to death, and saying, They are dead to me, and I to them, neither can they captivate and overcome me, for they are dead once for all, nor can I desire them, for I too am dead to them. Nothing can be more blessed than this putting to death, for it is the foundation of the blessed life.

Ver. 15, 16. “For neither is circumcision any thing, nor uncircumcision, but a new creature. And as many as shall walk by this rule, peace be upon them, and mercy, and upon the Israel of God.”

Observe the power of the Cross, to what a pitch it hath raised him! not only hath it put to death for him all mundane affairs, but hath set him far above the Old Dispensation. What can be comparable to this power? for the Cross hath persuaded him, who was willing to be slain and to slay others for the sake of circumcision, to leave it on a level with uncircumcision, and to seek for things strange and marvellous and above the heavens. This our rule of life he calls “a new creature,” both on account of what is past, and of what is to come; of what is past, because our soul, which had grown old with the oldness of sin, hath been all at once renewed by baptism, as if it had been created again.¹⁶³ Wherefore we require a new and heavenly rule of life. And of things to come, because both the heaven and the earth, and all the creation, shall with our bodies be translated into incorruption. Tell me not then, he says, of circumcision, which now availeth nothing; (for how shall it appear, when all things have undergone such a change?) but seek the new things of grace. For they who pursue these things shall enjoy peace and amity, and may properly be called by the name of “Israel.” While they who hold contrary sentiments, although they be descended from him (Israel) and bear his appellation, have yet fallen away from all these things, both the relationship and the name itself. But it is in their power to be true Israelites, who keep this rule, who desist from the old ways, and follow after grace.

Ver. 17. “From henceforth let no man trouble me.”

This he says not as though he were wearied or overpowered; he who chose to do and suffer all for his disciples’ sake; he who said, “Be instant in season, out of season;” (2 Tim. iv. 2.) he who said, “If peradventure God may give them repentance unto the knowledge of the truth, and they may recover themselves out of the snare of the devil;” (2 Tim. ii. 25, 26.) how shall he now become relaxed and fall back? Wherefore does he say this? it is to gird up

163 [“It is a matter of indifference whether one is circumcised or uncircumcised; and the only matter of importance is that one should be created anew, transferred into a new spiritual condition of life.”—Meyer.—G.A.]

their slothful mind, and to impress them with deeper fear, and to ratify the laws enacted by himself, and to restrain their perpetual fluctuations.¹⁶⁴

Ver. 17. “For I bear branded on my body the marks of Jesus.”

He says not, “I have,” but, “I bear,” like a man priding himself on trophies and royal ensigns. Although on a second thought it seems a disgrace, yet does this man vaunt of his wounds, and like military standard-bearers, so does he exult in bearing about these wounds. And why does he say this? “More clearly by those wounds than by any argument, than by any language, do I vindicate myself,” says he. For these wounds utter a voice louder than a trumpet against my opponents, and against those who say that I play the hypocrite in my teaching, and speak what may please men. For no one who saw a soldier retiring from the battle bathed in blood and with a thousand wounds, would dare to accuse him of cowardice and treachery, seeing that he bears on his body the proofs of his valor, and so ought ye, he says, to judge of me. And if any one desire to hear my defence, and to learn my sentiments, let him consider my wounds, which afford a stronger proof than these words and letters. At the outset of his Epistle he evinced his sincerity by the suddenness of his conversion, at its close he proves it by the perils which attended his conversion. That it might not be objected that he had changed his course with upright intentions, but that he had not continued in the same purpose, he produces his trials, his dangers, his stripes as witnesses that he had so continued.

Then having clearly justified himself in every particular, and proved that he had spoken nothing from anger or malevolence, but had preserved his affection towards them unimpaired, he again establishes this same point by concluding his discourse with a prayer teeming with a thousand blessings, in these words;

Ver. 18. “The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with your spirit, brethren. Amen.”

By this last word he hath sealed all that preceded it. He says not merely, “with you,” as elsewhere, but, “with your spirit,” thus withdrawing them from carnal¹⁶⁵ things, and displaying throughout the beneficence of God, and reminding them of the grace which they enjoyed, whereby he was able to recall them from all their judaizing errors. For to have received the Spirit came not of the poverty of the Law, but of the righteousness which is by

164 [Lightfoot similarly, but more clearly; “Paul closes the epistle as he began it, with an uncompromising assertion of his authority: Henceforth let no man question my authority; let no man thwart or annoy me. Jesus is my Master and his brand is stamped on my body. I bear this badge of an honorable servitude.”—G.A.]

165 [So also Lightfoot, who says, “with your spirit” is probably in reference to the carnal religion of the Galatians, but this cannot be pressed because the same form of benediction occurs in [Philem. 25](#); [2 Tim. iv. 22](#). Meyer denies there is any such allusion at all. G.A.]

Faith, and to preserve it when obtained came not from Circumcision but from Grace. On this account he concluded his exhortation with a prayer, reminding them of grace and the Spirit, and at the same time addressing them as brethren, and supplicating God that they might continue to enjoy these blessings, thus providing for them a twofold security. For both prayer and teaching, tended to the same thing and together became to them as a double wall. For teaching, reminding them of what benefits they enjoyed, the rather kept them in the doctrine of the Church; and prayer, invoking grace, and exhorting to an enduring constancy, permitted not the Spirit to depart from them. And He abiding in them, all the error of such doctrines as they held was shaken off like dust.¹⁶⁶



166 [Dr. Schaff strikingly says: “The last sentence of this polemic Epistle is a benediction and the last word is a word of affection, ‘brethren.’ (The word ἀδελφοί stands last in the true text, as the Rev. Version has it.) It takes the sting out of the severity. Thus concludes this Epistle so full of polemic fire and zeal, yet more full of grace—free sovereign grace, justifying sanctifying grace, and full of forgiving love even to ungrateful pupils; an Epistle for the time and an Epistle for all times.”—*Popular Commentary, in loco.*—G.A.]

Homilies of St. John Chrysostom,
archbishop of constantinople,
on the
epistle of St. paul the apostle
to the
ephesians.



The Argument.

Ephesus is the metropolis of Asia. It was dedicated to Diana, whom especially they worshipped there as their great goddess. Indeed so great was the superstition of her worshippers, that when her temple was burnt, they would not so much as divulge the name of the man who burnt it.

The blessed John the Evangelist spent the chief part of his time there: he was there when he was banished,¹⁶⁷ and there he died. It was there too that Paul left Timothy, as he says in writing to him, “As I exhorted thee to tarry at Ephesus.” (1 Tim. i. 3.)

Most of the philosophers also, those more particularly who flourished in Asia, were there; and even Pythagoras himself is said to have come from thence; perhaps because Samos, whence he really came, is an island of Ionia.¹⁶⁸ It was the resort also of the disciples of Parmenides, and Zeno, and Democritus, and you may see a number of philosophers there even to the present day.

These facts I mention, not merely as such, but with a view of showing that Paul would needs take great pains and trouble in writing to these Ephesians. He is said indeed to have entrusted them, as being persons already well-instructed, with his profoundest conceptions; and the Epistle itself is full of sublime thoughts and doctrines.¹⁶⁹

He wrote the Epistle from Rome, and, as he himself informs us, in bonds. “Pray for me, that utterance may be given unto me, in opening my mouth to make known with boldness the mystery of the Gospel, for which I am an ambassador in chains.” (Eph. vi. 19.) It abounds with sentiments of overwhelming loftiness and grandeur. Thoughts which he scarcely so

167 [The Apocalypse already implies that he stood at the head of the churches of Asia Minor. Rev. 1: 4, 9, 11, 20. Chs. 2 and 3. This is confirmed by the unanimous testimony of antiquity. The most probable view is that he was exiled to Patmos under Nero, wrote the Apocalypse soon after Nero’s death, 68 or 69 a.d., returned to Ephesus and died there after 98 a.d.—Schaff, *Ch. Hist.* I. p. 424, 429.—G.A.]

168 [Of which Ephesus was one of the cities. G.A.]

169 [Coleridge calls it the “divinest composition of man.” Alford: “The greatest and most heavenly work of one whose very imagination is peopled with things in the heavens.” Grotius: “Equaling the sublimity of its thoughts with words more sublime than any human language ever possessed.”—Quoted in Schaff, *Ch. Hist.* I. p. 781.—G.A.]

much as utters any where else, he here plainly declares; as when he says, “To the intent that now unto the principalities and the powers in the heavenly places might be made known through the Church the manifold wisdom of God.” (Eph. iii. 10.) And again; “He raised us up with him, and made us to sit with him in heavenly places.” (Eph. ii. 6.) And again; “Which in other generations was not made known unto the sons of men, as it hath now been revealed unto His holy apostles and prophets in the Spirit, that the Gentiles are fellow-heirs, and fellow-partakers of the promise in Christ.” (Eph. iii. 5.)

Homily I.

Chapter I. Verses 1–2

“Paul, an apostle of Christ Jesus through the will of God, to the saints which are at Ephesus,¹⁷⁰ and the faithful in Christ Jesus. Grace to you, and peace, from God our Father, and the Lord Jesus Christ.”

Observe, he applies the word “through” to the Father. But what then? Shall we say that He is inferior? Surely not.

“To the saints,” saith he, “which are at Ephesus, and the faithful in Christ Jesus.”

Observe that he calls saints, men with wives, and children, and domestics. For that these are they whom he calls by this name is plain from the end of the Epistle, as, when he says, “Wives, be in subjection unto your own husbands.” (Eph. v. 22.) And again, “Children, obey your parents:” (Eph. vi. 1.) and, “Servants, be obedient to your masters.” (Eph. vi. 5.) Think how great is the indolence that possesses us now, how rare is any thing like virtue now and how great the abundance of virtuous men must have been then, when even secular men could be called “saints and faithful.” “Grace to you, and peace, from God our Father, and the Lord Jesus Christ.” “Grace” is his word; and he calls God, “Father,” since this name is a sure token of that gift of grace. And how so? Hear what he saith elsewhere; “Because ye are sons, God sent forth the Spirit of His Son into our hearts, crying, Abba, Father.” (Gal. iv. 6.)

“And from the Lord Jesus Christ.”

Because for us men Christ was born, and appeared in the flesh.

Ver. 3. “Blessed¹⁷¹ be the God,” he saith, “and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ.”

Observe; The God of Him that was Incarnate¹⁷². And though thou wilt not, The Father of God the Word.

Ver. 3. “Who hath blessed us with every spiritual blessing in the heavenly places in Christ.”

170 [At Ephesus, Chrysostom’s text has these words (ἐν Ἐφέσῳ) and he betrays no knowledge of any copies which omitted them. But they are omitted by Aleph* B. by some mss., consulted by Basil, and apparently by Origen’s text, for he interprets τοῖς οὖσιν (those who are) absolutely, as he would not have done had he read ἐν Ἐφέσῳ. The Revisers insert the words but with a marginal note. Westcott and Hort bracket them. See their discussion of the point in Appendix (vol. II. of Greek Text), p. 123. For a full discussion see Meyer’s *Introduction to Ephesians*, Sec. 1, where he earnestly defends “the right of these words to a place in the text.”—G.A.]

171 [Compare Rom. ix. 5; 2 Cor. i. 3; Luke i. 68; 1 Peter i. 3.—G.A.]

172 [Meyer holds that the genitive τοῦ κυρίου, etc. does not limit Θεός, but only πατήρ: “Blessed be God who at same time is Father of our Lord Jesus Christ.” So also Ellicott.—G.A.]

He is here alluding to the blessings of the Jews¹⁷³; for that was blessing also, but it was not spiritual blessing. For how did it run? “The Lord bless thee, He will bless the fruit of thy body;” (*Deut. vii. 13.*) and “He will bless thy going out and thy coming in.” (*Deut. xxviii. 4.*) But here it is not thus, but how? “With every spiritual blessing.” And what lackest thou yet? Thou art made immortal, thou art made free, thou art made a son, thou art made righteous, thou art made a brother, thou art made a fellow-heir, thou reignest with Christ, thou art glorified with Christ; all things are freely given thee. “How,” saith he, “shall He not also with Him freely give us all things?” (*Rom. viii. 32.*) Thy First-fruits is adored by Angels, by the Cherubim, by the Seraphim! What lackest thou yet? “With every spiritual blessing.” There is nothing carnal here. Accordingly He excluded all those former blessings, when He said, “In the world ye have tribulation,” (*John xvi. 33.*) to lead us on to these. For as they who possessed carnal things were unable to hear of spiritual things, so they who aim at spiritual things cannot attain to them unless they first stand aloof from carnal things.

What again is “spiritual blessing in the heavenly places?” It is not upon earth, he means, as was the case with the Jews. “Ye shall eat the good of the land.” (*Isa. i. 19.*) “Unto a land flowing with milk and honey.” (*Ex. iii. 8.*) “The Lord shall bless thy land.” (*Deut. vii. 13.*) Here we have nothing of this sort, but what have we? “If a man love Me, he will keep My word, and I and My Father will come unto him, and make our abode with him.” (*John xiv. 23.*) “Every one therefore which heareth these words of Mine, and doeth them, shall be likened unto a wise man which built his house upon the rock, and the floods came, and the winds blew, and beat upon that house, and it fell not, for it was founded upon the rock.” (*Mat. vii. 24, 25.*) And what is that rock but those heavenly things which are above the reach of every change? “Every one therefore who,” saith Christ, “shall confess Me before men, him will I also confess before My Father which is in Heaven: But whosoever shall deny Me, him will I also deny.” (*Mat. x. 32, 33.*) Again, “Blessed are the pure in heart, for they shall see God.” (*Mat. v. 8.*) And again, “Blessed are the poor in spirit, for theirs is the kingdom of Heaven.” (*Mat. v. 3.*) And again, “Blessed are ye which are persecuted for righteousness sake, for great is your reward in Heaven.” (*Mat. v. 11, 12.*) Observe, how every where He speaketh of Heaven, no where of earth, or of the things on the earth.¹⁷⁴ And again, “Our citizenship is in Heaven, from whence also we wait for a Saviour the Lord Jesus Christ.”

173 [“A contrast to the earthly benefits promised to the Jews in the Old Testament is foreign to the context.”—Meyer.—G.A.]

174 [“Such a specification of the ‘sphere’ and thence of the ‘spiritual character’ of the action would seem superfluous after the definite words preceding. In four other passages in this Epistle the expression, ‘in the heavens,’ seems ‘local’ (*i. 20; ii. 6; iii. 10; vi. 12.*). So the expression here must be referred as a ‘local’ predication to εὐλογία & 139· πνευματικῆ defining the ‘region’ whence the blessings of the Spirit come. Cf. *Heb. vi. 4.*”—Ellcott.—G.A.]

(Philip. iii. 20.) And again, “Not setting your mind on the things that are on the earth, but on the things which are above.” (Col. iii. 3.)

“In Christ.”

That is to say, this blessing was not by the hand of Moses, but by Christ Jesus: so that we surpass them not only in the quality of the blessings, but in the Mediator also. As moreover he saith in the Epistle to the Hebrews; “And Moses indeed was faithful in all his house as a servant, for a testimony of those things which were afterward to be spoken; but Christ as a Son over His house, whose house are we.” (Heb. iii. 5–6.)

Ver. 4. “Even as,” he proceeds, “He chose us in Him before the foundation of the world, that we should be holy and without blemish before Him in love.”

His meaning is somewhat of this sort. Through whom He hath blessed us, through Him He hath also chosen us. And He, then, it is that shall bestow upon us all those rewards hereafter. He is the very Judge that shall say, “Come, ye blessed of my Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world.” (Mat. xxv. 34.) And again, “I will that where I am they will also be with Me.” (John xvii. 24.) And this is a point which he is anxious to prove in almost all his Epistles, that ours is no novel system, but that it had thus been figured from the very first, that it is not the result of any change of purpose, but had been in fact a divine dispensation and fore-ordained. And this is a mark of great solicitude for us.

What is meant by, “He chose us in Him?” By means of the faith which is in Him, Christ, he means, happily ordered this for us before we were born; nay more, before the foundation of the world. And beautiful is that word “foundation,” as though he were pointing to the world as cast down from some vast height. Yea, vast indeed and ineffable is the height of God, so far removed not in place but in incommunicableness of nature; so wide the distance between creation and Creator! A word which heretics may be ashamed to hear.¹⁷⁵

But wherefore hath He chosen us? “That we should be holy and without a blemish before Him.” That you may not then, when you hear that “He hath chosen us,” imagine that faith alone is sufficient, he proceeds to add life and conduct. To this end, saith he, hath He chosen us, and on this condition, “that we should be holy and without blemish.” And so formerly he chose the Jews. On what terms? “This nation, saith he, hath He chosen from the rest of the nations.” (Deut. xiv. 2.) Now if men in their choices choose what is best, much more doth God. And indeed the fact of their being chosen is at once a token of the loving kindness of God, and of their moral goodness.¹⁷⁶ For by all means would he have chosen those who

175 [And an argument which can hardly be considered valid, based, as it is, on the literal and etymological meaning of a word in a passage where it is plainly used metaphorically and not literally.—The word is καταβολή.—G.A.]

176 [Τεκμήριον καὶ τῆς αὐτῶν ἀρετῆς, a proposition which will strike a Protestant reader of any denomination with surprise, to say the least. Schaff says, “Chrysostom laid great stress on free will and the co-operation of the

were approved. He hath Himself rendered us holy, but then we must continue holy. A holy man is he who is a partaker of faith; a blameless man is he who leads an irreproachable life. It is not however simply holiness and irreproachableness that He requires, but that we should appear such “before Him.” For there are holy and blameless characters, who yet are esteemed as such only by men, those who are like whited sepulchres, and like such as wear sheep’s clothing. It is not such, however, He requires, but such as the Prophet speaks of; “And according to the cleanness of my hands.” (Ps. xviii. 24.) What cleanness? That which is so “in His eyesight.” He requires that holiness on which the eye of God may look.

Having thus spoken of the good works of these, he again recurs to His grace. “In love,” saith he, “having predestinated us.” Because this comes not of any pains, nor of any good works of ours, but of love; and yet not of love alone, but of our virtue also. For if indeed of love alone, it would follow that all must be saved; whereas again were it the result of our virtue alone, then were His coming needless, and the whole dispensation. But it is the result neither of His love alone, nor yet of our virtue, but of both. “He chose us,” saith the Apostle; and He that chooseth, knoweth what it is that He chooseth. “In love,” he adds, “having foreordained us;” for virtue would never have saved any one, had there not been love. For tell me, what would Paul have profited, how would he have exhibited what he has exhibited, if God had not both called him from the beginning, and, in that He loved him, drawn him to Himself? But besides, His vouchsafing us so great privileges, was the effect of His love, not of our virtue. Because our being rendered virtuous, and believing, and coming nigh unto Him, even this again was the work of Him that called us Himself, and yet, notwithstanding, it is ours also. But that on our coming nigh unto Him, He should vouchsafe us so high privileges, as to bring us at once from a state of enmity, to the adoption of children, this is indeed the work of a really transcendent love.

Ver. 4, 5. “In love,”¹⁷⁷ saith he, “having foreordained us unto adoption as sons through Jesus Christ unto Himself.”

Do you observe how that nothing is done without Christ? Nothing without the Father? The one hath predestinated, the other hath brought us near. And these words he adds by

human will with divine grace in the work of conversion. Cassian, the founder of Semi-Pelagianism, was his pupil and appealed to his authority. We may say that in tendency and spirit he was a Catholic Semi-Pelagian or Synergist before Semi-Pelagianism was brought into a system.” *Prolegomena* p. 20. Chrysostom’s exposition of this passage is inaccurate, inconsistent, illogical and untenable. If He chose us in order that we should be holy how can holiness, or “moral goodness,” as Chrysostom says, be an antecedent condition of His choosing us? See note on ch. ii. 10.—G.A.]

177 [These words, ἐν ἀγάπῃ, are in the Revised Version and in the text of Westcott and Hort joined with what precedes, ἀγίους καὶ ἀμώμους. So also Alford. Meyer and Ellicott, however, are in accord with Chrysostom and probably right in joining ἐν ἀγάπῃ with προορίσας, following.—G.A.]

way of heightening the things which have been done, in the same way as he says also elsewhere, “And not only so, but we also rejoice in God, through our Lord Jesus Christ.” (Rom. v. 11.) For great indeed are the blessings bestowed, yet are they made far greater in being bestowed through Christ; because He sent not any servant, though it was to servants He sent, but the Only-begotten Son Himself.

Ver. 5. “According to the good pleasure,” he continues, “of His will.”

That is to say, because He earnestly willed it. This is, as one might say, His earnest desire.¹⁷⁸ For the word “good pleasure” every where means the precedent will, for there is also another will. As for example, the first will is that sinners should not perish; the second will is, that, if men become wicked, they shall perish. For surely it is not by necessity that He punishes them, but because He wills it. You may see something of the sort even in the words of Paul, where he says, “I would that all men were even as I myself.” (1 Cor. vii. 7.) And again, “I desire that the younger widows marry, bear children.” (1 Tim. v. 14.) By “good pleasure” then he means the first will, the earnest will, the will accompanied with earnest desire, as in case of us, for I shall not refuse to employ even a somewhat familiar expression, in order to speak with clearness to the simpler sort; for thus we ourselves, to express the intentness of the will, speak of acting according to our resolve. What he means to say then is this, God earnestly aims at, earnestly desires, our salvation. Wherefore then is it that He so loveth us, whence hath He such affection? It is of His goodness alone. For grace itself is the fruit of goodness. And for this cause, he saith, hath He predestinated us to the adoption of children; this being His will, and the object of His earnest wish, that the glory of His grace may be displayed. “According to the good pleasure of His will,” he proceeds,

Ver. 6. “To the praise of the glory of His grace,¹⁷⁹ which He freely bestowed on us in the Beloved.”

That the glory of His grace may be displayed, he saith, which He freely bestowed on us in the Beloved. Now then if for this He hath shown grace to us, to the praise of the glory of His grace, and that He may display His grace, let us abide therein. “To the praise of His glory.” What is this? that who should praise Him? that who should glorify Him? that we, that Angels, that Archangels, yea, or the whole creation? And what were that? Nothing. The Divine nature knoweth no want. And wherefore then would He have us praise and glorify Him? It is that our love towards Him may be kindled more fervently within us. He desireth nothing we can render; not our service, not our praise, nor any thing else, nothing but our

178 [The good pleasure of His will means, “God’s free self-determination, independent of all human desert, as regulative of the *προορίζειν*.”—Meyer.—G.A.]

179 [“As love was the motive for the divine predestination, so is the glorifying of the divine love, here designated ‘grace,’ its divinely conceived ultimate aim.”—Meyer.—G.A.]

salvation; this is His object in every thing He does. And he who praises and marvels at the grace displayed towards himself will thus be more devoted and more earnest.

“Which He freely bestowed on us,” he saith. He does not say, “Which He hath graciously given us,” (ἐχαρίσατο) but, “wherein He hath shown grace to us.” (ἐχαρίτωσεν) That is to say, He hath not only released us from our sins, but hath also made us meet objects¹⁸⁰ of His love. It is as though one were to take a leper, wasted by distemper, and disease, by age, and poverty, and famine, and were to turn him all at once into a graceful youth, surpassing all mankind in beauty, shedding a bright lustre from his cheeks, and eclipsing the sun-beams with the glances of his eyes; and then were to set him in the very flower of his age, and after that array him in purple and a diadem and all the attire of royalty. It is thus that God hath arrayed and adorned this soul of ours, and clothed it with beauty, and rendered it an object of His delight and love. Such a soul Angels desire to look into, yea, Archangels, and all the holy ones. Such grace hath He shed over us, so dear hath He rendered us to Himself. “The King,” saith the Psalmist, “shall greatly desire thy beauty.” (Ps. xlv. 11.) Think what injurious words we uttered heretofore, and look, what gracious words we utter now. Wealth has no longer charms for us, nor the things that are here below, but only heavenly things, the things that are in the heavens. When a child has outward beauty, and has besides a pervading grace in all its sayings, do we not call it a beautiful child? Such as this are the faithful. Look, what words the initiated utter! What can be more beautiful than that mouth that breathes those wondrous words, and with a pure heart and pure lips, and beaming with cheerful confidence, partaketh of such a mystical table? What more beautiful than the words, with which we renounce the service of the Devil, and enlist in the service of Christ? than both that confession which is before the Baptismal laver,¹⁸¹ and that which is after it? Let us reflect as many of us as have defiled our Baptism, and weep that we may be able again to repair it.

Ver. 6. “In the Beloved,”¹⁸² he saith, “in whom we have¹⁸³ our redemption through His Blood.”¹⁸⁴

180 [“The word does not here mean ‘to make love worthy,’ as Chrys., referring to inherent righteousness, but ‘to grant grace,’ just as [ver. 7](#) sets forth simply the work of ‘pardoning grace.’”—Meyer.—G.A.]

181 Different usages were observed as regards the Baptismal Confession. In all cases there was one before Baptism. In some places it was made three times; and in some it was written after it was spoken. vid. Bingham *Antique*, xi. 7. &c.

182 [“The designation of Christ by ὀηγαπημένοσ makes us feel the greatness of the divine grace.”—Meyer.—G.A.]

183 [“More precise elucidation of what has been said, on the basis of experience (ἐχομεν). Meyer.—G.A.]

184 [“‘Through His Blood’ is a more precise definition of the preceding ἐν ᾧ ‘in whom.’”—Meyer. “We have redemption not in His work without His Person but in His Person which with His work is a living unity.”—Olshausen in *Lange*.—G.A.]

And how is this? Not only is there this marvel, that He hath given His Son, but yet further that He hath given Him in such a way, as that the Beloved One Himself should be slain!

Yea, and more transcendent still! He hath given the Beloved for them that were hated. See, how high a price he sets upon us. If, when we hated Him and were enemies, He gave the Beloved, what will He not do now, when we are reconciled by Him through grace?

Ver. 7. “The forgiveness,” saith he, “of our trespasses.”

Again he descends from high to low: first speaking of adoption, and sanctification, and blamelessness, and then of the Passion, and in this not lowering his discourse and bringing it down from greater things to lesser, no rather, he was heightening it, and raising it from the lesser to the greater. For nothing is so great as that the blood of this Son should be shed for us. Greater this than both the adoption, and all the other gifts of grace, that He spared not even the Son. For great indeed is the forgiveness of sins, yet this is the far greater thing, that it should be done by the Lord’s blood. For that this is far greater than all, look how here again he exclaims,

Ver. 7, 8. “According to the riches of His grace, which He made to abound toward us.”

The abovementioned gifts are riches, yet is this far more so. “Which,” saith he, “He made to abound toward us.” They are both “riches” and “they have abounded,” that is to say, were poured forth in ineffable measure. It is not possible to represent in words what blessings we have in fact experienced. For riches indeed they are, abounding riches, and He hath given in abundance riches not of man but of God, so that on all hands it is impossible that they should be expressed. And to show us how He gave it to such abundance, he adds,

Ver. 8, 9. “In all wisdom and prudence,¹⁸⁵ having made known unto us the mystery of His will.”

That is to say, Making us wise and prudent, in that which is true wisdom, and that which is true prudence. Strange! what friendship! For He telleth us His secrets; the mysteries, saith he, of His will, as if one should say, He hath made known to us the things that are in His heart. For here is indeed the mystery which is full of all wisdom and prudence. For what will you mention equal to this wisdom! Those that were worth nothing, it hath discovered a way of raising them to wealth and abundance. What can equal this wise contrivance? He that was an enemy, he that was hated, he is in a moment lifted up on high. And not this only,—but, yet more, that it should be done at this particular time, this again was the work of wisdom; and that it should be done by means of the Cross. It were matter of long discourse

185 [“In all wisdom and prudence” is not to be joined, as Chrysostom does, with ‘having made known’ (γνωρίσας), because it would thus denote the attribute of God operative in the γνωρίζειν, which on account of the πάση, ‘every,’ is not admissible. Paul in making known the mystery had to set forth not the display of ‘grace in itself but as revealed.’ Hence some definition to the clause, ‘which he made to abound toward us,’ is necessary and this is the ‘in all wisdom and prudence.’—Meyer.—G.A.]

here to point out, how all this was the work of wisdom, and how He had made us wise. And therefore he repeats again the words,

“According to His good pleasure¹⁸⁶ which He purposed in Him.”¹⁸⁷

That is to say, this He desired, this He travailed for, as one might say, that He might be able to reveal to us the mystery. What mystery? That He would have man seated up on high. And this hath come to pass.

Ver. 10. “Unto a dispensation of the fulness of the times to sum up all things in Christ, the things in the heavens and the things upon the earth, even in Him.”

Heavenly things, he means to say, had been severed from earthly. They had no longer one Head. So far indeed as the system of the creation went, there was over all One God, but so far as management of one household went, this, amid the wide spread of Gentile error, was not the case, but they had been severed from His obedience.

“Unto a dispensation,” saith he, “of the fulness of the times.”

The fulness of the times, he calls it. Observe with what nicety he speaks. And whereas he points out the origination, the purpose, the will, the first intention, as proceeding from the Father, and the fulfillment and execution as effected by the agency of the Son, yet no where does he apply to him the term minister.¹⁸⁸

“He chose us,” saith he, “in Him, having foreordained us unto adoption as sons through Jesus Christ to Himself;” and, “to the praise of the glory of His grace, in whom we have redemption through His blood,—which He purposed in Him, unto a dispensation of the fulness of the times, to sum up all things in Christ;” and no where hath he called Him minister. If however the word “in” and the word “by” implies a mere minister, look what the matter comes to. Just in the very beginning of the Epistle, he used the expression “through the will of the Father.” The Father, he means, willed, the Son wrought. But neither does it follow, that because the Father willed, the Son is excluded from the willing; nor because the Son

186 [“According to His good pleasure’ belongs to γυνώσας, stating that God has accomplished the making known in pursuance of His free self-determination, cf. [ver. 5](#).”—Meyer.—G.A.]

187 [“Which He purposed in Him,’ in itself redundant, serves for the attaching of that which follows.”—Meyer. G.A.]

188 E.G. of the Angels by way of contrast, “Are they not all ministering spirits, sent forth to minister,” εἰς διακονίαν. [Hebr. i. 14](#). However S. Irenæus says, “*Ministral ei ad omnia sua progenies et figuratio sua, id est Filius et Spiritus Sanctus.*” *Hær.* iv. 17. And St. Justin Martyr applies to our Lord the word ὑπηρετεῖν. *Tryph.* 61, as scripture does the word Angel or Messenger. The distinction is obvious; our Lord may be named the Minister or Instrument of the Father in the sense in which our reason may be called the instrument of our mind, as being one with it and in it. In this sense St. Hilary calls the Son *obedientem dictis Dei Deum.* *de Trin.* v. vid. Petav. *De Trin.* ii. 7. §. 7.

wrought, that the Father is deprived of the working. But to the Father and the Son, all things are common. “For all Mine are Thine,” saith He, “and Thine are Mine.” (John xvii. 10.)

The fullness of the times,¹⁸⁹ however, was His coming. After, then, He had done everything, by the ministry both of Angels, and of Prophets, and of the Law, and nothing came of it, and it was well nigh come to this, that man had been made in vain, brought into the world in vain, nay, rather to his ruin; when all were absolutely perishing, more fearfully than in the deluge, He devised this dispensation, that is by grace; that it might not be in vain, might not be to no purpose that man was created. This he calls “the fulness of the times,” and “wisdom.” And why so? Because at that time when they were on the very point of perishing, then they were rescued.

That “He might sum up” he saith.

What is the meaning of this word, “sum up?” It is “to knit together.” Let us, however, endeavor to get near the exact import. With ourselves then, in common conversation, the word means the summing into a brief compass things spoken at length, the concise account of matters described in detail. And it has this meaning. For Christ hath gathered up in Himself the dispensations carried on through a lengthened period, that is to say, He hath cut them short. For “by finishing His word and cutting it short in righteousness,” (Rom. ix. 28.) He both comprehended former dispensations, and added others beside. This is the meaning of “summing up.”

It has also another signification; and of what nature is this? He hath set over all one and the same Head, i.e., Christ according to the flesh, alike over Angels and men. That is to say, He hath given to Angels and men one and the same government; to the one the Incarnate, to the other God the Word.¹⁹⁰ Just as one might say of a house which has some part decayed and the other sound, He hath rebuilt the house, that is to say, He has made it stronger, and laid a firmer foundation. So also here He hath brought all under one and the same Head.¹⁹¹

189 [‘Which he purposed in him’ (i.e. ‘Christ’ according to Rev. Ver. and W. and H.; but ‘God’ according to Meyer and Ellicott, who have αὐτῷ) “with a design to the dispensation of the fullness of the times, i.e., the dispensation to be established at the setting in of the fulness of the times. Gal. iv. 4; Mark i. 15.”—Meyer.—G.A.]

190 [“A distinction at variance with Scripture.”—Meyer.—G.A.]

191 [“This illustration has been again employed by Harless whose view of this passage is that the apostle speaks thus: ‘The Lord and Creator of the whole body of which heaven and earth are members, has in the restoration of one member restored the whole body; and in this consists the greatest significance of the reconciliation that it is not merely a restoration of the life of earth but a bringing back of the harmony of the universe. This concedes to the τὰ ἐπὶ τοῖς οὐρανοῖς merely an *indirect* participation in the ἀνακεφαλαίωσις and the *de facto* operation of the Messianic οἰκονομία on the heavenly world is set aside,—which appears the less admissible inasmuch as the τὰ ἐπὶ τοῖς οὐρανοῖς has the precedence (in position).”—Meyer. “Heaven and earth have become places of sin (vi. 12;) indeed heaven was the first theatre of sin when a part of the angels fell into sin and away from God (1 Tim. iii. 6; 1 John iii. 8; James ii. 19; 2 Peter ii. 4;) thence it came to earth (2 Cor. xi. 3; 1 Cor. x. 20,

For thus will an union be effected, thus will a close bond be effected, if one and all can be brought under one and the same Head, and thus have some constraining bond of union from above. Honored then as we are with so great a blessing, so high a privilege, so great loving-kindness, let us not shame our Benefactor, let us not render in vain so great grace. Let us exemplify the life of Angels, the virtue of Angels, the conversation of Angels, yea, I entreat and conjure you, that all these things turn not to our judgment, nor to our condemnation, but to our enjoyment of those good things, which may God grant we may all attain, in Christ Jesus, our Lord, with whom to the Father, together with the Holy Ghost, be glory, strength, &c. &c.



21.) Thus the state originally appointed by God and the development He wished to be without disturbance, ceased (Rom. viii. 18–24,) so that a renewing of the heavens and the earth was taken into view (2 Peter iii. 13.) The center of this renewal is Christ and His redeeming work. Here we may certainly apply what Bengel so aptly remarks on Rom. viii. 19. that *pro suo quodque genus captu*, ‘every kind according to its capacity,’ participates in this Anacephalaiosis, the evil (angels) as conquered and rejected opponents, the good angels as participating friends, the redeemed as accepted children, the rest of creation as subordinate companions.”—Braune *in Lange*. Similarly Eadie: “Not only has harmony been restored to the universe and the rupture occasioned by sin repaired, but beings still in rebellion are placed under Christ’s control, as well as the unconscious elements and spheres of nature. This summation is seen in the form of government: Jesus is universal regent.”—G.A.]

Homily II.

Chapter I. Verses 11–14

“In whom also we were made a heritage, having been foreordained according to the purpose of Him who worketh all things after the counsel of his will.”

Paul earnestly endeavors on all occasions to display the unspeakable loving-kindness of God towards us, to the utmost of his power. For that it is impossible to do so adequately, hear his own words. “O! the depth of the riches both of the wisdom and knowledge of God; how unsearchable are His judgments, and His ways past tracing out.” (Rom. xi. 33.) Still, notwithstanding, so far as it is possible, he does display it. What then is this which he is saying; “In whom also we were made a heritage, being predestinated?” Above he used the word, “He chose us;” here he saith, “we were made a heritage.” But inasmuch as a lot is a matter of chance, not of deliberate choice, nor of virtue, (for it is closely allied to ignorance and accident, and oftentimes passing over the virtuous, brings forward the worthless into notice,) observe how he corrects this very point: “having been foreordained,” saith he, “according to the purpose of Him who worketh all things.” That is to say, not merely have we been made a heritage, as, again, we have not merely been chosen, (for it is God who chooses,) and so neither have we merely been allotted, (for it is God who allots,) ¹⁹² but it is “according to a purpose.” This is what he says also in the Epistle to the Romans, (Rom. viii. 28–30.) “To them that are called according to His purpose;” and “whom He called, them He also justified, and whom He justified, them he also glorified.” Having first used the expression, “to them that are called according to a purpose,” and at the same time wishing to declare their privilege compared with the rest of mankind, he speaks also of inheritance by lot, yet so as not to divest them of free will. That point then, which more properly belongs to happy fortune, is the very point he insists upon. For this inheritance by lot depends not on virtue, but, as one might say, on fortuitous circumstances. It is as though he had said, lots were cast, and He hath chosen us; ¹⁹³ but the whole is of deliberate choice. Men predestinated, that is to say, having chosen them to Himself, He hath separated. He saw us, as it were, chosen by lot before we were born. For marvellous is the foreknowledge of God, and acquainted with all things before their beginning.

192 [Meyer against the Rev. Version and many scholars makes the meaning here to be: “In whom we were allotted the inheritance.” He shows that as πιστεύειν may take as subject when in passive voice the dative of the active construction, so also may κληροῦν which takes in the active a dative.—See also [verse 14](#), κληρονομία.—G.A.]

193 “Why calls he the grace of God by the name of lot? because in a lot there is no choice, but the will of God; for when it is said, ‘a man does, he does not,’ merits are regarded; and then there is a choice, not a lot. But when God found no merits of ours, He saved us by the lot of His will, because He willed, not because we were worthy. This is a lot,” &c. August. in *Psalm. xxx. Enar. iii. 13.*

But mark now how on all occasions he takes pains to point out, that it is not the result of any change of purpose, but that these matters had been thus modeled from the very first, so that we are in no wise inferior to the Jews in this respect; and how, in consequence, he does every thing with this view. How then is it that Christ Himself saith, “I was not sent, but unto the lost sheep of the house of Israel?” ([Mat. xv. 24.](#)) And said again to his disciples, “Go not into any way of the Gentiles, and enter not into any city of the Samaritans.” ([Mat. x. 5.](#)) And Paul again himself says, “It was necessary that the word of God should first be spoken to you. Seeing ye thrust it from you and judge yourselves unworthy of eternal life, lo, we turn to the Gentiles.” ([Acts xiii. 46.](#)) These expressions, I say, are used with this design, that no one may suppose that this work came to pass incidentally only. “According to the purpose,” he says, “of Him who worketh all things after the counsel of His will.” That is to say, He had no after workings; having modeled all things from the very first, thus he leads forward all things “according to the counsel of His will.” So that it was not merely because the Jews did not listen that He called the Gentiles, nor was it of mere necessity, nor was it on any inducement arising from them.

[Ver. 12, 13.](#) “To the end that we should be unto the praise of His glory, we who had before hoped¹⁹⁴ in Christ. In whom ye also having heard the word of the truth, the Gospel of your salvation.”

That is to say, through whom. Observe how he on all occasions speaks of Christ, as the Author of all things, and in no case gives Him the title of a subordinate agent, or a minister. And so again, elsewhere, in his Epistle to the Hebrews, he says, “that God, having of old time spoken unto the Fathers in the prophets, hath at the end of these days spoken unto us in His Son,” ([Heb. i. 1.](#)) that is “through” His Son.

“The word of truth,” he says, no longer that of the type, nor of the image.

“The Gospel of your salvation.” And well does he call it the Gospel of salvation, intimating in the one word a contrast to the law, in the other, a contrast with punishment to come. For what is the message, but the Gospel of salvation, which forbears to destroy those that are worthy of destruction.

[Ver. 14.](#) “In whom having also believed, ye were sealed with the Holy Spirit of promise, which is an earnest of our inheritance.”

Here again, the word “sealed,” is an indication of especial forecast. He does not speak of our being predestinated only, nor of our being allotted, but further, of our being sealed. For just as though one were to make those who should fall to his lot manifest, so also did God separate them for believing, and sealed them for the allotment of the things to come.

194 [Meyer’s reference of ἡμᾶς***τοὺς προηλπικότας to Jewish Christians seems precarious. It seems better to make the ἡμᾶς refer to Christians in general, the προ in προηλπικότας refer to the time before the second Advent and the καὶ ὑμεῖς to the readers. So De Wette and Theophylact.—G.A.]

You see how, in process of time, He makes them objects of wonder. So long as they were in His foreknowledge, they were manifest to no one, but when they were sealed, they became manifest, though not in the same way as we are; for they will be manifest except a few. The Israelites also were sealed, but that was by circumcision, like the brutes and reasonless creatures. We too are sealed, but it is as sons, “with the Spirit.”

But what is meant by, “with the Spirit of promise?” Doubtless it means that we have received that Spirit according to promise. For there are two promises, the one by the prophets, the other from the Son.

By the Prophets.—Hearken to the words of Joel; “I will pour out My spirit upon all flesh, and your sons and your daughters shall prophesy, your old men shall dream dreams, your young men shall see visions,” ([Joel ii. 28.](#)) And hearken again to the words of Christ; “But ye shall receive power, when the Holy Ghost is come upon you, and ye shall be my witnesses both in Jerusalem, and in all Judea, and Samaria, and unto the uttermost part of the earth.” ([Acts i. 8.](#)) And truly, the Apostle means, He ought, as God, to have been believed; however, he does not ground his affirmation upon this, but examines it like a case where man is concerned, speaking much as he does in the Epistle to the Hebrews; ([Heb. vi. 18.](#)) where he says, “That by two immutable things in which it was impossible for God to lie, we may have a strong encouragement.” Thus here also he makes the things already bestowed a sure token of the promise of those which are yet to come. For this reason he further calls it an “earnest,” (Cf. also [2 Cor. i. 22.](#)) for an earnest is a part of the whole. He hath purchased what we are most concerned in, our salvation; and hath given us an earnest in the mean while. Why then did He not give the whole at once? Because neither have we, on our part, done the whole of our work. We have believed. This is a beginning; and He too on His part hath given an earnest. When we show our faith by our works, then He will add the rest. Nay, more, He hath given yet another pledge, His own blood, and hath promised another still. In the same way as in case of war between nation and nation they give hostages: just so hath God also given His Son as a pledge of peace and solemn treaties, and, further, the Holy Spirit also which is from Him. For they, that are indeed partakers of the Spirit, know that He is the earnest of our inheritance. Such an one was Paul, who already had here a foretaste of the blessings there. And this is why he was so eager, and yearned to be released from things below, and groaned within himself. He transferred his whole mind thither, and saw every thing with different eyes. Thou hast no part in the reality, and therefore failest to understand the description. Were we all partakers of the Spirit, as we ought to be partakers, then should we behold Heaven, and the order of things that is there.

It is an earnest, however, of what? of

[Ver. 14.](#) “The redemption of God’s own possession.”

For our absolute redemption takes place then.¹⁹⁵ For now we have our life in the world, we are liable to many human accidents, and are living amongst ungodly men. But our absolute redemption will be then, when there shall be no sins, no human sufferings, when we shall not be indiscriminately mixed with all kinds of people.

At present, however, there is but an earnest, because at present we are far distant from these blessings. Yet is our citizenship not upon earth; even now we are out of the pale of the things that are here below. Yes, we are sojourners even now.

Ver. 14. “Unto the praise of His glory.”

This he adds in immediate connection. And why? Because it would serve to give those who heard it full assurance. Were it for our sake only, he means to say, that God did this, there might be some room for misgiving. But if it be for His own sake, and in order to display His goodness, he assigns, as a sort of witness, a reason why these things never possibly could be otherwise. We find the same language everywhere applied to the case of the Israelites. “Do Thou this for us for Thy Name’s sake;” (**Ps. cix. 21.**) and again, God Himself said, “I do it for Mine own sake;” (**Isa. xlviii. 11.**) and so Moses, “Do it, if for nothing else, yet for the glory of Thy Name.” This gives those who hear it full assurance; it relieves them to be told, that whatever He promises, for His own goodness’ sake He will most surely perform.

Moral. Let not the hearing, however, make us too much at our ease; for although He doth it for His own sake, yet notwithstanding He requires a duty on our part. If He says, “Them that honor Me I will honor, and they that despise Me shall be lightly esteemed,” (**1 Sam. ii. 30.**) let us reflect that there is that which He requires of us also. True, it is the praise of His glory to save those that are enemies, but those who, after being made friends, continue His friends. So that if they were to return back to their former state of enmity, all were vain and to no purpose. There is not another Baptism, nor is there a second reconciliation again, but “a certain fearful expectation of judgment which shall devour the adversaries.” (**Heb. x. 27.**) If we intend at the same time to be always at enmity with Him and yet to claim forgiveness at His hand, we shall never cease to be at enmity, and to be wanton, to grow in depravity, and to be blind to the Sun of Righteousness which has risen. Dost thou not see the ray that shall open thine eyes? render them then good and sound and quicksighted. He hath showed thee the true light; if thou shunnest it, and runnest back again into the darkness, what shall be thy excuse? What sort of allowance shall be made for thee? None from that moment. For this is a mark of unspeakable enmity. When indeed thou knewest not God, then if thou wert at enmity with Him, thou hadst, be it how it might, some excuse. But when thou hast tasted the goodness and the honey, if thou again abandonest them, and turnest to thine own vomit,

195 [“The final consummation of the redemption effected by the λύτρον of Christ (**v. 7.**) at the Parousia (**Lu. xxi. 28.**) when suffering, sin and death are wholly done away and in the glorifying of the body there sets in the δόξα of the children of God.”—Meyer.—G.A.]

what else art thou doing but bringing forward evidence of excessive hatred and contempt? 'Nay,' thou wilt say, 'but I am constrained to it by nature. I love Christ indeed, but I am constrained by nature.' If thou art under the power and force of constraint, thou wilt have allowance made; but if thou yield from indolence, not for a moment.

Now then, come, let us examine this very question, whether sins are the effect of force and constraint, or of indolence and great carelessness. The law says, "Thou shalt not kill." What sort of force, what sort of violence, is there here? Violence indeed must one use to force himself to kill, for who amongst us would as a matter of choice plunge his sword into the throat of his neighbor, and stain his hand with blood? Not one. Thou seest then that, on the contrary, sin is more properly matter of violence and constraint. For God hath implanted in our nature a charm, which binds us to love one another. "Every beast (it saith) loveth his like, and every man loveth his neighbor." ([Ecclus. xiii. 15.](#)) Seest thou that we have from our nature seeds which tend to virtue; whereas those of vice are contrary to nature? and if these latter predominate, this is but an evidence of our exceeding indolence.

Again, what is adultery? What sort of necessity is there to bring us to this? Doubtless, it will be said, the tyranny of lust. But why, tell me, should this be? What, is it not in every one's power to have his own wife, and thus to put a stop to this tyranny? True, he will say, but a sort of passion for my neighbor's wife seizes hold on me. Here the question is no longer one of necessity. Passion is no matter of necessity, no one loves of necessity, but of deliberate choice and free will. Indulgence of nature, indeed, is perhaps matter of necessity, but to love one woman rather than another is no matter of necessity. Nor is the point with you natural desire, but vanity, and wantonness, and unbounded licentiousness. For which is according to reason, that a man should have an espoused wife, and her the mother of his children, or one not acknowledged? Know ye not that it is intimacy that breeds attachment. This, therefore, is not the fault of nature. Blame not natural desire. Natural desire was bestowed with a view to marriage; it was given with a view to the procreation of children, not with a view to adultery and corruption. The laws, too, know how to make allowance for those sins which are of necessity,—or rather nothing is sin when it arises from necessity but all sin rises from wantonness. God hath not so framed man's nature as that he should have any necessity to sin, since were this the case, there would be no such thing as punishment. We ourselves exact no account of things done of necessity and by constraint, much less would God, so full of mercy and loving-kindness.

Again, what is stealing? is it matter of necessity? Yes, a man will say, because poverty causes this. Poverty, however, rather compels us to work, not to steal. Poverty, therefore, has in fact the contrary effect. Theft is the effect of idleness; whereas poverty produces usually not idleness, but a love of labor. So that this sin is the effect of indolence, as you may learn from hence. Which, I ask, is the more difficult, the more distasteful, to wander about at night without sleep, to break open houses, and walk about in the dark, and to have one's



life in one's hand, and to be always prepared for murder, and to be shivering and dead with fear; or to be attending to one's daily task, in full enjoyment of safety and security? This last is the easier task; and it is because this is easier, that the majority practise it rather than the other. Thou seest then that it is virtue which is according to nature, and vice which is against nature, in the same way as disease and health are.

What, again, are falsehood and perjury? What necessity can they possibly imply? None whatever, nor any compulsion; it is a matter to which we proceed voluntarily. We are distrusted, it will be said. True, distrusted we are, because we choose it. For we might, if we would, be trusted more upon our character, than upon our oath. Why, tell me, is it that we do not trust some, no, not on their oath, whilst we deem others trustworthy even independently of oaths.¹⁹⁶ Seest thou that there is no need of oaths in any case? 'When such an one speaks,' we say, 'I believe him, even without any oath, but thee, no, not with thy oaths.' Thus then an oath is unnecessary; and is in fact an evidence rather of distrust than of confidence. For where a man is over ready to take his oath, he does not leave us to entertain any great idea of his scrupulousness. So that the man who is most constant in his use of oaths, has on no occasion any necessity for using one, and he who never uses one on any occasion, has in himself the full benefit of its use. Some one says there is a necessity for an oath, to produce confidence; but we see that they are the more readily trusted who abstain from taking oaths.

But again, if one is a man of violence, is this a matter of necessity? Yes, he will say, because his passion carries him away, and burns within him, and does not let the soul be at rest. Man, to act with violence is not the effect of anger, but of littleness of mind. Were it the effect of anger, all men, whenever they were angry, would never cease committing acts of violence. We have anger given us, not that we may commit acts of violence on our neighbors, but that we may correct those that are in sin, that we may bestir ourselves, that we may not be sluggish. Anger is implanted in us as a sort of sting, to make us gnash with our teeth against the devil, to make us vehement against him, not to set us in array against each other. We have arms, not to make us at war amongst ourselves, but that we may employ our whole armor against the enemy. Art thou prone to anger? Be so against thine own sins: chastise thy soul, scourge thy conscience, be a severe judge, and merciless in thy sentence against thine own sins. This is the way to turn anger to account. It was for this that God implanted it within us.

But again, is plunder a matter of necessity? No, in no wise. Tell me, what manner of necessity is there to be grasping; what manner of compulsion? Poverty, a man will say, causes it, and the fear of being without common necessities. Now this is the very reason why you

196 Vid. also *Hom. ad Pop. Antioch.* vii. fin. However, in *Act Apost. Hom.* x. fin. he considers oaths allowable in order to convince the weak. St. Augustin says the same, *de Serm. Dom.* i. 51. thus accounting for St. Paul's expressions, [Rom. i. 9.](#); [1 Cor. xv. 31.](#); [2 Cor. ii. 31.](#); [Gal. i. 20.](#)

ought not to be grasping. Wealth so gotten has no security in it. You are doing the very same thing as a man would do, who, if he were asked why he laid the foundation of his house in the sand, should say, he did it because of the frost and rain. Whereas this would be the very reason why he should not lay it in the sand. They are the very foundations which the rain, and blasts, and wind, most quickly overturn. So that if thou wouldest be wealthy, never be rapacious; if thou wouldest transmit wealth to thy children, get righteous wealth, at least, if any there be that is such. Because this abides, and remains firm, whereas that which is not such, quickly wastes and perishes. Tell me, hast thou a mind to be rich, and dost thou take the goods of others? Surely this is not wealth: wealth consists in possessing what is thine own. He that is in possession of the goods of others, never can be a wealthy man; since at that rate even your very silk venders, who receive their goods as a consignment from others, would be the wealthiest and the richest of men. Though for the time, indeed, it is theirs, still we do not call them wealthy. And why forsooth? Because they are in possession of what belongs to others. For though the piece itself happens to be theirs, still the money it is worth is not theirs. Nay, and even if the money is in their hands, still this is not wealth. Now, if consignments thus given render not men more wealthy because we so soon resign them, how can those which arise from rapine render them wealthy? However, if at any rate thou desirest to be wealthy, (for the matter is not one of necessity,) what greater good is it that thou wouldest fain enjoy? Is it a longer life? Yet, surely men of this character quickly become short-lived. Oftentimes they pay as the penalty of plunder and rapaciousness, an untimely death; and not only suffer as a penalty the loss of the enjoyment of their gains, but go out of life having gained but little, and hell to boot. Oftentimes too they die of diseases, which are the fruits of self-indulgence, and of toil, and of anxiety. Fain would I understand why it is that wealth is so eagerly pursued by mankind. Why surely for this reason hath God set a limit and a boundary to our nature, that we may have no need to go on seeking wealth beyond it. For instance He hath commanded us, to clothe the body in one, or perhaps in two garments; and there is no need of any more to cover us. Where is the good of ten thousand changes of raiment, and those moth-eaten? The stomach has its appointed bound, and any thing given beyond this, will of necessity destroy the whole man. Where then is the use of your herds, and flocks, and cutting up of flesh? We require but one roof to shelter us. Where then is the use of your vast ground-plots, and costly buildings? Dost thou strip the poor, that vultures and jackdaws may have where to dwell? And what a hell do not these things deserve? Many are frequently raising edifices that glisten with pillars and costly marbles, in places which they never so much as saw. What scheme is there indeed that they have not adopted? Yet neither themselves reap the benefit, nor any one else. The desolateness does not allow them to get away thither; and yet not even thus do they desist. You see that these things are not done for profit's-sake, but in all these cases folly, and absurdity, and vainglory, is the motive. And this, I beseech you to avoid, that we may be enabled to avoid

also every other evil, and may obtain those good things which are promised to them that love Him, in our Lord Jesus Christ, with whom to the Father, together with the Holy Ghost, be glory, strength, honor forever. Amen.

Homily III.

Chapter I. Verses 15–20

“For this cause I also, having heard of the faith in the Lord Jesus, which is among you, and which ye show toward all the saints, cease not to give thanks for you, making mention of you in my prayers; that the God of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of glory, may give unto you a spirit of wisdom and revelation in the knowledge of Him: having the eyes of your heart enlightened; that ye may know what is the hope of His calling, what the riches of the glory of His inheritance in the saints, and what the exceeding greatness of His power to us-ward who believe, according to that working of the strength of His might, which He wrought in Christ, when He raised Him from the dead.”

Never was anything equal to the yearnings of the Apostle, never anything like the sympathy and the affectionateness of the blessed Paul, who made his every prayer in behalf of whole cities and peoples, and writes the same to all,¹⁹⁷ “I thank my God for you, making mention of you in my prayers.” Think how many he had in his mind, whom it were a labor so much as to remember; how many he made mention of in his prayers, giving thanks to God for them all as though he himself had received the greatest blessing.

“Wherefore,” he says, i.e., because of what is to come,¹⁹⁸ because of the good things that are laid up in store for them who rightly believe and live. And it is meet then to give thanks to God both for all the things which mankind have received at His hands, both heretofore and hereafter; and meet to give Him thanks also for the faith of them that believe.

“Having heard,” saith he, “of the faith in the Lord Jesus which is among you, and which ye show¹⁹⁹ toward all the saints.”

He on all occasions knits together and combines faith and love, a glorious pair; nor does he mention the saints of that country only, but all.

“I cease not to give thanks for you, making mention of you in my prayers.”

What is thy prayer, and what thy entreaty? It is

“That the God of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of glory, may give unto you a spirit of wisdom and revelation.”²⁰⁰ Two things he requires them to understand, as it is their duty

197 [Rom. i. 9; 1 Cor. i. 4; Philip. i. 3, 4; Col. i. 3; 1 Thes. i. 2.—G.A.]

198 [“On the contrary this ‘wherefore,’ διὰ τοῦτο, refers to what precedes ver. 13, 14, ‘because this is the case that ye too are in Christ and have been sealed with the Spirit.’ So Theophylact.”—Meyer.—G.A.]

199 [The word ‘love,’ ἀγάπην, which gets into the Auth. Ver. from some inferior mss., is omitted by Aleph. A. B. W. and H. Rev. Vers. cf. Col. i. 4.—G.A.]

200 [Chrysostom’s hasty and superficial treatment of this great passage would seem to justify the language of Dr. Newman in his preface to the Oxford translation of these homilies on Ephesians. There are “imperfections in their composition which in the opinion of some critics argued the absence of that comparative leisure which he enjoyed at Antioch.” Schaff also says: “His life in Constantinople was too much disturbed to leave him quiet leisure for preparation.” This, however, in referring to his Homilies on Acts. *Prolegomena* p. 19.—G.A.]

to understand them; to what blessings they are called, and how they have been released from their former state. He says, however, himself, that these points are three. How then are they three? In order that we may understand touching the things to come; for from the good things laid up for us, we shall know His ineffable and surpassing riches, and from understanding who we were, and how we believed, we shall know His power and sovereignty, in turning again to Himself those who had been so long time estranged from Him, “For the weakness of God is stronger than men.” (1 Cor. i. 25.) Inasmuch as it is by the self-same power by which He raised Christ from the dead, that He hath also drawn us to Himself. Nor is that power limited to the resurrection, but far exceeds it.

Ver. 21, 22. “And made Him to sit at His right hand, in the Heavenly places, far above all rule and authority, and power and dominion, and every name that is named: and He put all things in subjection under His feet, and gave Him to be Head over all things to the Church, which is His body, the fulness of Him that filleth all in all.”

Vast indeed are the mysteries and secrets of which He hath made us partakers. And these it is not possible for us to understand otherwise than by being partakers of the Holy Ghost, and by receiving abundant grace. And it is for this reason that Paul prays. “The Father of glory,” that is, He that hath given us vast blessings, for he constantly addresses Him according to the subject he is upon, as, for instance, when he says, “The Father of mercies and God of all comfort.” (2 Cor. i. 3.) And, again, the Prophet says, “The Lord is my strength and my might.” (Ps. xviii. 1.)

“The Father of glory.”

He has no name by which he may represent these things, and on all occasions calls them “glory,” which is in fact, with us, the name and appellation of every kind of magnificence. Mark, he says, the Father of glory; (cf. Acts vii. 2.) but of Christ the God.²⁰¹ What then? Is the Son inferior to the glory? No, there is no one, not even a maniac, would say so.

“May give unto you,”

That is, may raise and wing your understanding, for it is not possible otherwise to understand these things. “For the natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God; for they are foolishness unto him.” (1 Cor. ii. 14.) So then, there is need of spiritual “wisdom,” that we may perceive things spiritual, that we may see things hidden. That Spirit “revealeth” all things. He is going to set forth the mysteries of God. Now the knowledge of the mysteries of God, the Spirit alone comprehends, who also searcheth the deep things of Him. It is not said, “that Angel, or Archangel, or any other created power, may give,” that is, confer upon you a spiritual gift. And if this be of revelation, then is the discovery of arguments consequently vain. For he that hath learned God, and knoweth God, shall no longer dispute concerning any thing. He will not say, This is impossible, and That is possible, and How

201 [Compare Mat. xxvii. 46; John xx. 17; Rev. iii. 12.—G.A.]

did the other thing come to pass? If we learn God, as we ought to know Him; if we learn God from Him from whom we ought to learn Him, that is from the Spirit Himself; then shall we no longer dispute concerning any thing. And hence it is that he says,

“Having the eyes of your heart enlightened in the knowledge of Him.”²⁰²

He that hath learned what God is, will have no misgiving about His promises, and disbelief about what hath been already brought to pass. He prays, then, that there may be given them “a spirit of wisdom and revelation.” Yet still he also establishes it, as far as he can himself, by arguments, and from “already” existing facts. For, whereas he was about to mention some things which had already come to pass, and others which had not as yet happened; he makes those which have been brought to pass, a pledge of those which have not: in some such way, I mean, as this,

“That ye may know,” saith he, “what is the hope of His calling.”

It is as yet, he means, hidden, but not so to the faithful.

“And,” again, “what is the riches of the glory of His inheritance in the saints.”²⁰³

This too is as yet hidden.

But what is clear? that through His power we have believed that He hath raised Christ. For to persuade souls, is a thing far more miraculous than to raise a dead body. I will endeavor to make this clear. Hearken then. Christ said to the dead, “Lazarus, come forth,” ([John xi. 43.](#)) and straightway he obeyed. Peter said, “Tabitha, arise,” ([Acts ix. 40.](#)) and she did not refuse. He Himself shall speak the word at the last day, and all shall rise, and that so quickly, that “they which are yet alive, shall in no wise precede them that are fallen asleep,” ([1 Thess. iv. 15.](#)) and all shall come to pass, all run together “in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye.” ([1 Cor. xv. 52.](#)) But in the matter of believing, it is not thus, but how is it? Hearken then to Him again, how He saith, “How often would I have gathered thy children together, and ye would not.” ([Matt. xxiii. 37.](#)) You perceive that this last is the more difficult. Accordingly, it is upon this that he builds up the whole argument; because by human calculations it is far more difficult to influence the choice, than to work upon nature. And the reason is this, it is because He would thus have us become good of our own will. Thus with good reason does he say,²⁰⁴

202 [“The words, ‘in the knowledge of Him,’ ἐν ἐπι γνῶσει αὐτοῦ, are not to be joined with the words ‘having your heart enlightened,’ as Chrysostom here, which entirely destroys the paralellism and symmetry of the sentence, but with the words, may give you a spirit of wisdom, etc., (in the knowledge of Him).”—Meyer and Ellicott.—G.A.]

203 [“That ye may know what a great and glorious hope is given to the man whom God has called to the Kingdom of the Messiah; and that ye may know what is the object of that hope, namely, the riches of the glory of the inheritance which He gives; and that ye may know that by which this hope is to be realized, namely, the infinite power of God as shown in the resurrection and exaltation of Jesus Christ.”—Meyer.—G.A.]

204 Ἐχόντας.

“The exceeding greatness of His power to us-ward who believe.”

Yes, when Prophets had availed nothing, nor Angels, nor Archangels, when the whole creation, both visible and invisible, had failed, (the visible lying before us, and without any power to guide us, and much also which is invisible,) then He ordered His own coming, to show us that it was a matter which required Divine power.

“The riches of the glory,”

That is, the unutterable glory; for what language shall be adequate to express that glory of which the saints shall then be partakers? None. But verily there is need of grace in order that the understanding may perceive it, and admit even so much as at least one little ray. Some things indeed they knew even before; now he was desirous that they should learn more, and know it more clearly. Seest thou how great things He hath wrought? He hath raised up Christ. Is this a small thing? But look again. He hath set Him at His right hand. And shall any language then be able to represent this? Him that is of the earth, more mute than the fishes, and made the sport of devils, He hath in a moment raised up on high. Truly this is indeed the “exceeding greatness of His power.” And behold, whither He hath raised Him.

“In the heavenly places;”

He hath made Him far above all created nature, far above all rule and authority.

“Far above all rule,” he saith.

Need then indeed is there of the Spirit, of an understanding wise in the knowledge of Him. Need then is there indeed of revelation. Reflect, how vast is the distance between the nature of man and of God. Yet from this vile estate hath He exalted Him to that high dignity. Nor does He mount by degrees, first one step, then another, then a third. Amazing! He does not simply say, “above,” but, “far above;” for God is above those powers which are above. And thither then hath He raised Him, Him that is one of us, brought Him from the lowest point to the supremest sovereignty, to that beyond which there is no other honor. Above “all” principality, he says, not, i.e., over one and not over another, but over all,

“Rule and authority and power, and dominion, and every name that is named.”

Whatever there be in Heaven, He has become above all. And this is said of Him that was raised from the dead which is worthy of our admiration; for of God the Word, it cannot possibly be, because what insects are in comparison of man, this the whole creation is in comparison of God. If all mankind are to be counted as spittle and were counted as the turn of a balance, consider the invisible powers as insects. But of Him that was one of us, this is great and surprising indeed. For He raised Him up from the very lowest parts of the earth. If all the nations are as a drop, how small a portion then of that drop is a single man! Yet Him hath He made higher than all things, “not only in this world, but also in that which is to come.” Therefore powers there are whose names are to us unintelligible, and unknown.

“And He put all things in subjection under His feet.”

Not simply so set Him above them as to be honored above them, nor by way of comparison with them, but so that He should sit over them as His slaves. Amazing! Awful indeed are these things; every created power hath been made the slave of man by reason of God the Word dwelling in Him.²⁰⁵ For it is possible for a man to be above others, without having others in subjection, but only as preferred before them. But here it is not so. No, “He put all things in subjection under His feet.” And not simply put them in subjection, but in the most abject subjection, that below which there can be none. Therefore he adds, “under His feet.”

“And gave Him to be Head over all things to the Church.”

Amazing again, whither hath He raised the Church? as though he were lifting it up by some engine, he hath raised it up to a vast height, and set it on yonder throne; for where the Head is, there is the body also. There is no interval to separate between the Head and the body; for were there a separation, then were it no longer a body, then were it no longer a head. “Over all things,” he says. What is meant by “over all things?” He hath suffered neither Angel nor Archangel nor any other being to be above Him. But not only in this way hath He honored us, in exalting that which is of ourselves, but also in that He hath prepared the whole race in common to follow Him, to cling to Him, to accompany His train.

“Which is His body.”

In order then that when you hear of the Head you may not conceive the notion of supremacy only, but also of consolidation, and that you may behold Him not as supreme Ruler only, but as Head of a body.

“The fulness of Him that filleth all in all” he says.

As though this were not sufficient to show the close connection and relationship, what does he add? “The fullness of Christ is the Church.” And rightly, for the complement of the head is the body, and the complement of the body is the head. Mark what great arrangement Paul observes, how he spares not a single word, that he may represent the glory of God. “The, complement,” he says, i.e., the head is, as it were, filled up by the body, because the body is composed and made up of all its several parts, and he introduces Him as having need of each single one and not only of all in common and together; for unless we be many, and one be the hand, and another the foot, and another some other member, the whole body is not filled up. It is by all then that His body is filled up. Then is the head filled up, then is the body rendered perfect, when we are all knit together and united. Perceivest thou

205 Διὰ τὸν ἐνοικοῦντα Θεὸν Λόγον. The ‘inhabitation’ of the Word in our flesh, was a favorite form of speech with the Nestorians, who thereby insinuated that the Word dwelt in ‘a’ man, or denied Christ’s unity of person. Yet the phrase is strictly orthodox, as being derived from [John i. 14](#), and is especially maintained by Cyril, the antagonist of Nestorius, in order to denote that God was in human ‘nature,’ vid. Cyril *in Schol.* 25. Theodor. *Eran.* ii. Ephræm. Antioch. apud Phot. 229.

then the “riches of the glory of His inheritance? the exceeding greatness of His power towards them that believe? the hope of your calling?”

Moral. Let us reverence our Head, let us reflect of what a Head we are the body,—a Head, to whom all things are put in subjection. According to this representation we ought to be better, yea, than the very angels, and greater than the Archangels, in that we have been honored above them all. God “took not hold of Angels,” as he says in writing to the Hebrews, “but He took hold of the seed of Abraham.” (Heb. ii. 16.) He took hold of neither principality nor power, nor dominion, nor any other authority, but He took up our nature, and made it to sit on His right hand. And why do I say, hath made it sit? He hath made it His garment,²⁰⁶ and not only so, but hath put all things in subjection under His feet. How many sorts of death supposest thou? How many souls? ten thousand? yea, and ten thousand times told, but nothing equal to it wilt thou mention. Two things He hath done, the greatest things. He hath both Himself descended to the lowest depth of humiliation, and hath raised up man to the height of exaltation. He saved him by His blood. He spoke of the former first, how that He so greatly humbled Himself. He speaks now of what is stronger than that—a great thing, the crown of all. Surely, even had we been counted worthy of nothing, it were enough. Or, had we been counted worthy even of this honor, it were enough, without the slaying of the Son. But where there are the two, what power of language must it not transcend and surpass? The very resurrection is not great, when I reflect on these things. It is of Him that he says, “The God of our Lord Jesus Christ,” not of God the Word.

Let us feel awed at the closeness of our relation, let us dread lest any one should be cut off from this body, lest any one should fall from it, lest any one should appear unworthy of it. If any one were to place a diadem about our head, a crown of gold, should we not do every thing that we might seem worthy of the lifeless jewels? But now it is not a diadem that is about our head, but, what is far greater, Christ is made our very Head, and yet we pay no regard to it. Yet Angels reverence that Head, and Archangels, and all those powers above. And shall we, which are His body, be awed neither on the one account nor the other? And what then shall be our hope of salvation? Conceive to yourself the royal throne, conceive the excess of the honor. This, at least if we chose, might more avail to startle us, yea, even than hell itself. For, even though hell were not, that we having been honored with such an honor, should be found base and unworthy of it, what punishment, what vengeance must not this carry with it? Think near whom thy Head is seated, (this single consideration is amply sufficient for any purpose whatever,) on whose right hand He is placed, far above all

206 Ἰμάτιον. Thus Cyril Alex. speaks of Christ as ‘clothed about’ with our nature. *In Success.* 2 p. 142. Vid. also Epiph. *Ancor.* §. 95. Augustine *in Psalm* 130. 10. This, as well as other theological terms, was abused by heretical disputants; as if it implied either that the manhood of Christ might be put off from His divine nature, or that it was a mere accidental and unsubstantial medium of manifesting it.

principality, and power, and might. Yet is the body of this Head trampled on by the very devils. Nay, God forbid it should be thus; for were it thus, such a body could be His body no longer. Thy own head the more respectable of thy servants reverence, and dost thou subject thy body to be the sport of them that insult it? How sore punishment then shalt thou not deserve? If a man should bind the feet of the emperor with bonds and fetters, will he not be liable to the extremity of punishment? Dost thou expose the whole body to fierce monsters, and not shudder?

However, since our discourse is concerning the Lord's body, come, and let us turn our thoughts to it, even that which was crucified, which was nailed, which is sacrificed.²⁰⁷ If thou art the body of Christ, bear the Cross, for He bore it: bear spitting, bear buffetings, bear nails. Such was that Body; that Body "did no sin, neither was guile found in His mouth." (1 Pet. ii. 22.) His hands did every thing for the benefit of them that needed, His mouth uttered not a word of those things which are not convenient. He heard them say, "Thou hast a devil," and He answered nothing.

Further, our discourse is concerning this Body, and as many of us as partake of that Body and taste of that Blood, are partaking of that which is in no wise different from that Body, nor separate. Consider that we taste of that Body that sitteth above, that is adored by Angels, that is next to the Power that is incorruptible. Alas! how many ways to salvation are open to us! He hath made us His own body, He hath imparted to us His own body, and yet not one of these things turns us away from what is evil. Oh the darkness, the depth of the abyss, the apathy! "Set your mind," saith he, "on the things that are above, where Christ is, seated on the right hand of God." (Col. iii. 1.) And after all this, some set their affections upon money, or licentiousness, others are carried captive by their passions!

Do ye not see, that even in our own body, when any part is superfluous and useless, it is cut off, is cut away? It is of no use that it has belonged to the body, when it is mutilated, when it is mortified, when it is decayed, when it is detrimental to the rest. Let us not then be too confident, because we have been once made members of this body. If this body of ours, though but a natural body, nevertheless suffers amputation, what dreadful evil shall it not undergo, if the moral principle should fail? When the body partakes not of this natural food, when the pores are stopped up, then it mortifies; when the ducts are closed, then it is palsied. So is it with us also, when we stop our ears, our soul becomes palsied; when we partake not of the spiritual food, when, instead of corrupt bodily humors, evil dispositions impair us, all these things engender disease, dangerous disease, disease that wastes. And then there will be need of that fire, there will be need of that cutting asunder. For Christ cannot endure that we should enter into the bride-chamber with such a body as this. If He



207 Ουομένου.

led away, and cast out the man that was clothed in filthy garments, what will He not do unto the man who attaches filth to the body; how will He not dispose of him?

I observe many partaking of Christ's Body lightly and just as it happens, and rather from custom and form, than consideration and understanding. When, saith a man, the holy season of Lent sets in, whatever a man may be, he partakes of the mysteries, or, when the day of the Lord's Epiphany²⁰⁸ comes. And yet it is not the Epiphany, nor is it Lent, that makes a fit time for approaching, but it is sincerity and purity of soul. With this, approach at all times; without it, never. "For as often," (1 Cor. xi. 26.) saith he, "as ye do this, ye proclaim the Lord's death," i.e., "ye make a remembrance of the salvation that has been wrought for you, and of the benefits which I have bestowed." Consider those who partook of the sacrifices under the old Covenant, how great abstinence did they practise? How did they not conduct themselves? What did they not perform? They were always purifying themselves. And dost thou, when thou drawest nigh to a sacrifice, at which the very Angels tremble, dost thou measure the matter by the revolutions of seasons? and how shalt thou present thyself before the judgment-seat of Christ, thou who presumest upon His body with polluted hands and lips? Thou wouldest not presume to kiss a king with an unclean mouth, and the King of heaven dost thou kiss with an unclean soul? It is an outrage. Tell me, wouldest thou choose to come to the Sacrifice with unwashed hands? No, I suppose, not. But thou wouldest rather choose not to come at all, than come with soiled hands. And then, thus scrupulous as thou art in this little matter, dost thou come with soiled soul, and thus dare to touch it? And yet the hands hold it but for a time, whereas into the soul it is dissolved entirely. What, do ye not see the holy vessels so thoroughly cleansed all over, so resplendent? Our souls ought to be purer than they, more holy, more brilliant. And why so? Because those vessels are made so for our sakes. They partake not of Him that is in them, they perceive Him not. But we do;—yes, verily. Now then, thou wouldest not choose to make use of a soiled vessel, and dost thou approach with a soiled soul? Observe the vast inconsistency of the thing. At the other times ye come not, no, not though often ye are clean; but at Easter, however flagrant an act ye may have committed, ye come. Oh! the force of custom and of prejudice! In vain is the daily Sacrifice,²⁰⁹ in vain do we stand before the Altar; there is no one to partake. These things I am saying, not to induce you to partake any how, but that ye should render yourselves worthy to partake. Art thou not worthy of the Sacrifice, nor of the participation?

208 This was the great festival of the Greek Church, being in remembrance of our Lord's Baptism, and, as it would appear, of His birth inclusively. The festival of Christmas, which had been in use in the West from an earlier date, was introduced at Antioch A.D. 376, with much opposition. Chrysostom, A.D. 387, urges its due celebration in his *Hom. de Beato Philogon*, and *Serm. in Diem Natal. J. C.*

209 [On Chrysostom's view of the eucharistic sacrifice, see *Prolegomena*, p. 21, note.—G.A.]

If so, then neither art thou of the prayer. Thou hearest the herald,²¹⁰ standing, and saying, “As many as are in penitence, all pray.”²¹¹ As many as do not partake, are in penitence. If thou art one of those that are in penitence, thou oughtest not to partake; for he that partakes not, is one of those that are in penitence. Why then does he say, “Depart, ye that are not qualified to pray,” whilst thou hast the effrontery to stand still? But no, thou art not of that number, thou art of the number of those who are qualified to partake, and yet art indifferent about it, and regardest the matter as nothing.

Look, I entreat: a royal table is set before you, Angels minister at that table, the King Himself is there, and dost thou stand gaping?²¹² Are thy garments defiled, and yet dost thou make no account of it?—or are they clean? Then fall down and partake. Every day He cometh in to see the guests, and converseth with them all. Yes, at this moment is he speaking to your conscience; “Friends, how stand ye here, not having on a wedding garment?” He said not, Why didst thou sit down? no, before he sat down, He declared him to be unworthy, so much as to come in. He saith not, “Why didst thou sit down to meat,” but, “Why camest thou in?” And these are the words that He is at this very moment addressing to one and all of us that stand here with such shameless effrontery. For every one, that partaketh not of the mysteries, is standing here in shameless effrontery. It is for this reason, that they which are in sins are first of all put forth; for just as when a master is present at his table, it is not right that those servants who have offended him should be present, but they are sent out of the way: just so also here when the sacrifice is brought forth, and Christ, the Lord’s sheep, is sacrificed; when thou hearest the words, “Let us pray together,” when thou beholdest the curtains drawn up,²¹³ then imagine that the Heavens are let down from above, and that the Angels are descending!

As then it is not meet that any one of the uninitiated be present, so neither is it that one of them that are initiated, and yet at the same time defiled. Tell me, suppose any one were invited to a feast, and were to wash his hands, and sit down, and be all ready at the table,

210 i.e. the Deacon, Αθανάσιος προστάξας διακόνω κηρύξαι εὐχὴν κ. τ. λ. Socr. *Hist.* ii. 11. id qu. ἀναγινώσκειν, Athan. *de fug* 24.

211 Vid. Bingham. *Antiqu.* xiii. 2. and xiv. 5. [The text here seems to be corrupt, Field’s text is, “as many as are in penitence, all pray,” (δεήθητε πάντες) which is evidently inconsistent with the context. The text should probably be, “As many as are in penitence, depart; as many as are not in penitence, pray all.” So Field suggests in a note saying, *Locus corruptus videtur, sic fortasse redintegrandus*: ὅσοι ἐν μετανοίᾳ 139· ἀπέλθετε, ὅσοι μὴ ἐν μετανοίᾳ δεήθητε πάντες.—G.A.]

212 Vid. Bingham. *Antiqu.* xv. 2.

213 ἀμφιθύρα, curtains before the choir or altar, vid. Chrysost. *in Matt. Hom.* 84. *fin.* where, however, it has not the ecclesiastical sense, Epiphanius. *Epist.* 51. 9. *apud Hieron.*, ed. Vallars. where the curtain had a figure of Christ or some Saint, (to which Epiphanius objects) vid. also Evagr. *Hist.* vi. 21.

and after all refuse to partake; is he not insulting the man who invited him? were it not better for such an one never to have come at all? Now it is just in the same way that thou hast come here. Thou hast sung the Hymn²¹⁴ with the rest: thou hast declared thyself to be of the number of them that are Worthy, by not departing with them that are unworthy. Why stay, and yet not partake of the table? I am unworthy, thou wilt say. Then art thou also unworthy of that communion thou hast had in prayers. For it is not by means of the offerings only, but also by means of those canticles that the Spirit descendeth all around. Do we not see our own servants, first scouring the table with a sponge, and cleaning the house, and then setting out the entertainment? This is what is done by the prayers, by the cry of the herald. We scour the Church, as it were, with a sponge, that all things may be set out in a pure church, that there may be “neither spot nor wrinkle.” (Eph. v. 27.) Unworthy, indeed, both our eyes of these sights, and unworthy are our ears! “And if even a beast,” it is said, “touch the mountain, it shall be stoned.” (Ex. xix. 13.) Thus then they were not worthy so much as to set foot on it, and yet afterwards they both came near, and beheld where God had stood. And thou mayest, afterwards, come near, and behold: when, however, He is present, depart. Thou art no more allowed to be here than the Catechumen is. For it is not at all the same thing never to have reached the mysteries, and when thou hast reached them, to stumble at them and despise them, and to make thyself unworthy of this thing. One might enter upon more points, and those more awful still; not however to burden your understanding, these will suffice. They who are not brought to their right senses with these, certainly will not be with more.

That I may not then be the means of increasing your condemnation, I entreat you, not to forbear coming, but to render yourselves worthy both of being present, and of approaching. Tell me, were any king to give command and to say, “If any man does this, let him partake of my table;” say, would ye not do all ye could to be admitted? He hath invited us to heaven, to the table of the great and wonderful King, and do we shrink and hesitate, instead of hastening and running to it? And what then is our hope of salvation? We cannot lay the blame on our weakness; we cannot on our nature. It is indolence and nothing else that renders us unworthy.

So far have I spoken of myself. But may He that pricketh the heart, He that giveth the Spirit of compunction, pierce your hearts, and plant the seeds in the depth of them, that so through His fear ye may conceive, and bring forth the spirit of salvation, and come near with boldness. For, “thy children,” it is said, “are like olive plants round about thy table.” (Ps. cxxviii. 3.) O, then, let there be nothing old, nothing wild, nothing harsh. For of such sort are the young plants that are fit for fruit, for the beautiful fruit, fruit I mean of the olive-tree. And thriving they are, so as all to be round about the table, and come together here,

214 The Angelic Hymn, Holy, Holy, Holy, vid. Chrysost. in 2 Cor. Hom. 18. Cyril. Hieros. Myst. v. 6.

not in vain or by chance, but with fear and reverence. For thus shall ye behold with boldness even Christ Himself in heaven, and shall be counted worthy of that heavenly kingdom, which may God grant we may all attain, in Jesus Christ, our Lord with whom to the Father, together with the Holy Spirit, be glory, might, honor, now and ever, and for ages of ages. Amen.

Homily IV.

Chapter II. Verses 1-3

“And you did He quicken, when ye were dead through your trespasses and sins, wherein aforetime ye walked, according to the course of this world, according to the prince of the power of the air, of the spirit that now worketh in the sons of disobedience; among whom we also all once lived, in the lusts of our flesh, doing the desires of the flesh, and of the mind; and were by nature children of wrath even as the rest.”

There is, we know, a corporal, and there is also a spiritual, dying.²¹⁵ Of the first it is no crime to partake, nor is there any peril in it, inasmuch as there is no blame attached to it, for it is a matter of nature, not of deliberate choice. It had its origin in the transgression of the first-created man, and thenceforward in its issue it passed into a nature, and, at all events, will quickly be brought to a termination; whereas this spiritual dying, being a matter of deliberate choice, has criminality, and has no termination. Observe then how Paul, having already shown how exceedingly great a thing it is, in so much that to heal a deadened soul is a far greater thing than to raise the dead, so now again lays it down in all its real greatness.

“And you,” saith he “when ye were dead through your trespasses and sins, wherein aforetime ye walked according to the course of this world, according to the prince of the power of the air, of the spirit that now worketh in the sons of disobedience.” You observe the gentleness of Paul, and how on all occasions he encourages the hearer, not bearing too hard upon him. For whereas he had said, Ye have arrived at the very last degree of wickedness, (for such is the meaning of becoming dead,) that he may not excessively distress them,²¹⁶ (because men are put to shame when their former misdeeds are brought forward, cancelled though they be, and no longer attended with danger,) he gives them, as it were, an accomplice, that it may not be supposed that the work is all their own, and that accomplice a powerful one. And who then is this? The Devil. He does much the same also in the Epistle to the Corinthians, where, after saying, “Be not deceived, neither fornicators, nor idolaters,” (1 Cor. vi. 9.) and after enumerating all the other vices, and adding in conclusion, “shall inherit the kingdom of God;” he then adds, “and such were some of you;” he does not say absolutely, “ye were,” but “some of you were,” that is, thus in some sort were ye. Here the heretics attack us. They tell us that these expressions (“prince of all the power of the air,” etc.) are used with

215 [The Commentators, except Meyer, refer the νεκρὸς to spiritual death, as Chrysostom does. Meyer refers it to “eternal death, the eternal condemnation,” and says the νεκρὸς is proleptic. He distinctly says it does not refer to physical death, though Ellicott represents him as saying that it does.—G.A.]

216 [Paul’s motive in this passage is probably not what Chrysostom says, but, on the contrary, to show how desperately bad their state was.—G.A.]

reference to God, and letting loose their unbridled tongue, they fit these things to God, which belong to the Devil alone. How then are we to put them to silence? By the very words they themselves use; for, if He is righteous, as they themselves allow, and yet hath done these things, this is no longer the act of a righteous being, but rather of a being most unrighteous and corrupted; and corrupted God cannot possibly be.

Further, why does he call the Devil “the prince” of the world? Because nearly the whole human race has surrendered itself to him and all are willingly and of deliberate choice his slaves. And to Christ, though He promises unnumbered blessings, not any one so much as gives any heed; whilst to the Devil, though promising nothing of the sort, but sending them on to hell, all yield themselves. His kingdom then is in this world, and he has, with few exceptions, more subjects and more obedient subjects than God, in consequence of our indolence.

“According to the power,” saith he, “of the air, of the spirit.”²¹⁷

Here again he means, that Satan occupies the space under Heaven, and that the incorporeal powers are spirits of the air, under his operation. For that his kingdom is of this age, i.e., will cease with the present age, hear what he says at the end of the Epistle; “Our wrestling is not against flesh and blood, but against the principalities, against powers, against the world rulers of this darkness;” (Eph. vi. 12.) where, lest when you hear of world-rulers you should therefore say that the Devil is uncreated, he elsewhere (Gal. i. 4.) calls a perverse time, “an evil world,” not of the creatures. For he seems to me, having had dominion beneath the sky, not to have fallen from his dominion, even after his transgression.

“That now worketh,” he says, “in the sons of disobedience.”

You observe that it is not by force, nor by compulsion, but by persuasion, he wins us over; “disobedience” or “untractableness” is his word, as though one were to say, by guile and persuasion he draws all his votaries to himself. And not only does he give them a word of encouragement by telling them they have an associate, but also by ranking himself with them, for he says,

“Among whom we also all once lived.”

“All,” because he cannot say that any one is excepted.

“In the lusts of our flesh, doing the desires of the flesh, and of the mind, and were by nature children of wrath, even as the rest.”

That is, having no spiritual affections. Yet, lest he should slander the flesh, or lest it should be supposed that the transgression was not great, observe how he guards the matter,

“Doing,” he says, “the desires of the flesh and of the mind.”

217 [“The word ἀήρ which is commonly confined to the region of the air, may be extended to all that supra-terrestrial but sub-celestial region which seems to be, if not the abode, at least the haunt of evil spirits, cf. Job i. 7.”—Ellicott.—G.A.]

That is, the pleasurable passions. We provoked God to anger, he saith, we provoked Him to wrath, we were wrath, and nothing else. For as he who is a child of man is by nature man, so also were we children of wrath²¹⁸ even as others; i.e., no one was free, but we all did things worthy of wrath.

Ver. 4. “But God, being rich in mercy.”

Not merely merciful, but rich in mercy; as it is said also in another place; “In the multitude of thy mercies.” (Ps. lxxix. 17.) And again, “Have mercy upon me, according to the multitude of thy tender mercies.” (Ps. li. 1.)

Ver. 4. “For His great love,²¹⁹ wherewith He loved us.”

Why did He love us? For these things are not deserving of love, but of the sorest wrath, and punishment. And thus it was of great mercy.

Ver. 5. “Even when we were dead through our trespasses He quickened us together with Christ.”

Again is Christ introduced, and it is a matter well worthy of our belief, because if the Firstfruits live, so do we also. He hath quickened both Him, and us. Seest thou that all this is said of Christ incarnate? Beholdest thou “the exceeding greatness of His power to us-ward who believe?” (Eph. i. 19.) Them that were dead, them that were children of wrath, them hath he quickened. Beholdest thou “the hope of his calling?”

Ver. 6. “He raised us up with Him and made us sit with Him.”

218 Chrysostom understands the words according to the order in which they stand in the original text, ἡμεν τέκνα φύσει ὀργῆς, “we were natural” or “genuine children of wrath,” referring “by nature” not to “we were” but to “children.” To say that we were by “nature” under wrath, might have seemed all one with saying that God created Adam under wrath. When then we so speak, we must take the word “nature” in S. Augustine’s sense, not to mean our literal nature, but “as referring to our birth.” *“In eo quod dixi, ‘naturâ esse malæ animæ nullo modo queunt,’ si quaeritur quomodo accipiamus quod ait Apostolus, ‘Fuimus et nos naturâ filii iræ, &c.’” respondemus, naturam in his verbis meis me intelligi voluisse illam, quæ proprie natura dicitur, in quâ sine vitiis creati sumus. Nam ista propter originem natura appellatur, quæ origo utique habet vitium, quod est contra naturam.* August. *Retract.* i. 15. §. 6. vid, also *de Lib. Arb.* iii. 54.] “That man is a born subject of wrath from birth, an object of the divine condemnation, is not at all a doctrine of the Apostle, according to whom man by his actual sin falls under the wrath of God, inasmuch as he becomes subject to and follows the inborn principle of sin in opposition to his moral will which he likewise by nature bears in himself. Certainly man is born with this natural sinful quality, i.e., with the principle of sin, by the awakening and development of which the moral will is vanquished (Rom. vii. cf. John iii. 6.) It is not, however, the mere fact of this inborn presence having its basis in his flesh that in and of itself makes him a child of wrath, but he only becomes so when that constitution of his moral nature, that mingling of the two opposite principles in his natural disposition has brought about the victory of the sin-principle, which however is the case with every one.”—Meyer.—G.A.]

219 [Διὰ τὴν πολλὴν ἀγάπην αὐτοῦ: “namely, in order to satisfy it.”—Meyer.—G.A.]

Beholdest thou the glory of His inheritance? That “He hath raised us up together,” is plain. But that He “hath made us sit with Him in the heavenly places in Christ Jesus,” how does this hold? It holds as truly, as that He hath raised us together. For as yet no one is actually raised,²²⁰ excepting that inasmuch as as the Head hath risen, we also are raised, just as in the history, when Jacob did obeisance, his wife also did obeisance to Joseph. (*Gen. xxxvii. 9, 10.*) And so in the same way “hath He also made us to sit with Him.” For since the Head sitteth, the body sitteth also with it, and therefore he adds “in Christ Jesus.” Or again, if it means, not this, it means that by the laver of Baptism He hath “raised us up with Him.” How then in that case hath He made “us to sit with Him?” Because, saith he, “if we suffer we shall also reign with Him,” (*2 Tim. ii. 12.*) if we be dead with Him we shall also live with Him. Truly there is need of the Spirit and of revelation, in order to understand the depth of these mysteries. And then that ye may have no distrust about the matter, observe what he adds further.

Ver. 7. “That in the ages to come, He might show the exceeding riches of His grace, in kindness towards us, in Christ Jesus.”

Whereas he had been speaking of the things which concerned Christ, and these might be nothing to us, (for what, it might be said, is it to us, that He rose) therefore he shows that they do moreover extend to us, inasmuch as He is made one with us. Only that our concern in the matter he states separately. “Us,” saith he, “who were dead through our trespasses He raised up with Him, and made us sit with Him.” Wherefore, as I was saying, be not unbelieving, take the demonstration he adduces both from former things, and from His Headship, and also from His desire to show forth His goodness. For how will He show it, unless this come to pass? And He will show it in the ages to come. What? that the blessings are both great, and more certain than any other. For now the things which are said may to the unbelievers seem to be foolishness; but then all shall know them. Wouldest thou understand too, how He hath made us sit together with Him? Hear what Christ Himself saith to the disciples, “Ye also shall sit upon twelve thrones, judging the twelve tribes of Israel.” (*Matt. xix. 28.*) And again, “But to sit on My right hand and on My left hand is not Mine to give, but it is for them for whom it hath been prepared of My Father.” (*Matt. xx. 23.*) So that it hath been prepared. And well saith he, “in kindness towards us in Christ Jesus,” for to sit on His right hand is honor above all honor, it is that beyond which there is none other. This then he saith, that even we shall sit there. Truly this is surpassing riches, truly surpassing is the

220 [This is Meyer’s view. He says: “By virtue of the dynamic connection of Christ with believers as the head with its body their revivification is objectively comprehended in His.” Ellicott says; “Though the simple meaning of *συνήγειρεν* and *συνεκάθισεν* seems to confine their reference to what is future and objective; still as *συνεζωοποιήσεν* though primarily spiritual and present may have a physical and future reference, so here a present spiritual resurrection and enthronement may be alluded to.”—G.A.]

greatness of His power, to make us sit down with Christ, Yea, hadst thou ten thousand souls, wouldest thou not lose them for His sake? Yea, hadst thou to enter the flames, oughtest thou not readily to endure it? And He Himself too saith again, “Where I am, there shall also My servant be.” (John. xii. 26.) Why surely had ye to be cut to pieces every day, ought ye not, for the sake of these promises cheerfully to embrace it? Think, where He sitteth? above all principality and power. And with whom it is that thou sittest? With Him. And who thou art? One dead, by nature a child of wrath. And what good hast thou done? None. Truly now it is high time to exclaim, “Oh the depth of the riches both of the wisdom and the knowledge of God!” (Rom. xi. 33.)

Ver. 8. “For by grace,” saith he “have ye been saved.”²²¹

In order then that the greatness of the benefits bestowed may not raise thee too high, observe how he brings thee down: “by grace ye have been saved,” saith he,

“Through faith;”

Then, that, on the other hand, our free-will be not impaired, he adds also our part in the work, and yet again cancels it, and adds,

“And that not of ourselves.”

Neither is faith,²²² he means, “of ourselves.” Because had He not come, had He not called us, how had we been able to believe? for “how,” saith he, “shall they believe, unless they hear?” (Rom. x. 14.) So that the work of faith itself is not our own.

“It is the gift,” said he, “of God,” it is “not of works.”

Was faith then, you will say, enough to save us? No; but God, saith he, hath required this, lest He should save us, barren and without work at all. His expression is, that faith saveth, but it is because God so willeth, that faith saveth. Since, how, tell me, doth faith save, without works? This itself is the gift of God.

Ver. 9. “That no man should glory.”

That he may excite in us proper feeling touching this gift of grace. “What then?” saith a man, “Hath He Himself hindered our being justified by works?” By no means. But no one, he saith, is justified by works, in order that the grace and loving-kindness of God may be shown. He did not reject us as having works, but as abandoned of works He hath saved us by grace; so that no man henceforth may have whereof to boast. And then, lest when thou



221 [“Confirmatory explanation of the truth and justice of the expression, ‘the exceeding riches of His grace’ by a recurrence to the statement made parenthetically in verse 5.”—Ellicott.—G.A.]

222 [Meyer objects to this interpretation saying: “How violent is this taking to pieces of the text, since οὐκ ἐξ ἑμῶν and οὐκ ἐξ ἔργων present themselves in a manner alike natural and weighty as elements belonging to one flow of the discourse! The τοῦτο refers to the salvation just designated as regards its specific mode.” So substantially Ellicott.—G.A.]

hearest that the whole work is accomplished not of works but by faith, thou shouldest become idle,²²³ observe how he continues,

Ver. 10. “For we are His workmanship, created in Christ Jesus for good works, which God afore prepared that we should walk in them.”

Observe the words he uses. He here alludes to the regeneration, which is in reality a second creation. We have been brought from non-existence into being. As to what we were before, that is, the old man, we are dead. What we are now become, before, we were not. Truly then is this work a creation, yea, and more noble than the first; for from that one, we have our being; but from this last, we have, over and above, our well being.

“For good works, which God afore prepared that we should walk in them.”²²⁴

Not merely that we should begin, but that we should walk in them, for we need a virtue which shall last throughout, and be extended on to our dying day. If we had to travel a road leading to a royal city, and then when we had passed over the greater part of it, were to flag and sit down near the very close, it were of no use to us. This is the hope of our calling; for “for good works” he says. Otherwise it would profit us nothing.

Moral. Thus here he rejoices not that we should work one work, but all; for, as we have five senses, and ought to make use of all in their proper season, so ought we also the several virtues. Now were a man to be temperate and yet unmerciful, or were he to be merciful and yet grasping, or were he to abstain indeed from other people’s goods, and yet not bestow his own, it would be all in vain. For a single virtue alone is not enough to present us with boldness before the judgment-seat of Christ; no, we require it to be great, and various, and universal, and entire. Hear what Christ saith to the disciples, “Go, ye and make disciples of all the nations,—teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I commanded you.” ([Matt. xxviii. 19.](#)) And again, “Whosoever shall break one of these least commandments, shall be called least in the kingdom of Heaven,” ([Matt. v. 19.](#)) that is, in the resurrection; nay, he shall not enter into the kingdom; for He is wont to call the time also of the resurrection, the kingdom. “If he break one,” saith He, “he shall be called least,” so that we have need of all. And observe how it is not possible to enter without works of mercy; but if even this alone be wanting, we shall depart into the fire. For, saith He, “Depart, ye cursed, into the eternal fire, which is prepared for the Devil and his angels.” Why and wherefore? “For I was an

223 [This is not the object of Paul in the statement of [v. 10](#), but as Meyer says: “[Ver. 10](#) is the reason assigned for the immediately preceding οὐκ ἐξ ὑμῶν...καυχῆσθαι. For if we are God’s handiwork our salvation cannot be of our own acquiring, and if we are created in Christ unto good works how could the merit of our works be the cause of our salvation or the subject of our boasting?”—G.A.]

224 [God, before we were created in Christ, made ready for us, prepared a sphere of moral action or (to use the simile of Chrysostom) a road, with the intent that we should walk in it. This sphere, this road was good works, ἔργα ἀγαθά.”—Ellicott.—G.A.]

hungered, and ye gave me no meat; I was thirsty, and ye gave me no drink.” (Matt. xxv. 42.) Beholdest thou, how without any other charge laid against them, for this one alone they perished. And for this reason alone too were the virgins also excluded from the bride-chamber, though sobriety surely they did possess. As the Apostle saith “and the sanctification, without which no man shall see the Lord.” (Heb. xii. 14.) Consider then, that without sobriety, it is impossible to see the Lord; yet it does not necessarily follow that with sobriety it is possible to see Him, because often-times something else stands in the way. Again, if we do all things ever so rightly, and yet do our neighbor no service, neither in that case shall we enter into the kingdom. Whence is this evident? From the parable of the servants entrusted with the talents. For, in that instance, the man’s virtue was in every point unimpaired, and there had been nothing lacking, but forasmuch as he was slothful in his business, he was rightly cast out. Nay, it is possible, even by railing only, to fall into Hell. “For whosoever” saith Christ, “shall say to his brother, Thou fool, shall be in danger of the hell of fire.” (Matt. v. 22.) And if a man be ever so right in all things, and yet be injurious, he shall not enter.

And let no one impute cruelty to God, in that he excludes those who fail in this matter, from the kingdom of Heaven. For even with men, if any one do any thing whatsoever contrary to the law, he is banished from the king’s presence. And if he transgresses so much as one of the established laws, if he lays a false accusation against another, he forfeits his office. And if he commits adultery, and is detected, he is disgraced, and even though he have done ten thousand right acts, he is undone; and if he commits murder, and is convicted, this again is enough to destroy him. Now if the laws of men are so carefully guarded, how much more should those of God be. “But He is good,” a man says. How long are we to be uttering this foolish talk? foolish, I say, not because He is not good, but in that we keep thinking that His goodness will be available to us for these purposes, though I have again and again used ten thousand arguments on this subject. Listen to the Scripture, which saith, “Say not, His mercy is great, He will be pacified for the multitude of my sins.” (Ecclus. v. 6.) He does not forbid us to say, “His mercy is great.” This is not what He enjoins; rather he would have us constantly say it, and with this object Paul raises all sorts of arguments, but his object is what follows. Do not, he means, admire the loving-kindness of God with this view, with a view to sinning, and saying, “His mercy will be pacified for the multitude of my sins.” For it is with this object that I too discourse so much concerning His goodness, not that we may presume upon it, and do any thing we choose, because in that way this goodness will be to the prejudice of our salvation; but that we may not despair in our sins, but may repent. For “the goodness of God leadeth thee to repentance,” (Rom. ii. 4.) not to greater wickedness. And if thou become depraved, because of His goodness, thou art rather belying Him before men. I see many persons thus impugning the long-suffering of God; so that if thou use it not aright, thou shalt pay the penalty. Is God a God of loving-kindness? Yes, but He is also a righteous Judge. Is He one who maketh allowance for sins? True, yet rendereth He to every man ac-



ording to his works. Doth He pass by iniquity and blot out transgressions? True, yet maketh He inquisition also. How then is it, that these things are not contradictions? Contradictions they are not, if we distinguish them by their times. He doeth away iniquity here, both by the laver of Baptism, and by penitence. There He maketh inquisition of what we have done by fire and torment. "If then," some man may say, "I am cast out, and forfeit the kingdom, whether I have wrought ten thousand evil deeds or only one, wherefore may I not do all sorts of evil deeds?" This is the argument of an ungrateful servant; still nevertheless, we will proceed to solve even this. Never do that which is evil in order to do thyself good; for we shall, all alike fall short of the kingdom, yet in Hell we shall not all undergo the same punishment, but one a severer, another a milder one. For now, if thou and another have "despised God's goodness," (*Rom. ii. 4.*) the one in many instances, and the other in a few, ye will alike forfeit the kingdom. But if ye have not alike despised Him, but the one in a greater, the other in a less degree, in Hell ye shall feel the difference.

Now then, why, it may be said, doth He threaten them who have not done works of mercy, that they shall depart into the fire, and not simply into the fire, but into that which is "prepared for the devil and his angels?" (*Matt. xxv. 41.*) Why and wherefore is this? Because nothing so provokes God to wrath. He puts this before all terrible things; for if it is our duty to love our enemies, of what punishment shall not he be worthy, who turns away even from them that love him, and is in this respect worse than the heathen? So that in this case the greatness of the sin will make such an one go away with the devil. Woe to him, it is said, who doeth not alms; and if this was the case under the Old Covenant, much more is it under the New. If, where the getting of wealth was allowed, and the enjoyment of it, and the care of it, there was such provision made for the succoring the poor, how much more in that Dispensation, where we are commanded to surrender all we have? For what did not they of old do? They gave tithes, and tithes again upon tithes for orphans, widows, and strangers; whereas some one was saying to me in astonishment at another, "Why, such an one gives tithes." What a load of disgrace does this expression imply, since what was not a matter of wonder with the Jews has come to be so in the case of the Christians? If there was danger then in omitting tithes, think how great it must be now.

Again, drunkenness shall not inherit the kingdom. Yet what is the language of most people? "Well, if both I and he are in the same case, that is no little comfort." What then? First of all, that thou and he shall not reap the same punishment; but were it otherwise, neither is that any comfort. Fellowship in sufferings has comfort in it, when the miseries have any proportion in them; but when they exceed all proportion, and carry us beyond ourselves, no longer do they allow of our receiving any comfort at all. For tell the man that is being tortured, and has entered into the flames, that such an one is undergoing the same, still he will not feel the comfort. Did not all the Israelites perish together? What manner of comfort did that afford them? Rather, did not this very thing distress them? And this was

why they kept saying, We are lost, we are perished, we are wasted away. What manner of comfort then is there here? In vain do we comfort ourselves with such hopes as these. There is but one only comfort, to avoid falling into that unquenchable fire; but it is not possible for one who has fallen into it to find comfort, where there is the gnashing of teeth, where there is the weeping, where is the worm that dieth not, and the fire that is not quenched. For shalt thou conceive any comfort at all, tell me, when thou art in so great tribulation and distress? Wilt thou then be any longer thyself? Let us not, I pray and entreat you, let us not vainly deceive ourselves and comfort ourselves with arguments like these; no, let us practise those virtues, which shall avail to save us. The object before us is to sit together with Christ, and art thou trifling about such matters as these? Why, were there no other sin at all, how great punishment ought we not to suffer for these very speeches themselves, because we are so insensate, so wretched, and so indolent, as, even with so vast a privilege before us, to talk thus? Oh! how much shalt thou have to lament, when thou shalt then consider them that have done good! When thou shalt behold slaves and base-born who have labored but a little here, there made partakers of the royal throne, will not these things be worse to thee than torment? For if even now, when thou seest any in high reputation, though thou art suffering no evil, thou regardest this as worse than any punishment, and by this alone art consumed, and bemoanest thyself, and weepst, and judgest it to be as bad as ten thousand deaths; what shalt thou suffer then? Why, even were there no hell at all, the very thought of the kingdom, were it not enough to destroy and consume thee? And that such will be the case, we have enough in our own experience of things to teach us. Let us not then vainly flatter our own souls with speeches like these; no, let us take heed, let us have a regard for our own salvation, let us make virtue our care, let us rouse ourselves to the practice of good works, that we may be counted worthy to attain to this exceeding glory, in Jesus Christ our Lord with whom to the Father, together with the Holy Spirit be glory, might, honor, now and ever, and for ages of ages. Amen.



Homily V.

Chapter II. Verses 11, 12

“Wherefore remember, that aforetime ye the Gentiles in the flesh, who are called Uncircumcision by that which is called Circumcision in the flesh made by hands; that ye were at that time separate from Christ, alienated from the commonwealth of Israel, and strangers from the covenants of the promise, having no hope, and without God in the world.”

There are many things to show the loving-kindness of God. First, the fact, that by Himself He hath saved us, and by Himself through such a method as this. Secondly, that He hath saved us, as being what we were. Thirdly, that He hath exalted us to the place where we are. For all these things both contain in themselves the greatest demonstration of His loving-kindness, and they are the very subjects which Paul is now agitating in his Epistle. He had been saying, that when we were dead through our trespasses, and children of wrath, He saved us; He is now telling us further, to whom He hath made us equal. “Wherefore,” saith he, “remember;” because it is usual with us, one and all, when we are raised from a state of great meanness to corresponding, or perhaps a greater, dignity, not so much as even to retain any recollection of our former condition, being nourished in this our new glory. On this account it is that he says, “Wherefore remember.”—“Wherefore.” Why, “wherefore?”²²⁵ Because we have been created unto good works, and this were sufficient to induce us to cultivate virtue; “remember;”—for that remembrance is sufficient to make us grateful to our Benefactor,—“that ye were aforetime Gentiles.” Observe how he lowers the superior advantages of the Jews and admires the disadvantages of the Gentiles; disadvantage indeed it was not, but he is arguing with each respectively from their character and manner of life.

“Who are called Uncircumcision.”²²⁶

The honor then of the Jews is in names, their prerogative is in the flesh. For uncircumcision is nothing, and circumcision is nothing.

“By that which is called,” saith he, “Circumcision in the flesh made by hands, that ye were at that time separate from Christ, alienated from the commonwealth of Israel, and strangers from the covenants of the promise, having no hope, and without God in the world.”²²⁷

225 [“Therefore, because such exalted and unmerited benefits have been imparted to us (vv. 4–10),” (Ellicott vv. 1–7). “These benefits should move the reader to remember his former miserable heathen state in order to appreciate by contrast the value of his present state.” Meyer.—G.A.]

226 [“They were those designated ‘Foreskin’ by the people who bear the name of the surgical operation performed on their flesh.”—Meyer.—G.A.]

227 [“They were without church, without promise, without hope, without God, and that in the profane wicked world (ἐν τῷ κόσμῳ being in contrast to πολιτείας τοῦ Ἰσραὴλ and like it, ethical in reference.) “Ἄθεοι may mean ignorant of God or forsaken by God, probably the latter.”—Ellicott.—G.A.]



Ye, saith he, who were thus called by the Jews. But why when he is about to show that the benefit bestowed upon them consisted in this, in having fellowship with Israel, does he disparage the Israelitish prerogative? He does not disparage it. In essential points he enhances it, but only in these points, in which they had no fellowship, he disparages it. For further on he says, “Ye are fellow-citizens of the saints and of the household of God.” Mark, how far he is from disparaging it. These points, saith he, are indifferent. Never think, saith he, that because ye happen not to be circumcised, and are now in uncircumcision, that there is any difference in this. No, the real trouble was this, the being “without Christ,” the being “aliens from the commonwealth of Israel.” Whereas this circumcision is not “the commonwealth.” Again, the being strangers from the covenants of promise, the having no hope to come, the being without God in this world, all these were parts of their condition. He was speaking of heavenly things; he speaks also of those which are upon earth; since the Jews had a great opinion of these. Thus also Christ in comforting His disciples, after saying, “Blessed are they that have been persecuted for righteousness’ sake, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven,” adds the lesser point of consolation, “for so,” saith He, “persecuted they the prophets which were before you.” (Matt. v. 10–12.) For this, compared with the greatness of the other, is far less, yet in regard to the being nigh, and believing, it is great and sufficient, and has much force. This then was the sharing in the commonwealth. His word is not, “separated,” but “alienated from the commonwealth.” His word is not, “ye took no interest in,” but, “ye had not so much as any part in, and were strangers.” The expressions are most emphatic, and indicate the separation to be very wide. Because the Israelites themselves were without this commonwealth, not however as aliens, but as indifferent to it, and they fell from the covenants, not however as strangers, but as unworthy.

But what were “the covenants of the promise?” “To thee and to thy seed,” saith He, “will I give this land,” (Gen. xvii. 8.) and whatever else He promised.

“Having no hope,” he adds, “and without God.” Though gods indeed they worshipped, but they were no gods: “for an idol is not any thing.” (1 Cor. x. 19.)

Ver. 13–15. “But now,²²⁸ in Christ Jesus, ye that once were far off, are made nigh in the blood of Christ. For He is our peace, who made both one, and brake down the middle wall of partition, having abolished in His flesh the enmity.”

Is this then the great privilege, it may be said, that we are admitted into the commonwealth of the Jews? What art thou saying? “He hath summed up all things that are in heaven, and that are in earth,” and now dost thou tell us about Israelites? Yes, he would say. Those higher privileges we must apprehend by faith; these, by the things themselves. “But now,”

228 [“This too is what they should remember, but the Apostle continues the contrast in an independent sentence.”—Riddle, in *Popular Commentary*.—G.A.]

saith he, “in Christ Jesus, ye that once were far off, are made nigh,” in reference to the commonwealth. For the “far off,” and the “nigh,” are matters of will and choice only.

“For He²²⁹ is our peace, Who made both one.”

What is this, “both one?” He does not mean this, that He hath raised us to that high descent of theirs, but that he hath raised both us and them to a yet higher. Only that the blessing to us is greater, because to these it had been promised, and they were nearer than we; to us it had not been promised, and we were farther off than they. Therefore it is that he says, “And that the Gentiles might glorify God for His mercy.” (Rom. xv. 9.) The promise indeed He gave to the Israelites, but they were unworthy; to us He gave no promise, nay, we were even strangers, we had nothing in common with them; yet hath He made us one, not by knitting us to them, but by knitting both them and us together into one. I will give you an illustration. Let us suppose there to be two statues, the one of silver, the other of lead, and then that both shall be melted down, and that the two shall come out gold. Behold, thus hath He made the two one. Or put the case again in another way. Let the two be, one a slave, the other an adopted son: and let both offend Him, the one as a disinherited child, the other as a fugitive, and one who never knew a father. Then let both be made heirs, both trueborn sons. Behold, they are exalted to one and the same dignity, the two are become one, the one coming from a longer, the other from a nearer distance, and the slave becoming more noble than he was before he offended.

“And brake down,” he proceeds, “the middle wall of partition.”

What the middle wall of partition is, he interprets by saying, “the enmity having abolished in His flesh, even the law of commandments contained in ordinances.” Some indeed affirm that he means the wall of the Jews against the Greeks, because it did not allow the Jews to hold intercourse with the Greeks. To me, however, this does not seem to be the meaning, but rather that he calls “the enmity in the flesh,” a middle wall, in that it is a common barrier, cutting us off alike from God.²³⁰ As the Prophet says, “Your iniquities separate between you and Me;” (Isa. lix. 2.) for that enmity which He had both against Jews and Gentiles was, as it were, a middle wall. And this, whilst the law existed, was not only not abolished, but rather was strengthened; “for the law,” saith the Apostle, “worketh wrath.” (Rom. iv. 15.) Just in the same way then as when he says in that passage, “the law worketh wrath,” he does not ascribe the whole of this effect to the law itself, but it is to be understood, that it is because



229 [“The emphatic pronoun is used, αὐτός. But He is not put in opposition to ‘ourselves’ having made the peace, but as Bengel says, ‘Not merely is He peacemaker, for at the cost of ‘Himself’ He procured peace.’”—Meyer.—G.A.]

230 [“The only mode of taking ἔχθραν in harmony with the context is not as Chrysostom, “but of the enmity which existed between Jews and Gentiles.”—Meyer. “‘Ev τῇ σαρκί, ‘in the flesh,’ does not belong to τὴν ἔχθραν, as Chrysostom construes it but to καταργήσας, ‘having abolished.’” So Meyer and Rev. Ver.—G.A.]

we have transgressed it; so also in this place he calls it a middle wall, because through being disobeyed it wrought enmity. The law was a hedge, but this it was made for the sake of security, and for this reason was called “a hedge,” to the intent that it might form an inclosure. For listen again to the Prophet, where he says, “I made a trench about it.” (Isa. v. 2.) And again, “Thou hast broken down her fences, so that all they which pass by the way do pluck her.” (Ps. lxxx. 12.) Here therefore it means security and so again, “I will take away the hedge thereof, and it shall be trodden down.” (Isa. v. 5.) And again, “He gave them the law for a defence.” (Isa. viii. 20.) And again, “The Lord executeth righteous acts and made known His ways unto Israel.” (Ps. ciii. 6, 7.) It became, however, a middle wall, no longer establishing them in security, but cutting them off from God. Such then is the middle wall of partition formed out of the hedge. And to explain what this is, he subjoins, “the enmity in His flesh having abolished, the law of commandments.”

How so? In that He was slain and dissolved the enmity therein. And not in this way only but also by keeping it. But what then, if we are released from the former transgression, and yet are again compelled to keep it? Then were the case the same over again, whereas He hath destroyed the very law itself. For he says, “Having abolished the law of commandments contained in ordinances.” Oh! amazing loving-kindness! He gave us a law that we should keep it, and when we kept it not, and ought to have been punished, He even abrogated the law itself. As if a man, who, having committed a child to a schoolmaster, if he should turn out disobedient, should set him at liberty even from the schoolmaster, and take him away. How great loving-kindness were this! What is meant by,

“Having abolished by ordinances?”²³¹

For he makes a wide distinction between “commandments” and “ordinances.” He either then means “faith,” calling that an “ordinance,” (for by faith alone He saved us,) or he means “precept,” such as Christ gave, when He said, “But I say unto you, that ye are not to be angry at all.” (Matt. v. 22.) That is to say, “If thou shalt believe that God raised Him from the dead, thou shalt be saved.” (Rom. x. 6–9.) And again, “The word is nigh thee, in thy mouth, and in thine heart. Say not, Who shall ascend into heaven, or who shall descend into the abyss?” or, who hath “brought Him again from the dead?” Instead of a certain manner of life, He brought in faith. For that He might not save us to no purpose, He both Himself underwent the penalty, and also required of men the faith that is by doctrines.

“That he might create in Himself of the twain, one new man.”

231 [The order of the Greek is as follows: τὸν νόμον τῶν ἐντολῶν ἐν δόγμασιν καταργήσας. Chrysostom has because of the order joined ἐν δόγμασιν with καταργήσας, as its modal definition. But ἐν δόγμασιν belongs to ἐντολῶν meaning ‘the law of commandments consisting in ordinances,’ ‘ἐντολῶν denoting the ‘contents’ of the law and ἐν δόγμασιν the ‘form’ in which they were given;” so Meyer.—G.A.]

Observe thou, that it is not that the Gentile is become a Jew, but that both the one and the other are entered into another condition. It was not with a view of merely making this last other than he was, but rather, in order to create the two anew. And well does he on all occasions employ the word “create,” and does not say “change,” in order to point out the power of what was done, and that even though the creation be invisible, yet it is no less a creation than that is, and that we ought not henceforward start away from this, as from natural things.

“That He might in Himself of the twain.”

That is, by Himself.²³² He gave not this charge to another, but Himself, by Himself, melted both the one and the other, and produced a glorious one, and one greater than the first creation; and that one, first, was Himself. For this is the meaning of “in Himself.” He Himself first gave the type and example. Laying hold on the one hand of the Jew, and on the other of the Gentile, and Himself being in the midst, He blended them together, made all the estrangement which existed between them to disappear, and fashioned them anew from above by fire and by water; no longer with water and earth, but with water and fire. He became a Jew by circumcision, He became accursed, He became a Gentile without the law, and was over both Gentiles and Jews.

“One new man,” saith he, “so making peace.”

Peace for them both towards God, and towards each other. For so long as they continued still Jews and Gentiles, they could not have been reconciled. And had they not been delivered each from his own peculiar condition, they would not have arrived at another and a higher one. For the Jew is then united to the Gentile when he becomes a believer. It is like persons being in a house, with two chambers below, and one large and grand one above: they would not be able to see each other, till they had got above.

“Making peace,” more especially towards God; for this the context shows, for what saith he?

Ver. 16. “And might reconcile them both in one body unto God through the Cross.”

He saith, not merely “might reconcile,” (καταλλάξει) but “might reconcile thoroughly” (ἀποκαταλλάξει²³³) indicating that heretofore human nature had been easily reconciled, as, e.g., in the case of the saints and before the time of the Law.

“In one body,” saith he, and that His own, “unto God.” How is this effected? By Himself, he means, suffering the due penalty.

232 [ἐν αὐτῷ: “This is not equivalent to δι’ ἑαυτοῦ, as Chrysostom, but it affirms that the unity to be brought about was to be founded in Christ Himself, was to have the basis of its existence and continuance in Him and not in any other unifying principles whatever.”—Meyer.—G.A.]

233 [Meyer says the ἀπό strengthens the notion of reconciliation, Ellicott that it not only strengthens but hints at a restoration to primal unity, the ἀπό meaning again.—G.A.]

“Through the cross having slain the enmity thereby.”²³⁴

Nothing can be more decisive, nothing more expressive than these words. His death, saith the Apostle, hath “slain” the enmity. He hath “wounded” and “killed” it, not by giving charge to another, nor by what He wrought only, but also by what He suffered. He does not say “having dissolved,” he does say “having cancelled,” but what is stronger than all, “having slain,” so that it never should rise again. How then is it that it does rise again? From our exceeding depravity. For as long as we abide in the body of Christ, as long as we are united, it rises not again, but lies dead; or rather that former enmity never rises again at all. But if we breed another, it is no longer because of Him, who hath destroyed and put to death the former one. It is thou, forsooth, that travailest with a fresh one. “For the mind of the flesh,” saith he, “is enmity against God;” (Rom. viii. 6.) if we are in nothing carnally-minded, there will be no fresh enmity produced, but that “peace” shall remain.

Moral. Think then, how vast an evil is it, when God hath employed so many methods to reconcile us, and hath effected it, that we should again fall back into enmity! This enmity no fresh Baptism, but hell itself awaits; no fresh remission, but searching trial. The mind of the flesh is luxury and indolence, the “mind of the flesh” is covetousness and all kinds of sin. Why is it said the mind of the flesh? While yet the flesh could do nothing without the soul. He does not say this to the disparagement of the flesh, any more than when he says the “natural man,” (1 Cor. ii. 14.) he uses that expression to the disparagement of the soul, for neither body nor soul in itself, if it receive not the impulse which is far above, is able to achieve any thing great or noble. Hence he calls those acts which the soul performs of herself, “natural; ψυχικά” and those which the body performs of itself “carnal.” Not because these are natural, but because, inasmuch as they receive not that direction from heaven, they perish. So the eyes are good, but without light, will commit innumerable errors; this, however, is the fault of their weakness, not of nature. Were the errors natural, then should we never be able to use them aright at all. For nothing that is natural is evil. Why then does he call carnal affections sins? Because whenever the flesh exalts herself, and gets the mastery over her charioteer, she produces ten thousand mischiefs. The virtue of the flesh is, her subjection to the soul. It is her vice to govern the soul. As the horse then may be good and nimble, and yet this is not shown without a rider; so also the flesh will then show her goodness, when we cut off her prancings. But neither again is the rider shown, if he have not skill. Nay he himself will do mischief yet more fearful than that before named. So that on all hands we must have the Spirit at hand. This being at hand will impart new strength to the rider; this will give beauty both to body and soul. For just as the soul, while dwelling in the body, makes it beautiful, but when she leaves it destitute of her own native energy and departs, like a

234 [“After he shall have slain the enmity &c.,” for it is inserted in the second half of the affirmation of ‘design’ and is correlative to ποιῶν εἰρήνην.”—Meyer.—G.A.]

painter confounding his colors together, the greatest loathsomeness ensues, every one of the several parts hastening to corruption, and dissolution:—so is it also when the Spirit forsakes the body and the soul, the loathsomeness which ensues is worse and greater. Do not then, because the body is inferior to the soul, revile it, for neither do I endure to revile the soul because it hath no strength without the Spirit. If one need say anything at all, the soul is deserving of the greater censure than the body; for the body indeed can do no grievous harm without the soul, whereas the soul can do much without the body. Because, we know, when the one is even wasting away, and has no wantonness, the soul is busily employed. Even as those sorcerers, magicians, envious persons, enchanter, especially cause the body to waste away. But besides this, not even luxury is the effect of the necessity of the body, but rather of the inattentiveness of the soul; for food, not feasting, is the object of the necessity of the body. For if I have a mind to put on a strong curb, I stop the horse; but the body is unable to check the soul in her evil courses. Wherefore then does he call it the carnal mind? Because it comes to be wholly of the flesh, for when she has the mastery, then she goes wrong, as soon as ever she has deprived herself of reason, and of the supremacy of the soul. The virtue therefore of the body consists in this, in its submission to the soul, since of itself the flesh is neither good nor evil. For what could the body ever do of itself? It is then by its connection that the body is good, good because of its subjection, but of itself neither good nor evil, with capacity, however, both for one and for the other, and having an equal tendency either way. The body has a natural desire, not however of fornication, nor of adultery, but of pleasure; the body has a desire not of feasting, but of food; not of drunkenness, but of drink. For in proof that it is not drunkenness that is the natural desire of the body, mark how, whenever you exceed the measure, when you go beyond the boundary-lines, it cannot hold out a moment longer. Up to this point it is of the body, but all the rest of the excesses, as e.g., when she is hurried away into sensualities, when she becomes stupefied, these are of the soul. For though the body be good, still it is vastly inferior to the soul, as lead is less of value than gold, and yet gold needs lead to solder it, and just so has the soul need also of the body. Or in the same way as a noble child requires a conductor, so again does the soul stand in need of the body. For, as we speak of childish things, not to the disparagement of childhood, but only of those acts which are done during childhood; so also are we now speaking of the body.

Yet it is in our power, if we will, no longer to be in the flesh, no, nor upon the earth, but in heaven, and in the Spirit. For our being here or there, is not determined so much by our position, as by our disposition. Of many people, at least, who are in some place, we say they are not there, when we say, “Thou wast not here. And again Thou art not here.” And why do I say this? We often say, “Thou art not at (ἐν) thyself, I am not at (ἐν) myself,” and yet what can be more material (a stronger instance of corporeal locality) than this, that a man is near to himself? And yet, notwithstanding, we say that he is not at himself. Let us then be



in ourselves, in heaven, in the Spirit. Let us abide in the peace and in the grace of God, that we may be set at liberty from all the things of the flesh, and may be able to attain to those good things which are promised in Jesus Christ our Lord, with whom to the Father, together with the Holy Spirit, be glory, and might, and honor, now and henceforth, and for ever and ever. Amen.

Homily VI.

Chapter II. Verses 17–22

“And He came and preached peace to you that were far off, and peace to them that were nigh, for through Him we both have our access in one Spirit unto the Father. So then ye are no more strangers and sojourners, but ye are fellow-citizens with the saints, and of the household of God, being built upon the foundation of the Apostles and Prophets, Christ Jesus Himself being the chief corner-stone. In whom each several building, fitly framed together, groweth into a holy temple in the Lord. In whom ye also are builded together for a habitation of God in the Spirit.”

He sent not, saith the Apostle, by the hand of another, nor did He announce these tidings to us by means of any other, but Himself did it in His own person. He sent not Angel nor Archangel on the mission, because to repair so many and vast mischiefs and to declare what had been wrought was in the power of none other, but required His own coming.²³⁵ The Lord then took upon Himself the rank of a servant, nay, almost of a minister, “and came, and preached peace to you,” saith he, “that were far off, and to them that were nigh.” To the Jews, he means, who as compared with ourselves were nigh. “For through Him we both have our access in one Spirit unto the Father.”

“Peace,” saith he, that “peace” which is towards God. He hath reconciled us. For the Lord Himself also saith, “Peace I leave with you; my peace I give unto you.” (John xiv. 27.) And again, “Be of good cheer, I have overcome the world.” (John xvi. 33.) And again, “Whatsoever ye shall ask in my name that will I do.” (John xiv. 14.) And again, “For the Father loveth you.” (John xvi. 27.) These are so many evidences of peace. But how towards the Gentiles? “Because through Him we both have our access in one Spirit unto the Father,” not ye less, and they more, but all by one and the same grace. The wrath He appeased by His death, and hath made us meet for the Father’s love through the Spirit. Mark again, the “in” means “by” or “through.” By Himself and the Spirit that is, He hath brought us unto the Father. “So then ye are no more strangers and sojourners, but fellow-citizens with the saints.”

Perceive ye that it is not with the Jews simply, no, but with those saintly and great men, such as Abraham, and Moses, and Elias? It is for the self-same city with these we are enrolled, for that we declare ourselves. “For they that say such things,” saith he, “make it manifest that they are seeking after a country of their own.” (Heb. xi. 14.) No longer are we strangers

235 [This passage does not refer to His bodily advent upon earth, as Chrysostom interprets, but following the account of his crucifixion more naturally refers to a spiritual advent, namely in the Holy Spirit, (in so far as it is Christ’s spirit) Christ Himself came. He is our peace; yes, and He came and by His spirit and the mouths of the Apostles He preached it.—Meyer and Ellicott.—G.A.]

from the saints, nor foreigners. For they who shall not attain to heavenly blessings, are foreigners. “For the Son,” saith Christ, “abideth for ever.” (John viii. 35.)

“And of the household,” he continues, “of God.”

The very thing which they at the first had, by means of so many toils and troubles, hath been for you accomplished by the grace of God. Behold the hope of your calling.

“Being built upon the foundation of the Apostles and Prophets.”

Observe how he blends all together, the Gentiles, the Jews,²³⁶ the Apostles, the Prophets, and Christ, and illustrates the union sometimes from the body, and sometimes from the building: “built,” saith he, “upon the foundation of the Apostles and Prophets;” that is, the Apostles and Prophets are a foundation,²³⁷ and he places the Apostles first, though they are in order of time last, doubtless to represent and express this, that both the one and the other are alike a foundation, and that the whole is one building, and that there is one root. Consider, that the Gentiles have the Patriarchs as a foundation. He here speaks more strongly of that point than he does when he speaks of a “grafting in.” There he rather attaches them on. Then he adds, that He who binds the whole together in Christ. For the chief corner-stone binds together both the walls, and the foundations.

“In whom each several building.”

Mark, how he knits it all together, and represents Him at one time, as holding down the whole body from above, and welding it together; at another time, as supporting the building from below, and being, as it were, a root, or base. And whereas he had used the expression, “He created in Himself of the twain one new man;” (Eph. ii. 15.) by this he clearly shows us, that by Himself Christ knits together the two walls: and again, that in Him it was created. And “He is the first-born,”²³⁸ saith he, “of all creation,” that is, He Himself supports all things.

236 [Field’s text has not the words, “the Jews;” but as there is excellent authority for them and they suit the context better, we have left them, with the Oxford translator, in our text.—G.A.]

237 [“It is wrong to take this genitive as the genitive of apposition, as Chrysostom, for the Apostles and Prophets are not the foundation but have laid it. (1 Cor. iii. 10.) Nor are the Prophets here mentioned O.T. prophets but N.T. prophets. (cf. iii. 5; iv. 11.).—Meyer.”—G.A.]

238 Col. i. 15. i.e. “Begotten before every creature;” “begotten of His Father before all worlds.” It is explained of our Lord’s divine nature by Origen, *Periarch.* i. 2. Tertullian *in Prax.* 7. *in Marcion*, v. 19. S. Hilar. *de Trin.* viii. 50. S. Ambros. *de Fid.* i. 14. S. Basil *in Eunom.* iv. in Col. i. 15. Others understand the expression to denote the Only-Begotten considered as becoming the origin of the new creation,—as beginning in His flesh, as being the Only-Begotten, the regenerate world. Thus S. Athanasius *Orat.* iii. 62, 63. S. Greg. Nyss. *de Perfect.* p. 722. *contra. Eunom.* i. p. 24. iii. pp. 113, 114. S. Cyril. *de Trin.* iv. p. 518. S. August. *in Rom.* 56. Theodoret interprets the word in both ways, *in loc.* and in Ps. 88, 28. S. Chrysostom too, *Hom. Son. Col.* i. 15. may be understood according to either interpretation. Indeed they are quite consistent with each other.

“In whom each several building, fitly framed together.”

Whether you speak of the roof, or of the walls, or of any other part whatsoever,²³⁹ He it is supports the whole. Thus he elsewhere calls Him a foundation. “For other foundations,” saith he, “can no man lay than that which is laid, which is Jesus Christ.” (1 Cor. iii. 11.) “In whom each several building,” he saith, “fitly framed together.” Here he displays the perfectness of it, and indicates that one cannot otherwise have place in it, unless by living with great exactness. “It groweth saith he into a holy temple in the Lord, in whom ye also,” he adds, “are builded together.” He is speaking continuously: “Into a holy temple, for a habitation of God in the Spirit.” What then is the object of this building? It is that God may dwell in this temple. For each of you severally is a temple, and all of you together are a temple. And He dwelleth in you as in the body of Christ, and as in a Spiritual temple. He does not use the word which means our coming to God, (πρόσδοος) but which implies God’s bringing us to Himself, (προσαγωγή) for we came not out of ourselves, but we were brought nigh by Him. “No one,” saith Christ, “cometh unto the Father but by Me.” And again, “I am the way, and the truth, and the life.” (John xiv. 6.)

He joins them with the Saints and again returns to his former image, nowhere suffering them to be disunited from Christ. Doubtless then, this is a building that shall go on until His coming. Doubtless it was for this reason that Paul said, “As a wise master builder, I laid a foundation.” (1 Cor. iii. 10, 11.) And again that Christ is the foundation. What then means all this? You observe that the comparisons have all referred to the subject-matters, and that we must not expound them to the very letter. The Apostle speaks from analogy as Christ does, where He calls the Father an husbandman, (John xv. 1.) and Himself a root. (Rev. xxii. 16.)

Chap. iii. ver. 1. “For this cause I Paul, the prisoner of Christ Jesus in behalf of you Gentiles.”

He has mentioned Christ’s great and affectionate care; he now passes on to his own, insignificant indeed as it is, and a very nothing in comparison with that, and yet this is enough to engage them to himself. For this cause, saith he, am I also bound.²⁴⁰ For if my Lord was crucified for your sakes, much more am I bound. He not only was bound Himself,

239 [“Chrysostom is wrong in holding that by πᾶσα οἰκοδομή is signified every ‘part’ of the building (wall, roof, etc.) since οἰκοδομή rather denotes the ‘aggregate’ of the single parts of the building. Πᾶσα οἰκοδομή means ‘every building’ and is here to be interpreted, ‘every Christian community, each congregation.’”—Meyer.—G.A.]

240 [The Syriac Version followed by commentators from Chrysostom to Meyer makes ὀδέσμιος predicate, supplying “am.” “I Paul am the prisoner of Christ Jesus for you Gentiles.” This is open to grave objections. Ὀδεσμιος is rather in apposition and the broken construction is resumed at ver. 14.—Riddle, Ellicott, Alford, Braune. R.V. Comp. 4: 1.—G.A.]

but allows His servants to be bound also,—“for you Gentiles.” It is full of emphasis; not only do we no longer loathe you, but we are even bound, saith he, for your sakes and of this exceeding grace am I partaker.

Ver. 2. “If so be that ye have heard of the dispensation of that grace of God, which was given me to you-ward.”

He alludes to the prediction addressed to Ananias concerning him at Damascus, when the Lord said, “Go thy way, for he is a chosen vessel unto Me, to bear My name before the Gentiles and Kings.” ([Acts ix. 15.](#))

By “dispensation of grace,” he means the revelation made to him. As much as to say, “I learned it not from man. ([Gal. i. 12.](#)) He vouchsafed to reveal it even to me, though but an individual for your sakes. For Himself said unto me, saith he, “Depart, for I will send thee forth far hence unto the Gentiles.” ([Acts xxii. 21.](#)) “If so be that ye have heard” for a dispensation it was, a mighty one; to call one, uninfluenced from any other quarter, immediately from above, and to say, “Saul, Saul, why persecutest thou Me?” and to strike him blind with that ineffable light! “if so be that ye have heard,”²⁴¹ saith he, “of the dispensation of that grace of God which was given me to you-ward.”

Ver. 3. “How that by revelation was made known unto me the mystery, as I wrote afore in few words.”

Perhaps he had informed them of it by some persons, or had not long before been writing to them.²⁴² Here he is pointing out that the whole is of God, that we have contributed nothing. For what? I ask, was not Paul himself, the wonderful, he that was so versed in the law, he that was brought up at the feet of Gamaliel according to the most perfect manner, was not he saved by grace? With good reason too does he call this a mystery, for a mystery it is, to raise the Gentiles in a moment to a higher rank than the Jews. “As I wrote afore,” saith he, “in few words,” i.e., briefly,

Ver. 4. “Whereby, when ye read, ye can perceive.”

Amazing! So then he wrote not the whole, nor so much as he should have written. But here the nature of the subject prevented it. Elsewhere, as in the case of the Hebrews ([Heb. v. 11.](#)) and the Corinthians, ([1 Cor. iii. 2.](#)) the incapacity of the hearers. “Whereby, when ye read, ye can perceive,” saith he, “my understanding in the mystery of Christ,” i.e., how I knew, how I understood either such things as God hath spoken, or else, that Christ sitteth at the right hand of God; and then too the dignity, in that God “hath not dealt so with any

241 [“Gentle appeal, expressed in a hypothetical form and conveying the hope that his words had not been forgotten.”—Ellicott.—G.A.]

242 [“This parenthetical remark of the Apostle refers not to a lost letter but to the section last treated of concerning the Gentiles attaining salvation.”—Meyer.—G.A.]

nation.” (Ps. cxlvii. 20.) And then to explain what nation this is with whom God hath thus dealt, he adds,

Ver. 5. “Which in other generations was not made known unto the sons of men, as it hath now been revealed unto His holy Apostles and Prophets in the Spirit.”

What then, tell me, did not the Prophets²⁴³ know it? How then doth Christ say, that Moses and the Prophets wrote “these things concerning Me?” And again, “If ye believed Moses, ye would believe Me.” (John v. 46.) And again, “Ye search the Scriptures, because ye think that in them ye have eternal life, and these are they which bear witness of me.” (John v. 39.) His meaning is this, either that it was not revealed unto all men, for he adds, “which in other generations was not made known unto the sons of men, as it hath now been revealed;” or else, that it was not thus made known by the very facts and realities themselves, “as it hath now been revealed unto His holy Apostles and Prophets in the Spirit.” For reflect. Peter, had he not been instructed by the Spirit, never would have gone to the Gentiles. For hear what he says, “Then hath God given unto them the Holy Ghost, as well as unto us.” (Acts x. 47.) That it was by the Spirit that God chose that they should receive the grace. The Prophets then spoke, yet they knew it not thus perfectly; so far from it, that not even did the Apostles, after they had heard it. So far did it surpass all human calculation, and the common expectation.

Ver. 6. “That the Gentiles are fellow-heirs, and fellow-members of the body and fellow partakers.”²⁴⁴

What is this; “fellow-heirs, and fellow-partakers of the promise, and fellow-members of the body?” This last is the great thing, that they should be one body; this exceeding closeness of relation to Him. For that they were to be called indeed, that they knew, but that it was so great, as yet they knew not. This therefore he calls the mystery. “Of the promise.” The Israelites were partakers, and the Gentiles also were fellow-partakers of the promise of God.

“In Christ Jesus through the Gospel.”

That is, by His being sent unto them also, and by their believing; for it is not said they are fellow-heirs simply, but “through the Gospel.” However, this indeed, is nothing so great, it is in fact a small thing, and it discloses to us another and greater thing, that not only men knew not this, but that neither Angels nor Archangels, nor any other created power, knew

243 [Prophets here refers, as before, to New Testament prophets, and not, as Chrysostom understands it, to O.T. prophets.—G.A.]

244 [“Fellow-heirs (συγκληρονόμα) denotes the joint possession with the believing Jews of the eternal Messianic bliss.”—Meyer. “The following words (σύσσωμα καὶ συμμετοχα), which seem to have been coined by the apostle, are well rendered by R.V., ‘fellow-members of the body, and fellow-partakers,’ and bring out more fully the relation of the fellow-heirs to each other.”—Riddle.—G.A.]

it. For it was a mystery, and was not revealed. "That ye can perceive," he saith, "my understanding." This alludes, perhaps, to what he said to them in the Acts, that he had some knowledge that the Gentiles also were called. This, he says, is his own knowledge, "the knowledge of the mystery," which he had mentioned, viz., "that Christ will in Himself make of the twain one new man." For by revelation he was instructed, both he and Peter, that they must not spurn the Gentiles; and this he states in his defence.

Ver. 7. "Whereof I was made a minister, according to the gift of that grace of God which was given me according to the working of His power."

He had said, "I am a prisoner;" but now again he says, that all is of God, as he says, "according to the gift of His grace;" for according to the power of the gift is the dignity of this privilege. But the gift would not have been enough, had it not also implanted in him power.

Moral. For a work indeed it was of power, of mighty power, and such as no human diligence was equal to. For he brought three qualifications to the preaching of the word, a zeal fervent and venturous, a soul ready to undergo any possible hardship, and knowledge and wisdom combined. For his love of enterprise, his blamelessness of life, had availed nothing, had he not also received the power of the Spirit. And look at it as seen first in himself, or rather hear his own words. "That our ministration be not blamed." (2 Cor. vi. 3.) And again, "For our exhortation, is not of error, nor of uncleanness, nor in guile, nor a cloke of covetousness." (1 Thes. ii. 3, 5.) Thus thou hast seen his blamelessness. And again, "For we take thought for things honorable, not only in the sight of the Lord, but also in the sight of men." (2 Cor. viii. 21.) Then again, besides these; "I protest by that glorying in you which I have in Christ Jesus our Lord, I die daily." (1 Cor. xv. 31.) And again; "Who shall separate us from the love of Christ? shall tribulation, or anguish, or persecution?" (Rom. viii. 35.) And again; "In much patience, in afflictions, in necessities, in distresses, in stripes, in imprisonments, in watchings." (2 Cor. vi. 4, 5.) Then again, his prudence and management; "To the Jews I became as a Jew, to them that are without law as without law, to them that are under the law as under the law." (1 Cor. ix. 20.) He shaves his head also, (Acts. xxi. 24-26.) and does numberless things of the sort. But the crown of all is in the power of the Holy Ghost. "For I will not dare to speak," saith he, "of any things save those which Christ wrought through me." (Rom. xv. 18.) And again, "For what is there wherein you were made inferior to the rest of the Churches?" (2 Cor. xii. 13.) And again, "For in nothing was I behind the very chiefest Apostles though I am nothing." (2 Cor. xii. 11.) Without these things, the work had been impossible.

It was not then by his miracles that men were made believers; no, it was not the miracles that did this, nor was it upon the ground of these that he claimed his high pretension, but upon those other grounds. For a man must be alike irreproachable in conduct, prudent and discreet in his dealings with others, regardless of danger, and apt to teach. It was by these

qualifications that the greater part of his success was achieved. Where there were these, there was no need of miracles. At least we see he was successful in numberless such cases, quite antecedently to the use of miracles. But, now-a-days, we without any of these would fain command all things. Yet if one of them be separated from the other, it henceforth becomes useless. What is the advantage of a man's being ever so regardless of danger, if his life be open to censure. "For if the light that is in thee be darkness," saith Christ, "how great is that darkness?" ([Mat. vi. 23.](#)) Again, what the advantage of a man's being of an irreproachable life, if he is sluggish and indolent? "For, he that doth not take his cross, and follow after Me," saith He, "is not worthy of Me;" ([Mat. x. 38.](#)) and so, "The good shepherd layeth down his life for the sheep." ([John x. 11.](#)) Again, what is the advantage of being both these, unless a man is at the same time prudent and discreet in "knowing how he ought to answer each one?" ([Col. iv. 6.](#)) Even if miracles be not in our power, yet both these qualities are in our power. Still however, notwithstanding Paul contributed so much from himself, yet did he attribute all to grace. This is the act of a grateful servant. And we should never so much as have heard of his good deeds, had he not been brought to a necessity of declaring them.

And are we worthy then so much as even to mention the name of Paul? He, who had moreover grace to aid him, yet was not satisfied, but contributed to the work ten thousand perils; whilst we, who are destitute of that source of confidence, whence, tell me, do we expect either to preserve those who are committed to our charge, or to gain those who are not come to the fold;—men, as we are, who have been making a study of self-indulgence, who are searching the world over for ease, and who are unable, or rather who are unwilling, to endure even the very shadow of danger, and are as far distant from his wisdom as heaven is from earth? Hence it is too that they who are under us are at so great a distance behind the men of those days; because the disciples of those days were better than the teachers of these, isolated as they were in the midst of the populace, and of tyrants, and having all men on all sides their enemies, and yet not in the slightest degree dragged down or yielding. Hear at least what he saith to the Philippians, ([Philip. i. 29.](#)) "Because to you it hath been granted in the behalf of Christ, not only to believe on Him, but also to suffer in his behalf." And again to the Thessalonians, ([1 Thes. ii. 14.](#)) "For ye, brethren, became imitators of the churches of God which are in Judæa." And again in writing to the Hebrews ([Heb. x. 34.](#)) he said, "And ye took joyfully the spoiling of your possessions." And to the Colossians ([Col. iii. 3.](#)) he testifies, saying, "For ye died, and your life is hid with Christ in God." And indeed to these very Ephesians he bears witness of many perils and dangers. And again in writing to the Galatians, ([Gal. iii. 4.](#)) he says, "Did ye suffer so many things in vain? if it be indeed in vain." And you see them too, all employed in doing good. Hence it was that both grace wrought effectually in those days, hence also that they lived in good works. Hear, moreover, what he writes to the Corinthians, against whom he brings charges out of number; yet does he not bear even them record, where he says, "Yea, what zeal it wrought in you, yea, what

longing!” (1 Cor. vii. 11.) And again, in how many points does he bear them record on this subject? These things one shall not see now-a-days, even in teachers. They are all gone and perished. And the cause is, that love hath waxed cold, that sinners go unpunished; (for hear what he says writing to Timothy, (1 Tim. v. 20.) “Them that sin, reprove in the sight of all;”) it is that the rulers are in a sickly state; for if the head be not sound, how can the rest of the body maintain its vigor? But mark how great is the present disorder. They, who were living virtuously, and who under any circumstance might have confidence, have taken possession of the tops of the mountains,²⁴⁵ and have escaped out of the world, separating themselves as from an enemy and an alien and not from a body to which they belonged.

Plagues too, teeming with untold mischiefs, have lighted upon the Churches. The chief offices have become saleable.²⁴⁶ Hence numberless evils are springing, and there is no one to redress, no one to reprove them. Nay, the disorder has assumed a sort of method and consistency. Has a man done wrong, and been arraigned for it? His effort is not to prove himself guiltless, but to find if possible accomplices in his crimes. What is to become of us? since hell is our threatened portion. Believe me, had not God stored up punishment for us there, ye would see every day tragedies deeper than the disasters of the Jews. What then? however let no one take offence, for I mention no names; suppose some one were to come into this church to present you that are here at this moment, those that are now with me, and to make inquisition of them; or rather not now, but suppose on Easter day any one, endued with such a spirit, as to have a thorough knowledge of the things they had been doing, should narrowly examine all that came to Communion, and were being washed [in Baptism] after they had attended the mysteries; many things would be discovered more shocking than the Jewish horrors. He would find persons who practise augury, who make use of charms, and omens and incantations, and who have committed fornication, adulterers, drunkards, and revilers,—covetous, I am unwilling to add, lest I should hurt the feelings of any of those who are standing here. What more? Suppose any one should make scrutiny into all the communicants in the world, what kind of transgression is there which he would not detect? and what if he examined those in authority? Would he not find them eagerly bent upon gain? making traffic of high places? envious, malignant, vainglorious, gluttonous, and slaves to money?

Where then there is such impiety as this going on, what dreadful calamity must we not expect? And to be assured how sore vengeance they incur who are guilty of such sins as

245 This alludes to the Monks who lived in the mountains about Antioch, where these Homilies seem to have been written. Compare Homily xiii. p. 2. vid. *Adv. Oppugn.* i. 7, 8. Elsewhere he blames persons who retired, as hiding their talents, vid. *I Cor. Hom.* vi. 8.

246 The same sin is noticed among other places by S. Basil *Ep.* 53. S. Ambrose *in Luc.* lib. ix. 17–19. S. Jerome *in Mat.* xxi. 12, 13.

these, consider the examples of old. One single man, a common soldier, stole the sacred property, and all were smitten. Ye know, doubtless, the history I mean? I am speaking of Acham the son of Carmi, the man who stole the consecrated spoil. ([Joshua vii. 1–26.](#)) The time too when the Prophet spoke, was a time when their country was full of soothsayers, like that of the Philistines. ([Isa. ii. 6.](#)) Whereas now there are evils out of number at the full, and not one fears. Oh, henceforth let us take the alarm. God is accustomed to punish the righteous also with the wicked; such was the case with Daniel, and with the three holy Children, such has been the case with ten thousand others, such is the case in the wars that are taking place even at the present day. For the one indeed, whatever burden of sins they have upon them, by this means lay aside even that; but not so the other.

On account of all these things, let us take heed to ourselves. Do ye not see these wars? Do ye not hear of these disasters? Do ye learn no lesson from these things? Nations and whole cities are swallowed up and destroyed, and myriads as many again are enslaved to the barbarians.

If hell bring us not to our senses, yet let these things. What, are these too mere threats, are they not facts that have already taken place? Great is the punishment they have suffered, yet a greater still shall we suffer, who are not brought to our senses even by their fate. Is this discourse wearing?²⁴⁷ I am aware it is myself, but if we attend to it, it has its advantage; because this it has not, the quality of an address to please,—nay more, nor ever shall have, but ever those topics which may avail to humble and to chasten the soul. For these will be to us the ground-work of those blessings to come hereafter, to which God grant that we may all attain, in Jesus Christ our Lord, with whom to the Father, together with the Holy Ghost be glory and might and honor, now and henceforth, and forever and ever. Amen.

²⁴⁷ S. Chrysostom complains that his rich hearers, when the choice lay between theatre or race and Church, preferred the former; alleging the heat and crowd of the latter, vid. t. 3. *Hom.* iii. xii. and xv. (Ed. Ben.) *I Cor.* *Hom.* v. fin. We see his care to consult for the tastes and capacities of his hearers in his preaching, in [Ps. 41.](#) init. and t. 3. *Hom.* vii. n. 3. (Ed. Ben.)

Homily VII.

Chapter III. Verses 8–11

“Unto me, who am less than the least of all saints, was this grace given, to preach unto the Gentiles the unsearchable riches of Christ; and to make all men see what is the dispensation of the mystery, which from all ages hath been hid in God, who created all things:²⁴⁸ to the intent that now unto the principalities and the powers in the heavenly places might be made known through the Church the manifold wisdom of God, according to the eternal purpose, which He purposed in Christ Jesus our Lord.”

They who go to the physician’s have not merely to go there and nothing further; they have to learn how to treat themselves, and to apply remedies. And so with us then who come here, we must not do this and nothing else, we must learn our lesson, the surpassing lowliness of Paul. What? when he was about to speak of the vastness of the grace of God, hear what he saith, “Unto me, who am less than the least of all saints, was this grace given.” Lowliness indeed it was even to bewail his former sins, although blotted out, and to make mention of them, and to hold himself within his true measure as where he calls himself “a blasphemer, and a persecutor, and injurious;” (1 Tim. i. 13.) yet nothing was equal to this: for “formerly,” saith he, such was I; and again he calls himself, “one born out of due time.” (1 Cor. xv. 8.) But that after so many great and good deeds and at that time he should thus humble himself, and call himself “less than the least of all,” this is indeed great and surpassing moderation. “To one who am less than the least of all saints;” he saith not, “than the Apostles.” So that that expression is less strong than this before us. There his words are, “I am not meet to be called an Apostle.” (1 Cor. xv. 9.) Here he says that he is even “less than the least of all saints;” “to me,” saith he, “who am less than the least of all saints was this grace given.” What grace? “To preach unto the Gentiles the unsearchable riches of Christ, and to make all men see what is the dispensation of the mystery, which from all ages hath been hid in God, who created all things, to the intent that now unto the principalities and the powers in the heavenly places, might be made known through the Church the manifold wisdom of God.” True, to man it was not revealed; and art thou enlightening Angels and Archangels and Principalities and Powers? I am, saith he. For it was “hid in God,” even “in God who created all things.” And dost thou venture to utter this? I do, saith he. But whence hath this been made manifest to the Angels? By the Church. Again he saith, not merely the manifold (ποικίλος) but the much-manifold (πολυποικίλος) wisdom, that is, “the multiplied and



248 [The words ‘through Jesus Christ’ (διὰ Ἰησοῦ Χριστοῦ) which are here found in Chrysostom’s text have gotten into the *textus receptus* from the few late and mostly cursive mss. which present the Byzantine or Constantinopolitan text and from which the *textus receptus* was made. Chrysostom is the chief witness of this Byzantine text. Schaff, *Companion to Greek Testament*, pp. 205–6. The words are omitted by Aleph A B C D, most Versions and Editors.—G.A.]

varied.” What then is this? Did not Angels know it? No, nothing of it; for if Principalities knew it not, much less could Angels ever have known it. What then? Did not even Archangels know it? No, nor even they. But whence were they going to know it? Who was to reveal it? When we were taught it, then were they also by us.²⁴⁹ For hear what the Angel saith to Joseph; “Thou shalt call His Name Jesus, for it is He that shall save His people from their sins.” (Matt. i. 21.)

Paul himself was sent to the Gentiles, the other Apostles to the Circumcision. So that the more marvellous and astonishing commission was given, saith he, “to me, who am less than the least.” And this too was of grace, that he that was least should have the greatest things entrusted to him; that he should be made the herald of these tidings. For he that is made a herald of the greater tidings, is in this way great.

“To preach unto the Gentiles the unsearchable riches²⁵⁰ of Christ.”

If His “riches are unsearchable,” and that too after his appearing, much more is His essence. If it is still a mystery, much more was it before it was made known; for a mystery he calls it on this account, because neither did the Angels know it, nor was it manifest to any one else.

“And to make all men see,” saith he, “what is the dispensation of the mystery which from all ages hath been hid in God, who created all things.”

Angels knew only this, that “The Lord’s portion was His people.” (Deut. xxxii. 8, 9.) And again it is said, “The Prince of Persia withstood me.” (Dan. x. 13.) So that it is nothing to be wondered at that they were ignorant of this; for if they were ignorant of the circumstances of the return from the Captivity, much more would they be of these things. For this is the gospel. “It is He that shall save,” it saith, “His people.” (Matt. i. 21.) Not a word about the Gentiles. But what concerns the Gentiles the Spirit revealeth. That they were called indeed, the Angels knew, but that it was to the same privileges as Israel, yea, even to sit upon the throne of God, this, who would ever have expected? who would ever have believed?

“Which hath been hid,” saith he, “in God.”

This “dispensation,” however, he more clearly unfolds in the Epistle to the Romans. “In God,” he continues, “who created all things by Jesus Christ.”²⁵¹ And he does well to say “by Jesus Christ;” forasmuch as He who created all things by Him, revealeth also this by Him;

249 S. Chrysostom says the same, *Orat. iv. in Anom. 2.* and *Hom. i. in Joan. 2.* (ed. Ben.) vid. also Theodoret *in Ps. 23. 7, 8.* S. Greg. Nyss. *Hom. 8 in Cant.* p. 596. S. Jerome *in loc.* [Comp. [1 Pet. i. 12](#), which things angels desire to look into.—G.A.]

250 [“The whole divine fulness of salvation, of which Christ is the possessor and bestower, and which is of such a nature that the human intellect cannot explore it so as to form an adequate conception of it. This does not hinder the proclamation which, on the contrary, is rendered possible by revelation.”—Meyer.—G.A.]

251 [See note on these words above.—G.A.]

for He hath made nothing without Him; for “without Him,” it is said, “was not any thing made.” (John i. 30.)

In speaking of “principalities” and “powers,” he speaks both of those above and those beneath.

“According to the eternal purpose.” It hath been now, he means, brought to pass, but not now decreed, it had been planned beforehand from the very first. “According to the eternal purpose which He purposed²⁵² in Christ Jesus our Lord.” That is, according to the eternal foreknowledge; foreknowing the things to come, i.e., he means the ages to come; for He knew what was to be, and thus decreed it. According to the purpose of the ages, of those, perhaps, which He hath made by Christ Jesus, because it was by Christ that every thing was made.

Ver. 12. “In whom we have,” saith he, “boldness, and access in confidence through our faith in him.”

“Have access,” not as prisoners, he says, nor yet, as persons candidates for pardon, nor as sinners; for, saith he, we have even “boldness with confidence,” that is, accompanied with cheerful trust; arising from what source? “through our faith in Him.”

Ver. 13. “Wherefore²⁵³ I ask that ye faint not at my tribulations for you, which are your glory.”

How is it “for them?” How is it “their glory?” It is because God so loved them, as to give even the Son for them, and to afflict His servants for them: for it was in order that they might attain so many blessings, that Paul was in prison. Surely this was from God’s exceeding love towards them: it is what God also saith concerning the Prophets, “I have slain them by the words of my mouth.” (Hos. vi. 5.) But how was it that they fainted, when another was afflicted? He means, they were troubled, were distressed. This also he says when writing to the Thessalonians, “that no man be moved by these afflictions.” (1 Thes. iii. 3.) For not only ought we not to grieve, but we ought even to rejoice. If ye find consolation in the forewarning, we tell you beforehand that here we have tribulation. And why pray? Because thus hath the Lord ordered.

Ver. 14, 15. “For this cause²⁵⁴ I bow my knees unto the Father from whom every family in heaven and on earth is named.”

252 [This verb, ἐποίησεν, has been applied by many to the ‘forming’ of the purpose. (So Rev. Ver.) But it seems best to refer it to the ‘execution’ of it, regarded as an accomplished fact. Riddle in *Popular Commentary* and in *Lange*. Braune in *Lange*. Meyer, Ellicott.—G.A.]

253 [Wherefore, “in view of my position as minister of such a gospel.”—Riddle.—G.A.]

254 [This τοῦτου χάριν is a resumption of the first verse of the chapter which was left unfinished by reason of the digression concerning his office as apostle of the Gentiles, which forms a section by itself. (ver. 2-13.)—G.A.]

He here shows the spirit of his prayer for them. He does not say simply, “I pray,” but manifests the supplication to be heartfelt, by the “bowing of the knees.”

“From whom every family.”

That is, no longer, he means, reckoned, according to the number of Angels, but according to Him who hath created the tribes both in heaven above and in earth beneath, not as the Jewish.

Ver. 16, 17. “That He would grant you according to the riches of His glory that ye may be strengthened with power through His Spirit in the inward man; that Christ may dwell in your hearts through faith.”

Mark with what insatiable earnestness he invokes these blessings upon them, that they may not be tossed about. But how shall this be effected? By the “Holy Spirit in your inward man, that Christ may dwell in your hearts through faith.” How again shall this be?

Ver. 18, 19. “To the end that ye being rooted and grounded in love, may be strong to apprehend with all the saints, what is the breadth, and length, and height, and depth,²⁵⁵ and to know the love of Christ which passeth knowledge.”

Thus is his prayer now again, the very same as when he began. For what were his words in the beginning? “That the God of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of glory may give unto you a Spirit of wisdom and revelation in the knowledge of Him; having the eyes of your heart enlightened, that ye may know what is the hope of His calling, what the riches of the glory of His inheritance in the saints; and what the exceeding greatness of His power to us-ward who believe.” And now again he says the same. “That ye may be strong to apprehend with all the saints what is the breadth, and length, and height, and depth;” i.e., to know perfectly the mystery which hath been providentially ordered in our behalf:²⁵⁶ “and the breadth, and length, and height, and depth;” that is, too, the immensity of the love of God, and how it extends every where. And he outlines it by the visible dimensions of solid bodies, pointing as it were to a man. He comprehends the upper and under and sides. I have thus spoken indeed, he would say, yet is it not for any words of mine to teach you these things; that must be the work of the Holy Spirit. “By His might,” saith he, is it that ye must be “strengthened” against the trials that await you, and in order to remain unshaken; so that there is no other way to be strengthened but by the Holy Ghost, both on account of trials and carnal reasonings.

255 [“A sensuous illustration of the idea; ‘how great in every relation.’”—Meyer. G.A.]

256 [“Of what are these dimensions predicated? Not of the work of redemption as Chrysostom (τὸ μυστήριον τὸ ὑπὲρ ὑμῶν οἰκονομηθὲν) because after a new portion of the discourse is begun at **ver. 14**, the μυστήριον is not again mentioned; nor of the love of God to us, as Chrysostom again, for the ἐν ἀγάπῃ preceding does not refer to God’s love; but of the love of Christ to men as shown in **ver. 19**.”—Meyer. So Ellicott, Braune, Riddle.—G.A.]

But how doth Christ dwell in the hearts? Hear what Christ Himself saith, “I and my Father will come unto him, and make our abode with him.” (John xiv. 23.) He dwelleth in those hearts that are faithful, in those that are “rooted” in His love, those that remain firm and unshaken.

“That ye may be” thoroughly “strong,” saith he; so that there is great strength needed.
²⁵⁷“That ye may be filled unto all the fulness of God.”

What he means is this. Although the love of Christ lies above the reach of all human knowledge, yet shall ye know it, if ye shall have Christ dwelling in you, yea, not only shall know from Him this, but shall even “be filled unto all the fulness of God;” meaning by the “fulness of God,” either the knowledge how God is worshipped in the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost, or else urging them thus to use every effort, in order to be filled with all virtue, of which God is full.

Ver. 20. “Now unto Him that is able to do exceeding abundantly above all that we ask or think, according to the power that worketh in us.”

That God hath done “abundantly above all that we ask or think,” is evident from what the Apostle himself hath written. For I indeed, saith he, pray, but He of Himself, even without any prayer of mine, will do works greater than all we ask, not simply “greater,” nor “abundantly greater,” but “exceeding abundantly.” And this is evident from “the power, that worketh in us:” for neither did we ever ask these things, nor did we expect them.

Ver. 21. “Unto Him be the glory,” he concludes, “in the Church and in Christ Jesus, unto all generations forever and ever. Amen.”

Well does he close the discourse with prayer and doxology; for right were it that He, who hath bestowed upon us such vast gifts, should be glorified and blessed, so that this is even a proper part of our amazement at His mercies, to give glory for the things advanced to us at God’s hands through Jesus Christ.

“The glory in the Church.” Well might he say this, forasmuch as the Church alone can last on to eternity.

It seems necessary to state what are meant by “families.” (πατριαί) Here on earth, indeed there are “families” that is races sprung from one parent stock; but in heaven how can this be, where none is born of another? Surely then, by “families,”²⁵⁸ he means either the assem-

257 [This entire paragraph is omitted from Field’s text. But as it is supported by several excellent authorities, as it is in Chrysostom’s style and as it contains a very noble thought, we have ventured to retain it. “Field seems to rely on the probability that the shorter text is the original. One of his main authorities seems to be a Catena which would naturally abridge the portions extracted especially in a writer so given to amplifications as Chrysostom.” We have in the main followed Field’s text in spite of this probability, but in exceptional cases, like the present, we have ventured to demur.—G.A.]

258 This text has various interpretations. S. Athanasius uses it to imply that God, as Father of the Son, is the only true Father, and that all created paternity is a shadow of the true. *Orat. in Arian.* i. 23. S. Jerome says, “As

blies and orders of heavenly beings; as also we find it written in Scripture, “the family of Amattari:” (1 Sam. x. 21. See Septuagint.) or else that it is from Him from whom earthly fathers have their name of father.

However, he does not ask the whole of God, but demands of them also faith and love, and not simply love, but love “rooted and grounded,” so that neither any blasts can shake it, nor any thing else overturn it. He had said, that “tribulations” are “glory,” and if mine are so to you, he would say, much more will your own be: so that to be afflicted is no token of men being forsaken, for He who hath wrought so great things for us, never would do this.

Again, if in order to understand the love of God, it was necessary for Paul to pray, and there was need of the indwelling of the Holy Spirit, who by following mere reasonings shall understand the nature of Christ? And why is it a difficult thing to learn that God loveth us? Beloved, it is extremely difficult. For some know not even this; wherefore, they even say, numberless evils come to be in the world; and others know not the extent of this love. Nor, indeed, is Paul seeking to know its extent, nor with any view to measure it; for how could he? but only to understand this, that it is transcendent, and great. And this very thing, he says, he is able to show, even from the knowledge which hath been vouchsafed to us.

However, what is higher than the being “strengthened with might,” in order to have Christ within? Vast are the things we ask, saith he, yet is He able to do above even them, so that not only doth He love us, but doth so intensely. Be it our care therefore, beloved, to understand the love of God. A great thing indeed is this; nothing is so beneficial to us, nothing so deeply touches us: more availing this to convince our souls than the fear of hell itself. Whence then shall we understand it? Both from the sources now mentioned, and from the things which happen every day. For from what motive have these things been done for us? from what necessity on His part? None whatever. Over and over again he lays down love as the cause. But the highest degree of love is that where men receive a benefit, without any prior service on their part to call for it.

He who alone is good, (Luke xviii. 19.) makes men good, and who is alone immortal, (1 Tim. vi. 16.) bestows immortality, and who alone is true (Rom. iii. 4.) imparts the name of truth; so too the only Father, in that He is Creator of all, and the cause of substance to all, gives to the rest to be called Father.” *in loc.* He considers that the Angels are said in the text to share His paternity, in a spiritual sense, as Christ says to the sick man, “Son,” and to His disciples, “Little children.” Theodoret seems to say the same. *in loc.* v. also Hooker, E. P. V. liv. 2. [“The reference must be to those larger classes and communities into which, as we may also infer from other passages (i. 21; Col. i. 16.) the celestial hosts appear to be divided; and to the races and tribes of men every one of which owes the very title of πατριά, by which it is defined to the great πατήρ of all the πατριά both of angels and men.”—Ellicott. “The Apostle seems regarding God as the Father of us His adopted children in Christ, to go forth into the fact that He in this relation to us is the great original and prototype of the paternal relation, wherever found.” Alford in Riddle in *Pop. Com.*—G.A.]

Moral. And let us then be followers of Him; let us do good to our enemies, to them that hate us, let us draw near to those who turn their backs upon us. This renders us like unto God. “For if ye love them that love you,” saith Christ, “what reward have ye?” “Do not even the Gentiles the same.” ([Matt. v. 46.](#)) But what is a sure proof of love? To love him that hates thee. I wish to give you some example, (pardon me,) and since I find it not among them that are spiritual, I shall quote an instance from them that are without. See ye not those lovers? How many insults are wreaked upon them by their mistresses, how many artifices practised, how many punishments inflicted: yet they are enchained to them, they burn for them, and love them better than their own souls, passing whole nights before their thresholds. From them let us take our example, not indeed to love such as those,—women, I mean, that are harlots; no, but thus to love our enemies. For tell me, do not harlots treat their lovers with greater insolence than all the enemies in the world, and squander away their substance, and cast insult in their face, and impose upon them more servile tasks than upon their own menials? And yet still they desist not, though no one hath so great an enemy in any one, as the lover in his mistress. Yea, this beloved one disdains, and reviles, and oftentimes maltreats him, and the more she is loved, the more she scorns him. And what can be more brutal than a spirit like this? Yet notwithstanding he loves her still.

But possibly we shall find love like this in spiritual characters also, not in those of our day, (for it has “waxed cold,”) ([Matt. xxiv. 12.](#)) but in those great and glorious men of old. Moses, the blessed Moses, surpassed even those that love with human passion. How, and in what way? First, he gave up the court, and the luxury, and the retinue, and the glory attending it, and chose rather to be with the Israelites. Yet is this not only what no one else would ever have done, but would have even been ashamed, were another to have discovered him, of being found to be a kinsman of men, who were slaves and not only slaves, but were looked upon as even execrable. Yet was he not only not ashamed of his kindred, but with all his spirit defended them, and threw himself into dangers for their sake. ([Acts. vii. 24.](#)) How? Seeing, it is said, one doing an injury to one of them, he defended him that suffered the injury, and slew him that inflicted it. But this is not as yet for the sake of enemies. Great indeed is this act of itself, but not so great as what comes afterwards. The next day, then, he saw the same thing taking place, and when he saw him whom he had defended²⁵⁹ doing his neighbor wrong, he admonished him to desist from his wrong-doing. But he said, with great ingratitude, “Who made thee a ruler and a judge over us?” ([Acts. vii. 27.](#)) Who would not have taken fire at these words? Had then the former act been that of passion and frenzy, then would he have smitten and killed this man also; for surely he on whose behalf it was

259 [It does not appear from the account in [Exodus ii. 11 ff.](#) or from that in [Acts vii. 24 ff.](#) that the Hebrew who did his brother wrong was the same that Moses had defended on the preceeding day, as Chrysostom here takes for granted.—G.A.]

done, never would have informed against him. But because they were brethren, it is said, he spoke thus. When he [the Hebrew] was being wronged, he uttered no such word “Who made thee a ruler and a judge over us?” “Wherefore saidst thou not this yesterday?” Moses would say, “Thy injustice, and thy cruelty, these make me a ruler and a judge.”

But now, mark, how that some, in fact, say as much even to God Himself. Whenever they are wronged indeed, they would have Him a God of vengeance, and complain of His long suffering; but when themselves do wrong, not for a moment.

However, what could be more bitter than words like these? And yet notwithstanding, after this, when he was sent to that ungrateful, to that thankless race, he went, and shrunk not back. Yea, and after those miracles, and after the wonders wrought by his hand, oftentimes they sought to stone him to death and he escaped out of their hands. They kept murmuring too incessantly, and yet still, notwithstanding, so passionately did he love them, as to say unto God, when they committed that heinous sin, “Yet now if Thou wilt forgive, forgive their sin; and if not, blot even me also out of the book which Thou hast written.” (Ex. xxxii. 32.) Fain would I perish, saith he, with them, rather than without them be saved. Here, verily, is love even to madness, verily, unbounded love. What sayest thou, Moses? Art thou regardless of Heaven? I am, saith he, for I love those who have wronged me. Prayest thou to be blotted out? Yea, saith he, what can I do, for it is love? And what again after these things? Hear what the Scripture saith elsewhere; “And it went ill with Moses for their sakes.” (Ps. cvi. 32.) How often did they wax wanton? How often did they reject both himself and his brother? How often did they seek to return back to Egypt? and yet after all these things did he burn, yea, was beside himself with love for them, and was ready to suffer for their sakes.

Thus ought a man to love his enemies; by lamentation, by unwearied endurance, by doing everything, by showing all favor, to aim at their salvation.

And what again, tell me, did Paul? did he not ask even to be accursed in their stead? (Rom. ix. 3.) But the great pattern we must of necessity derive from the Lord, for thus doth He also Himself, where he saith, “For He maketh His sun to rise on the evil and the good,” (Matt. v. 45.) adducing the example from His Father; but we from Christ Himself. He came unto them, in His Incarnation, I mean, He became a servant for their sakes, “He humbled Himself, He emptied Himself, He took the form of a servant.” (Philip. ii. 7, 8.) And when He came unto them, He went not Himself aside “into any way of the Gentiles,” (Matt. x. 5.) and gave the same charge to His disciples, and not only so, but “He went about healing all manner of disease, and all manner of sickness.” (Matt. iv. 23.) And what then? All the rest indeed were astonished, and marvelled, and said, “Whence, then, hath this man all these things?” (Matt. xiii. 56.) But these, the objects of His beneficence, these said, “He hath a devil,” (John x. 20.) and “blasphemeth,” (John x. 36.) and “is mad,” and is a “deceiver,” (John vii. 12, and Matt. xxvii. 63.) Did he therefore cast them away? No, in no wise, but when He

heard these sayings, He even yet more signally bestowed His benefits upon them, and went straightway to them that were about to crucify Him, to the intent that He might but only save them. And after He was crucified, what were His words? "Father, forgive them, for they know not what they do." (Luke xxiii. 34.) Both cruelly treated before this, and cruelly treated after this, even to the very latest breath, for them He did every thing, in their behalf He prayed. Yea, and after the Cross itself, what did He not do for their sakes? Did He not send Apostles? Did He not work miracles? Did He not shake the whole world?

Thus is it we ought to love our enemies, thus to imitate Christ. Thus did Paul. Stoned, suffering unnumbered cruelties, yet did he all things for their good. Hear his own words. "My heart's desire and my supplication to God is for them that they may be saved." (Rom. x. 1, 2.) And again; "For I bear them witness that they have a zeal for God." And again; "If thou, being a wild olive tree wast grafted in, how much more shall these be grafted into their own olive tree?" (Rom. xi. 24.) How tender, thinkest thou, must be the affection from which these expressions proceed, how vast the benevolence? it is impossible to express it, impossible.

Thus is it we ought to love our enemies. This is to love God, Who hath enjoined it, Who hath given it as His law. To imitate Him is to love our enemy. Consider it is not thine enemy thou art benefiting, but thyself; thou art not loving him, but art obeying God. Knowing therefore these things, let us confirm our love one to another, that we may perform this duty perfectly, and attain those good things that are promised in Christ Jesus our Lord, with Whom to the Father, together with the Holy Ghost, be glory, might, and honor, now, and for ever and ever. Amen.

Homily VIII.

Chapter IV. Verses 1, 2

“I therefore, the prisoner in the Lord, beseech you to walk worthily of the calling wherewith ye were called, with all lowliness and meekness.”

It is the virtue of teachers to aim not at praise, nor at esteem from those under their authority, but at their salvation, and to do every thing with this object; since the man who should make the other end his aim, would not be a teacher but a tyrant. Surely it is not for this that God set thee over them, that thou shouldest enjoy greater court and service, but that thine own interests should be disregarded, and every one of theirs built up. This is a teacher’s duty: such an one was the blessed Paul, a man who was free from all manner of vanity, and was contented to be one of the many, nay more, to be the very least even of them. Hence he even calls himself their servant, and so generally speaks in a tone of supplication. Observe him then even now writing nothing dictatorial, nothing imperious, but all chastened and subdued.

“I therefore,” saith he, “the prisoner in the Lord, beseech you to walk worthily of the calling wherewith ye were called.” What is it, tell me, thou art beseeching? Is it that thou mayest gain any end for thyself? No, saith he, in no wise; it is that I may save others. And yet surely they who beseech, do so for things which are of importance to themselves. True; and this, saith he, is of importance to myself, according to what he says also elsewhere in his writings, “Now we live, if ye stand fast in the Lord;” (1 Thess. iii. 8.) for he ever earnestly desired the salvation of those whom he was instructing.

“I, the prisoner in the Lord.” Great and mighty dignity! Greater than that of king or of consul, or of any other. Hence it is the very title he uses in writing to Philemon, “As Paul the aged, and now a prisoner also of Jesus Christ.” (Philemon 9.) For nothing is so glorious as a bond for Christ’s sake, as the chains that were bound around those holy hands; more glorious is it to be a prisoner for Christ’s sake than to be an Apostle, than to be a Teacher, than to be an Evangelist. Is there any that loveth Christ, he will understand what I am saying. Is any transported and fired with devotion for the Lord, he knows the power of these bonds. Such an one would rather choose to be a prisoner for Christ’s sake, than to have the Heavens for his dwelling. More glorious than any gold were the hands he was showing to them, yea, than any royal diadem. Yes, no jewelled tiara bound around the head invests it with such glory, as an iron chain for Christ’s sake. Then was the prison more glorious than palaces, yea, than heaven itself. Why say I than palaces? Because it contained a prisoner of Christ. Is there any that loveth Christ, he knows the dignity of this title, he knows what a virtue is this, he knows how great a boon he bestowed upon mankind, even this, to be bound for His sake. More glorious this, perhaps to be bound for His sake, than “to sit at His right hand,” (Matt. xx. 21.) more august this, than to “sit upon the twelve thrones.” (Matt. xix. 28.)



And why speak I of human glories? I am ashamed to compare earthly riches and golden attire to these bonds. But forbearing to speak of those great and heavenly glories, even were the thing attended with no reward at all, this alone were a great reward, this an ample recompense, to suffer these hardships for the sake of the Beloved. They that love, even though it be not God, but man, they know what I am saying, since they are more delighted to suffer for, than to be honored by those they love. But to fully understand these things belongs to the holy company, the Apostles, I mean, and them alone. For hearken to what the blessed Luke saith, ([Acts v. 11.](#)) “that they departed from the presence of the council, rejoicing that they were counted worthy to suffer dishonor for the Name.” To all others indeed it seems to be foolishness, that to suffer dishonor is to be counted worthy, that to suffer dishonor is to rejoice. But to them that understand the love of Christ, this is esteemed of all things the most blessed. Were any to offer me my choice, the whole Heaven or that chain, that chain I would prefer. Were any to ask whether he should place me on high with the Angels, or with Paul in his bonds, the prison I would choose. Were any about to change me into one of those powers, that are in Heaven, that are round about the throne, or into such a prisoner as this, such a prisoner I would choose to be. Nothing is more blessed than that chain. Would that I could be at this moment in that very spot, (for the bonds are said to be still in existence,) to behold and admire those men, for their love of Christ. Would that I could behold the chains, at which the devils fear and tremble, but which Angels reverence. Nothing is more noble than to suffer any evil for Christ’s sake. I count not Paul so happy, because he was “caught up into Paradise,” ([2 Cor. xii. 4.](#)) as because he was cast into the dungeon; I count him not so happy, because he heard “unspeakable words,” as because he endured those bonds. I count him not so happy, because he was “caught up into the third Heaven,” ([2 Cor. xii. 2.](#)) as I count him happy for those bonds’ sake. For that these are greater than those, hear how even he himself knew this; for he saith not, I who “heard unspeakable words,” beseech you: but what? “I, the prisoner in the Lord, beseech you.” Nor yet are we to wonder, though he inscribes not this in all his Epistles, for he was not always in prison, but only at certain times.

I deem it more desirable to suffer evil for Christ’s sake, than to receive honor at Christ’s hands. This is transcendent honor, this is glory that surpasseth all things. If He Himself who became a servant for my sake, and “emptied” ([Philip. ii. 7.](#)) His glory, yet thought not Himself so truly in glory, as when He was crucified for my sake, what ought not I to endure? For hear His own words: “Father, glorify Thou Me.” ([John xvii. 1.](#)) What is this thou art saying? Thou art being led to the cross with thieves and plunderers of graves, thou endurest the death of the accursed; Thou art about to be spit upon and buffeted; and callest Thou this glory?²⁶⁰ Yes, He saith, for I suffer these things for My beloved ones, and I count them

260 [Christ referred to the glorification with His Father which was to follow his humiliation. Cf. [John xvii. 5.](#) [Philip. ii. 9.](#)—G.A.]

altogether glory. If He who loved the miserable and wretched calleth this glory, not to be on His Father's throne, nor in His Father's glory, but in dishonor,—if this was His glory, and if this He set before the other: much more ought I to regard these things as glory. Oh! those blessed bonds! Oh! those blessed hands which that chain adorned! Not so worthy were Paul's hands when they lifted up and raised the lame man at Lystra, as when they were bound around with those chains. Had I been living in those times, how eagerly would I have embraced them, and put them to the very apple of mine eyes. Never would I have ceased kissing those hands which were counted worthy to be bound for my Lord. Marvellest thou at Paul, when the viper fastened on his hand, and did him no hurt? Marvel not. It revered his chain. Yea, and the whole sea revered it; for then too was he bound, when he was saved from shipwreck. Were any one to grant me power to raise the dead at this moment, I would not choose that power, but this chain. Were I free from the cares of the Church, had I my body strong and vigorous, I would not shrink from undertaking so long a journey, only for the sake of beholding those chains, for the sake of seeing the prison where he was bound. The traces indeed of his miracles are numerous in all parts of the world, yet are they not so dear as those of his scars. ([Gal. vi. 17.](#)) Nor in the Scriptures does he so delight me when he is working miracles, as when he is suffering evil, being scourged, and dragged about. Insomuch that from his body were carried away handkerchiefs or aprons. Marvellous, truly marvellous, are these things, and yet not so marvellous as those. "When they had laid many stripes upon him, they cast him into prison." ([Acts xvi. 23.](#)) And again; being in bonds, "they were singing hymns unto God." ([Acts xvi. 25.](#)) And again; "They stoned him, and dragged him out of the city, supposing that he was dead." ([Acts xiv. 19.](#)) Would ye know how mighty a thing is an iron chain for Christ's sake, bound about His servant's body? Harken to what Christ Himself saith, "Blessed are ye." ([Mat. v. 11.](#)) Why? When ye shall raise the dead? No. But why? When ye shall heal the blind? Not at all. But why then? "When men shall reproach you, and persecute you, and say all manner of evil against you falsely for My sake." ([Matt. v. 11.](#)) Now, if to be evil spoken of renders men thus blessed, to be evil entreated, what may not that achieve? Harken to what this blessed one himself saith elsewhere; "Henceforth there is laid up for me the crown of righteousness:" ([2 Tim. iv. 8.](#)) and yet, more glorious than this crown is the chain: of this, saith he, the Lord will count me worthy, and I am in no wise inquisitive about those things. Enough it is for me for every recompense, to suffer evil for Christ's sake. Let Him but grant me to say, that "I fill up that which is lacking of the afflictions of Christ:" ([Col. i. 24.](#)) and I ask nothing further.

Peter also was counted worthy of this chain; for he, we read, was bound, and delivered to soldiers, and was sleeping. ([Acts xii. 6.](#)) Yet he rejoiced and was not diverted from his right mind and he fell into deep sleep which could not have been, had he been in any great anxiety. However, he was sleeping, being between two soldiers: and an Angel came unto him, and smote him on the side, and raised him up. Now then, were any one to say to me,



Which wouldst thou? Wouldst thou be the Angel that struck Peter, or Peter that was delivered? I would rather choose to be Peter, for whose sake even the Angel came, yea, I would that I might enjoy those chains. And how is it, say ye, that, as being released from great evils, he prays? Marvel not: he prays, because he is afraid lest he should die; and of dying he is afraid, because he would fain have his life to be still a subject for further sufferings. For hearken to what the blessed Paul himself also saith. ([Philip. i. 23, 24.](#)) “To depart, and to be with Christ, is very far better;” “Yet to abide in the flesh is more needful for your sake.” This he calls even a favor where he writes, and says, “To you it hath been granted, (as a favor ἔχαρίσθη) in the behalf of Christ, not only to believe on Him, but also to suffer in His behalf.” ([Philip. i. 29.](#)) So that this latter is greater than the other: for He gave it of His free grace; verily, a favor it is, exceeding great, yea greater than any one of those, greater than to make the sun and the moon stand still, than to move the world! greater this than to have power over devils, or to cast out devils. The devils grieve not so much at being cast out by the faith which we exert, as when they behold us suffering any evil, and imprisoned for Christ’s sake. For this increases our boldness. Not for this is it a noble thing to be in bonds for Christ’s sake that it procures for us a kingdom; it is that it is done for Christ’s sake. Not for this do I bless those bonds, for that they conduct on to Heaven; it is because they are worn for the sake of the Lord of Heaven. How great a boast to know that he was bound for Christ’s sake! How great a happiness, how high an honor, how illustrious a distinction! Fain would I ever be dwelling on these subjects. Fain would I cling to this chain. Fain would I, though in reality I have not the power, yet still in idea, bind this chain round my soul by a temper like his.

“The foundations of the prison-house,” we read, “were shaken” where Paul was bound, “and every one’s bands were loosed.” ([Acts xvi. 26.](#)) Beholdest thou then in bonds a nature that can dissolve bonds themselves? for as the Lord’s death put death itself to death, so also did Paul’s bonds loose the men in bonds, shake the house of bondage, open the doors. Yet is not this the natural effect of bonds, but the very reverse; it is to keep him that is bound in safety, not to open for him the prison walls. No, of bonds then in general this is not the nature, but of those bonds which are for Christ’s sake, it is. “The jailor fell down before Paul and Silas.” ([Acts xvi. 29.](#)) And yet neither is this again the effect of chains in general, to lay the binders at the feet of the bound: no, but, on the contrary, to put these last under the hands of the former. Whereas here, the man who was free was under the feet of the man who had been bound. The binder was beseeching him whom he had bound to release him from his fear. Tell me, was it not thou that didst bind him? Didst thou not cast him into the inner prison? Didst thou not make his feet fast in the stocks? Why tremblest thou? Why art thou troubled? Why weepst thou? Why hast thou drawn thy sword? Never bound I, saith he, aught like this! I knew not that the prisoners of Christ had power so mighty as this. What sayest thou? They received power to open Heaven, and should they not be able to open a

prison? They loosed them that were bound by evil spirits, and was a piece of iron likely to conquer them? Thou knowest not the men. And therefore also wert thou pardoned. That prisoner is Paul, whom all the Angels reverence. He is Paul, whose very handkerchiefs and napkins cast out devils, and chase diseases to flight. And sure the bond which is of the devil is adamantine, and far more indissoluble than iron; for this indeed binds the soul, the other only the body. He therefore that released souls that were bound, shall not he have power to release his own body? He that could burst asunder the bonds of evil spirits, shall he not unloose a rivet of iron? He that by his very garments unloosed those prisoners, and released them from the spell of devils, shall not he of himself set himself at liberty? For this was he first bound himself, and then loosed the prisoners, that thou mightest understand that Christ's servants in bonds possess a power far greater than they that are at liberty. Had one who was at liberty wrought this, then had it not been so marvellous. So then the chain was not a token of weakness, but rather of a greater power, and thus is the saint's might more illustriously displayed, when, even though in bonds, he overpowers them that are at liberty, when he that is in bonds sets not only himself at liberty, but them that are in bonds also. Where is the use of walls? What the advantage of thrusting him into the inner prison, whereas he opened the outer also? and why too was it done in the night? and why with an earthquake?

Oh, bear with me a little, and give me leave while I refrain from the Apostle's words, and revel in the Apostle's deeds, and banquet on Paul's chain; grant me still longer to dwell upon it. I have laid hold on that chain, and no one shall part me from it. More securely at this moment am I bound by affection, than was he then in the stocks. This is a bond which no one can loose, for it is formed of the love of Christ; this neither the Angels, no, nor the kingdom of Heaven, has power to unloose. We may hear Paul's own words; ([Rom. viii. 38, 39.](#)) "Neither angels, nor principalities, nor things present, nor things to come, nor powers, nor height, nor depth, shall be able to separate us from the love of God which is in Christ Jesus our Lord."

Now then, why did the event take place at midnight? And wherefore too with an earthquake? Harken, and marvel at the providential orderings of God. Every one's bands were loosed, and the doors were opened. And yet was this done only for the jailor's sake, not with a view to display, but with a view to his salvation: for that the prisoners knew not that they were loosed, is evident from Paul's exclamation; for what said he? "He cried with a loud voice, saying, Do thyself no harm, for we are all here." ([Acts xvi. 28.](#)) But never would they all have been within, had they seen the doors opened, and themselves set at liberty. They who were used to cut through walls, and to scale roofs and parapets, and to venture on all sorts of attempts in chains, never would have endured to remain within, with their bands loosed, and the doors opened, with the jailer himself asleep; no, but the bond of sleep was to them instead of the bonds of iron. So that the thing took place and yet no damage

ensued from the miracle to the jailer who was to be saved. And besides this too, they that are bound are bound most securely in the night, not in the day; and so accordingly might we behold them bound again with all care and sleeping; but had these things been done in the day time, there would have been great stir and tumult.

Then again, wherefore was the building shaken? It was to arouse the jailer, to behold what was done, for he alone was worthy of being saved. And do thou too, behold, I pray, the exceeding greatness of the grace of Christ, for well were it in the midst of Paul's bonds to make mention also of the grace of God, nay indeed the very bonds themselves are of the gift and grace of God. Some indeed there are who complain "Why was the jailer saved?" and from those very circumstances, for which they ought to admire the loving-kindness of God they find fault with it. Nor is it anything to be wondered at. Such are those sickly persons, that find fault even with the food that nourishes them, which they ought to prize, and who affirm that honey is bitter: and those dimsighted persons who are darkened by the very thing which ought to enlighten them. Not that these effects arise from the nature of the objects themselves, but from the weakness of the persons who are unable to use them properly. What, however, was I saying? When they ought to be admiring God's loving-kindness, in that He took a man who had fallen into the most desperate wickedness, and was making him better, they find fault: "Why, how was it that he did not take the thing to be the work of witchcraft and of sorcery, and confine them the more closely, and cry out?" Many things conspired to prevent this; first, that he heard them singing praises to God. And sorcerers never would have been singing such hymns as those, for he heard them, it is said, singing praises unto God. Secondly, the fact, that they themselves did not take flight, but even withheld him from killing himself. Now had they done it for their own sake, they never would have remained still within; they would themselves have escaped first of all. Great again was their kindness also; they withheld the man from killing himself, even him who had bound them, thus all but saying unto him, "Truly, thou didst bind us with all safety, and most cruelly, that thou thyself mightest be loosed from the most cruel of all bonds." For every one is shackled with the chains of his own sins; and those bonds are accursed, whereas these for Christ's sake are blessed, and worth many an earnest prayer. For that these bonds can loose those other bonds of sin, he showed to us by things which are matters of sense. Didst thou behold them released, who had been bound with iron? Thou shalt see thyself also delivered from other galling bonds. These bonds, the prisoners' bonds, not those of Paul, I mean, are the effect of those other bonds, the bonds of sins. They who were confined within, were doubly prisoners, and the jailer himself was a prisoner. They indeed were bound both with iron and with sins, he with sins only. Them did Paul loose to assure the faith of him, for the chains which he loosed were visible. And thus too did Christ Himself; but rather in the inverse order. In that instance, there was a double palsy. What was it? There was that of the soul by sins, and also that of the body. What then did the Lord do? "Son," saith He,



“be of good cheer, thy sins are forgiven.” (Matt. ix. 3–6.) He first loosed the bonds of the real and true palsy, and then proceeds to the other: for when “certain of the Scribes said within themselves, This man blasphemeth; Jesus, knowing their thoughts, said, Wherefore think ye evil in your hearts? For whether is easier, to say, Thy sins are forgiven, or to say, Arise, and walk? But, that ye may know that the Son of Man hath power on earth to forgive sins, (then saith he to the sick of the palsy,) Arise, and take up thy bed, and go unto thy house.” Having wrought the invisible miracle, He confirmed it by the visible, the spiritual by the bodily cure. And why did He do thus? That it might be fulfilled, which is spoken, (Luke xix. 22.) “Out of thine own mouth will I judge thee, thou wicked servant.” For what said they? “None can forgive sins, but God alone.” Of course, therefore, no Angel, nor Archangel, nor any other created power. This ye have yourselves confessed. And what then ought to be said? If I shall be shown to have forgiven sins, it is fully evident that I am God. However, He said it not thus, but what said He? “But that ye may know that the Son of Man hath power on earth to forgive sins; then saith He to the sick of the palsy, Arise, and take up thy bed, and go unto thy house.” (Matt. ix. 6.) When therefore, He would say, I work the more difficult miracle, it is plain that there is no pretext left you, no room for gainsaying about the easier one.²⁶¹ Hence it was that He wrought the invisible miracle first, because there were many gainsayers; and then He led them from the invisible to the visible itself.

Surely then the faith of the jailer was no light or hasty faith. He saw the prisoners. And he saw nothing, he heard nothing wrong; he saw that nothing was done by sorcery, for they were singing hymns unto God. He saw that every thing done proceeded from overflowing kindness, for they did not avenge themselves against him, although they had it in their power; for it was in their power to rescue both themselves and the prisoners, and escape; and if not the prisoners, at all events themselves; but they did not do this. Thus did they challenge his reverence, not only by the miracle, but also by their behavior. For how did Paul cry out? “He cried with a loud voice, saying, Do thyself no harm, for we are all here.” Thou seest at once his freedom from vain-glory and arrogance, and his fellow-feeling. He said not, “It is for us these wonders have been wrought,” but as though he were merely one of the prisoners, he said, “For we are all here.” And yet, even though they had not before this loosed themselves, nor had done so by means of the miracle, still they might have been silent, and have set all that were bound at liberty. For had they held their peace, and had they not with their loud crying stayed his hand, he would have thrust the sword through his throat. Wherefore also Paul cried out, because he had been cast into the inner ward: as

261 [“The one requires no less power than the other, the same divine ἐξουσία enables both to be done. But that ye may know that I was entitled to say the one, I will prove to you that I have the power to say the other.”—Meyer. Since neither is easier but each alike requires divine power, if I can prove to you that I have this divine power to do one, that will prove to you that I have power to do the other.—G.A.]

though he had said, "To thine own injury hast thou done this, that thou hast thrust in so far those that could deliver thee from the danger." However they imitated not the treatment they had received at his hands; though, had he died, all would have escaped. Thou seest that they chose rather to remain in bonds, than to suffer him to perish. Hence too might he reason within himself, "Had they been sorcerers, doubtless they would have set the others at liberty, and have released themselves from their bonds:" (for it is likely that many such had also been imprisoned.) He was the more amazed, in that having often received sorcerers in charge, he had yet witnessed nothing done like this. A sorcerer never would have shaken the foundations, so as to startle the jailer from sleep, and thus render his own escape more difficult.

Now, however, let us proceed to look at the jailor's faith. "And," saith the Scripture, "he called for lights and sprang in, and trembling for fear fell down before Paul and Silas, and brought them out, and said, Sirs, what must I do to be saved?" He grasped fire and sword, and cried, "Sirs, what must I do to be saved?" "And they said, Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and thou shalt be saved, thou and thy house." ([Acts xvi. 29–31.](#)) "This is not the act of sorcerers," he would say, "to deliver a doctrine like this. No mention any where here of an evil spirit." Thou seest how worthy he was to be saved: for when he beheld the miracle, and was relieved from his terror, he did not forget what most concerned him, but even in the midst of so great peril, he was solicitous about that salvation which concerned his soul: and came before them in such a manner as it was meet to come before teachers: he fell down at their feet. "And they spake," it continues, "the word of the Lord, unto him with all that were in his house. And he took them the same hour of the night, and washed their stripes; and was baptized, he and all his, immediately." ([Acts xvi. 32, 33.](#)) Observe the fervency of the man! He did not delay; he did not say, "Let day come, let us see, let us look about us;" but with great fervency, he was both himself baptized, and all his house. Yes, not like most men now-a-days, who suffer both servants and wives and children to go unbaptized.²⁶² Be ye, I beseech you, like the jailor. I say not, in authority, but in purpose; for what is the benefit of authority, where purpose is weak? The savage one, the inhuman one, who lived in the practice of unnumbered wrongs and made this his constant study, has become all at once so humane, so tenderly attentive. "He washed," it is said, "their stripes."

And mark, on the other hand, the fervency of Paul also. Bound, scourged, thus he preached the Gospel. Oh, that blessed chain, with how great travail did it travail that night, what children did it bring forth! Yea of them too may he say, "Whom I have begotten in my bonds." ([Philem. x.](#)) Mark thou, how he glories, and will have the children thus begotten, to be on that account the more illustrious! Mark thou, how transcendent is the glory of those bonds, in that they give lustre not only to him that wore them, but also to them who

262 ἀμνήτους.

were on that occasion begotten by him. They have some advantage, who were begotten in Paul's bonds, I say not in respect of grace, (for grace is one and the same,) nor in respect of remission, (for remission is one and the same to all,) but in that they are thus from the very outset taught to rejoice and to glory in such things. "The same hour of the night," it is said, "he took them, and washed their stripes, and was baptized."

And now then behold the fruit. He straightway recompensed them with his carnal things. "He brought them up into his house, and set meat before them, and rejoiced greatly with all his house, having believed in God." For what was he not ready to do, now that by the opening of the prison doors, heaven itself was opened to him? He washed his teacher, he set food before him, and rejoiced. Paul's chain entered into the prison, and transformed all things there into a Church; it drew in its train the body of Christ, it prepared the spiritual feast, and travailed with that birth, at which Angels rejoice. And was it without reason then that I said that the prison was more glorious than Heaven? For it became a source of joy there; yes, if "there is joy in Heaven over one sinner that repenteth," ([Luke xv. 7.](#)) if, "where two or three are gathered together in His Name, there is Christ in the midst of them;" ([Matt. xviii. 20.](#)) how much more, where Paul and Silas, and the jailor and all his house were, and faith so earnest as theirs! Observe the intense earnestness of their faith.

But this prison has reminded me of another prison. And what then is that? It is that where Peter was. Not, however, that any thing like this took place there. No. He was delivered to four quaternions of soldiers to keep him and he sang not, he watched not, but he slept; neither, again, had he been scourged. And yet was the peril greater, for in the case before us indeed the end was accomplished, and the prisoners Paul and Silas, had undergone their punishment; but in his case it was yet to come. So that though there were no stripes to torture him, yet was there the anticipation of the future to distress him. And mark too the miracle there. "Behold, an angel of the Lord," it is related, "stood by him, and a light shined in the cell; and he smote Peter on the side, and awoke him, saying, Rise up quickly. And his chains fell off from his hands." ([Acts xii. 7.](#)) In order that he might not imagine the transaction to be the work of the light alone, he also struck Peter. Now no one saw the light, save himself only, and he thought it was a vision. So insensible are they that are asleep to the mercies of God. "And the angel," it proceeds, "said unto him, Gird thyself and bind on thy sandals; and he did so. And he saith unto him, Cast thy garment about thee, and follow me. And he went out and followed, and he wist not that it was true which was done by the angel; but thought he saw a vision. And when they were past the first and the second ward, they came unto the iron gate, that leadeth unto the city, which opened to them of his own accord; and they went out, and passed on through one street; and straightway the angel departed from him." ([Acts xii. 8-10.](#)) Why was not the same thing done here as was done in the case of Paul and Silas? Because in that case they were intending to release them. On that account God willed not that they should be released in this manner. Whereas in blessed Peter's case,

they were intending to lead him forth to execution. But what then? Would it not have been far more marvellous, some one may say, had he been led forth, and delivered over into the king's hands, and then had been snatched away from the very midst of his imminent peril, and sustained no harm? For thus moreover, neither had the soldiers perished. Great is the question which has been raised upon this matter. What! did God, it is said, save His own servant with the punishment of others, with the destruction of others? Now in the first place, it was not with the destruction of others; for this did not arise from the ordering of providence, but arose from the cruelty of the judge. How so? God had so providentially ordered it, as that not only these men need not perish, but moreover that even he, the judge, should have been saved, just as in this case of the jailor. But he did not use the boon aright. "Now as soon as it was day," it continues, "there was no small stir among the soldiers, what was become of Peter." And what then? Herod makes strict inquiry into the matter, "and he examined the guards," it is related, "and commanded that they should be put to death." ([Acts xii. 18–19.](#)) Now, indeed, had he not examined them, there might have been some excuse for executing them. Whereas, as it is, he had them brought before him, he examined them, he found that Peter had been bound, that the prison had been well secured, that the keepers were before the doors. No wall had been broken through, no door had been opened, nor was there any other evidence whatever of false dealing. He ought upon this to have been awed by the power of God, which had snatched Peter from the very midst of perils, and to have adored Him who was able to do such mighty works. But, on the contrary, he ordered those men off to execution. How then in this case is God the cause? Had He indeed caused the wall to be broken through, and thus had extricated Peter, possibly the deed might have been put to the account of their negligence. But if He so providentially ordered it, as that the matter should be shown to be the work not of the evil agency of man, but of the miraculous agency of God, why did Herod act thus? For had Peter intended to flee, he would have fled as he was, with his chains on. Had he intended to fly, in his confusion he never would have had so great forethought as to take even his sandals, but he would have left them. Whereas, as it is, the object of the Angel's saying unto him, "Bind on thy sandals," was that they might know that he had done the thing not in the act of flight, but with full leisure. For, bound as he was, and fixed between the two soldiers, he never would have found sufficient time to unbind the chains also, and especially as he too, like Paul, was in the inner ward. Thus then was the punishment of the keepers owing to the unrighteousness of the judge. For why did not the Jews²⁶³ act in the same way? For now again I am reminded of yet another prison. The first was that at Rome, next, was this at Cæsarea, now we come to that at Jerusalem.²⁶⁴ When then the chief Priests and the Pharisees heard from those whom

263 [The Jews, when they imprisoned the Apostles as recorded in [Acts v. 19.](#)—G.A.]

264 [The prison which suggested this discourse ([Eph. iv. 1.](#)) was that of Paul in Rome, but the next one mentioned and discoursed of by St. Chrysostom was the one in which Paul was at Philippi, [Acts xvi.](#), the next

they had sent to the prison to bring Peter out, that “they found no man within,” but both doors “closed,” and “the keepers standing at the doors,” why was it that they not only did not put the keepers to death, but, so far from it, “they were much perplexed concerning them whereunto this would grow.” Now if the Jews, murderous as they were in their designs against them, yet entertained not a thought of the kind, much more shouldst not thou, who didst every thing to please those Jews. For this unrighteous sentence vengeance quickly overtook Herod.

But now if any complain of this, then complain too about those who are killed on the highway, and about the ten thousand others who are unjustly put to death, and further, of the infants also that were slaughtered at the time of Christ’s birth; for Christ also, according to what thou allegest, was the cause of their deaths. But it was not Christ, but rather the madness and tyranny of Herod’s father. Dost thou ask, Why then did He not snatch Him out of Herod’s hands? True, He might have done so, but there would have been nothing gained by so doing. How many times, at least, did Christ escape even from the grasp of their hands? And yet what good did this do to that unfeeling people? Whereas here there is even much profit arising to the faithful from what was done. For as there were records made, and the enemies themselves bore testimony to the facts, the testimony was above suspicion. As therefore in that instance the mouths of the enemies were stopped in no other way whatever, but only by the persons who came acknowledging the facts, so was it also here. For why did the jailor here do nothing like what Herod did? Nay, and the things which Herod witnessed were not at all less wonderful than those which this man witnessed. So far as wonder goes, it is no less wonderful to be assured that a prisoner came out when the doors were closed, than it is to behold them set open. Indeed this last might rather have seemed to be perhaps a vision of the imagination, the other never could, when exactly and circumstantially reported. So that, had this man been as wicked as Herod, he would have slain Paul, as Herod did the soldiers; but such he was not.

If any one should ask, ‘Why was it that God permitted the children also to be murdered?’ I should fall, probably, into a longer discourse, than was originally intended to be addressed to you.

At this point, however, let us terminate our discourse, with many thanks to Paul’s chain, for that it has been made to us the source of so many blessings, and exhorting you, should ye have to suffer any thing for Christ’s sake, not only not to repine, but to rejoice, as the Apostles did, yea, and to glory; as Paul said, “Most gladly, therefore will I rather glory in my infirmities,” (2 Cor. xii. 9.) for because of this it was that he heard also those words, “My grace is sufficient for thee.” Paul glories in bonds; and dost thou pride thyself in riches? The

one was the prison where Peter was at Jerusalem, and this last one (Acts v. 19.) at Jerusalem also. No mention has been made of any imprisonment at Cæsarea.—G.A.]

Apostles rejoiced that they were counted worthy to be scourged, and dost thou seek for ease and self-indulgence? On what ground then, dost thou wish to attain the same end as they, if here on earth thou art traveling the contrary road from them? “And now,” saith Paul, “I go bound in the spirit unto Jerusalem, not knowing the things that shall befall me there; save that the Holy Ghost testifieth unto me in every city, saying, that bonds and afflictions abide me.” (Acts xx. 22.) And why then dost thou set out, if bonds and afflictions abide thee? For this very reason, saith he, that I may be bound for Christ’s sake, that I may die for His sake. “For I am ready not to be bound only, but also to die for the name of the Lord Jesus.” (Acts xxi. 13.)

Moral. Nothing can be more blessed than that soul. In what does he glory? In bonds, in afflictions, in chains, in scars; “I bear branded on my body,” saith he, “the marks of Jesus,” (Gal. vi. 17.) as though they were some great trophy. And again, “For because of the hope of Israel,” saith he, “I am bound with this chain.” (Acts xxviii. 20.) And again, “For which I am an ambassador in chains.” (Eph. vi. 20.) What is this? Art thou not ashamed, art thou not afraid going about the world as a prisoner? Dost thou not fear lest any one should charge thy God with weakness? lest any one should on this account refuse to come near thee and to join the fold? No, saith he, not such are my bonds. They can shine brightly even in kings’ palaces. “So that my bonds,” saith he, “became manifest in Christ, throughout the whole prætorian guard: and most of the brethren in the Lord, being confident through my bonds, are more abundantly bold to speak the word of God without fear.” (Philip. i. 13, 14.) Behold ye a force in bonds stronger than the raising of the dead. They beheld me bound, and they are the more courageous. For where bonds are, there of necessity is something great also. Where affliction is, there verily is salvation also, there verily is solace, there verily are great achievements. For when the devil kicks, then is he, doubtless, hit.²⁶⁵ When he binds God’s servants, then most of all does the word gain ground. And mark how this is every where the case. Paul was imprisoned; and in the prison he did these things, yea, saith he, by my very bonds themselves. He was imprisoned at Rome, and brought the more converts to the faith; for not only was he himself emboldened, but many others also because of him. He was imprisoned at Jerusalem, and preaching in his bonds he struck the king with amazement, (Acts xxvi. 28.) and made the governor tremble. (Acts xxiv. 25.) For being afraid, it is related, he let him go, and he that had bound him was not ashamed to receive instruction concerning the things to come at the hands of him whom he had bound. In bonds he sailed, and retrieved the wreck, and bound fast the tempest. It was when he was in bonds that the monster fastened on him, and fell off from his hand, having done him no hurt. He was bound at Rome, and

265 [This reminds one of the saying of an eccentric evangelist in America who referring to those that abused and persecuted him for the severity of his preaching said, “It’s always the hit dog that yelps.”—G.A.]

preaching in bonds drew thousands to his cause, holding forward, in the place of every other, this very argument, I mean his chain.

It is not however our lot to be bound now-a-days. And yet there is another chain if we have a mind to wear it. And what is it? It is to restrain our hand, to be not so forward to covetousness. With this chain let us bind ourselves. Let the fear of God be unto us instead of a bond of iron. Let us loose them that are bound by poverty, by affliction. There is no comparison between opening the doors of a prison, and releasing an enthralled soul. There is no comparison between loosing the bonds of prisoners and “setting at liberty them that are bruised;” (Luke iv. 18.) this last is far greater than the other; for the other there is no reward in store, for this last there are ten thousand rewards.

Paul’s chain has proved a long one, and has detained us a length of time. Yea, long indeed it is, and more beautiful than any cord of gold. A chain this, which draws them that are bound by it, as it were by a kind of invisible machinery, to Heaven, and, like a golden cord let down,²⁶⁶ draws them up to the Heaven of heavens. And the wonderful thing is this, that, bound, as it is, below, it draws its captives upwards: and indeed this is not the nature of the things themselves. But where God orders and disposes, look not for the nature of things, nor for natural sentence, but for things above nature and natural sequence.

Let us learn not to sink under affliction, nor to repine; for look at this blessed saint. He had been scourged, and sorely scourged, for it is said, “When they had laid many stripes upon them.” He had been bound too, and that again sorely, for the jailor cast him into the inner ward, and with extraordinary security. And though he was in so many perils, at midnight, when even the most wakeful are asleep with sleep, another and a stronger bond upon them, they chanted and sang praise unto the Lord. What can be more adamant than these souls? They bethought them how that the holy Children sang even in fire and furnace. (Dan. iii. 1–30.) Perhaps they thus reasoned with themselves, “we have as yet suffered nothing like that.”

But our discourse has done well, in that it has thus brought us out again to other bonds, and into another prison. What am I to do? I would fain be silent, but am not able. I have discovered another prison, far more wonderful and more astonishing than the former. But, come now, rouse yourselves, as though I were just commencing my discourse, and attend to me with your minds fresh. I would fain break off the discourse, but it will not suffer me; for just as a man in the midst of drinking cannot bear to break off his draught, whatever any one may promise him; so I too, now I have laid hold of this glorious cup of the prison of them that were bound for Christ’s sake, I cannot leave off, I cannot hold my peace. For if Paul in the prison, and in the night, kept not silence, no, nor under the scourge; shall I,

266 [This passage reminds one of the famous golden chain of Homer, σερπήν χρυσεῖην, (Iliad viii. 19–27) to which several allegorical meanings have been given.—G.A.]

who am sitting²⁶⁷ here by daylight, and speaking so much at my ease, shall I hold my peace, when men in bonds, and under the scourge, and at midnight could not endure to do so? The holy Children were not silent, no, not in the furnace and in the fire, and are not we ashamed to hold our peace? Let us look then at this prison also. Here too, they were bound, but at once and from the very outset it was evident that they were not about to be burned, but only to enter as into a prison. For why do ye bind men who are about to be committed to the flames? They were bound, as Paul was, hand and foot. They were bound with as great violence as he was. For the jailor thrust him into the inner prison; and the king commanded the furnace to be intensely heated. And now let us see the issue. When Paul and Silas sang, the prison was shaken, and the doors were opened. When the three Children sang, the bonds both of their feet and hands were loosed. The prison was opened, and the doors of the furnace were opened: for a dewy breeze whistled through it.

But many thoughts crowd around me. I know not which to utter first, and which second. Wherefore, let no one, I entreat, require order of me, for the subjects are closely allied.

They who were bound together with Paul and Silas were loosed, and yet nevertheless they slept. In the case of the three Children, instead of that, something else took place. The men who had cast them in, were themselves burned to death. And then, as I was fain to tell you, the king beheld them loose, and fell down before them: he heard them singing their song of praise, and beheld four walking, and he called them. As Paul, though able to do so, came not forth, until he who had cast him in, called him, and brought him forth: so neither did the three Children come forth, until he who had cast them in commanded them to come forth. What lesson are we taught from this? Not to be over hasty in courting persecution, nor when in tribulation to be over eager for deliverance, and on the other hand when they release us not to continue in it. Further, the jailor, inasmuch as he was able to enter in where the saints were, fell down at their feet. The king came but to the door and fell down. He dared not approach into the prison which he had prepared for them in the fire. And now mark their words. The one cried, "Sirs, what must I do to be saved?" ([Acts xvi. 30.](#)) The other, though not indeed with so great humility, yet uttered a voice no less sweet, "Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego, ye servants of the most high God, come forth, and come hither." ([Dan. iii. 26.](#)) Mighty dignity! "Ye servants of the most high God, come forth, and come hither." How are they to come forth, O king? Thou didst cast them into the fire bound; they have continued this long time in the fire. Why, had they been made of adamant, had they been blocks of metal, in singing that entire hymn, must they not have perished? On this account then they were saved, because they sang praises to God. The fire revered their readiness to suffer and afterwards it revered that wonderful song, and their hymns of

267 [The ancient custom was the reverse of ours, for the preacher commonly delivered his sermon sitting, and the people heard it standing.—Bingham *Antiquities* Bk. xiv. Ch. iv. Sec. 24.—G.A.]

praise. By what title dost thou call them? I said before, “Ye servants of the most high God.” Yes, to the servants of God, all things are possible; for if some, who are the servants of men, have, nevertheless, power, and authority, and the disposal of their concerns, much more have the servants of God. He called them by the name most delightful to them, he knew that by this means he flattered them most: for indeed, if it was in order to continue servants of God, that they entered into the fire, there could be no sound more delightful to them than this. Had he called them kings, had he called them lords of the world, yet would he not so truly have rejoiced them as when he said, “Ye servants of the most high God.” And why marvel at this? when, in writing to the mighty city, to her who was mistress of the world, and prided herself upon her high dignities, Paul set down as equivalent in dignity, nay, as far greater, yea incomparably greater than consulship, or kingly name, or than the empire of the world, this title, “Paul, a servant²⁶⁸ of Jesus Christ.” (Rom. i. 1.) “Ye servants of the most high God.” “Yes,” he would say, “if they show so great zeal as to be bond-servants, doubtless this is the title by which we shall conciliate them.”

Again, observe also the piety of the Children: they showed no indignation, no anger, no gain-saying, but they came forth. Had they regarded it as an act of vengeance that they had been thrown into the furnace, they would have been grieved against the man who had cast them in; as it is, there is nothing of the kind; but, as though they were going forth from Heaven itself, so went they forth. And what the Prophet says of the Sun, that “He is as a bridegroom coming forth out of his chamber,” (Ps. xix. 5.) one would not go amiss in saying also of them. But though he goes forth thus, yet came they forth there more gloriously than he, for he indeed comes forth to enlighten the world with natural light, they to enlighten the world in a different way, I mean, spiritually. For because of them the king straightway issued a decree, containing these words, “It hath seemed good unto me to show the signs and wonders that the Most High God hath wrought toward me. How great are His signs! And how mighty are His wonders!” (Dan. iv. 2, 3.) So that they went forth, shedding a yet more glorious radiance, beaming indeed in that region itself, but, what is more than all, capable, by means of the king’s writings, of being diffused over the world and thus of dispelling the darkness which every where prevails. “Come forth,” said he, “and come hither.” He gave no commandment²⁶⁹ to extinguish the flame, but hereby most especially honored them, by believing that they were able not only to walk within it, but even to come out of it while it was still burning.

268 [The word in the Greek δοῦλος which means a bond-slave, though softened in the Auth. Ver. to “servant” and in the Rev. Ver. to “bond-servant.”—G.A.]

269 [Field’s text has here ἐτόλμησε, ‘he did not venture;’ but that gives a sense less satisfactory than the text of Savile and the Oxford translator, ἐκέλευσε, which is well attested.—G.A.]

But let us look again, if it seem good to you, at the words of the jailor, “Sirs, what must I do to be saved?” What language sweeter than this? This makes the very Angels leap for joy. To hear this language, even the Only-begotten Son of God Himself became a servant. This language they who believed at the beginning addressed to Peter. ([Acts ii. 37.](#)) “What shall we do?” And what said he in answer? “Repent and be baptized.” To have heard this language from the Jews, gladly would Paul have been cast even in to hell, in his eagerness for their salvation and obedience. But observe, he commits the whole matter to them, he wastes no unnecessary pains. Let us however look at the next point. The king here does not say, What must I do to be saved? but the teaching is plainer in his case than any language whatever; for he straightway becomes a preacher, he needs not to be instructed like the jailor. He proclaims God, and makes confession of His power. “Of a truth your God is the God of Gods and the Lord of Kings, because He hath sent His Angel, and hath delivered you.” ([Dan. ii. 47;](#) [iii. 28.](#)) And what was the sequel? Not one single jailor, but numbers are instructed by the king’s writings, by the sight of the facts. For that the king would not have told a falsehood is evident enough to every one, because he never would have chosen to bear such testimony to captives, nor to overthrow his own acts; he never would have chosen to incur the imputation of such utter madness: so that had not the truth been abundantly manifest, he would not have written in such terms, and with so many persons present.

Perceive ye how great is the power of bonds? How great the force of those praises that are sung in tribulation? Their heart failed not, they were not cast down, but were then yet more vigorous, and their courage then yet greater and justly so.

While we are considering these things one question yet remains for us: Why was it that in the prison on the one hand, the prisoners were loosed, whilst in the furnace the executioners were burnt to death: for that indeed should have been the king’s fate, because neither were they who bound them, nor they who cast them into the furnace, guilty of so great sin as the man who commanded this should be done. Why then did they perish? On this point there is not any very great need of minute examination; for they were wicked men. And therefore this was providentially ordered, that the power of the fire might be shown, and the miracle might be made more signal; for if it thus devoured them that were without, how did it show them unscathed that were within it? it was that the power of God might be made manifest. And let no one wonder that I have put the king on a level with the jailor, for he did the same thing; the one was in no wise more noble than the other, and they both had their reward.

But, as I said, the righteous, when they are in tribulations, are then especially more energetic, and when they are in bonds: for to suffer any thing for Christ’s sake is the sweetest of all consolation.

Will ye that I remind you of yet another prison? It seems necessary to go on from this chain to another prison still. And which will ye? Shall it be that of Jeremiah, or of Joseph,



or of John? Thanks to Paul's chain; how many prisons has it opened to our discourse? Will ye have that of John? He also was once bound for Christ's sake, and for the law of God. What then? Was he idle when he was in prison? Was it not from thence he sent, by his disciples, and said, "Art Thou He that cometh, or look we for another?" ([Matt. xi. 2, 3.](#)) Even when there, then, it seems he taught, for surely he did not disregard his duty. But again, did not Jeremiah prophesy concerning the king of Babylon, and fulfil his work even there in prison? And what of Joseph? Was he not in prison thirteen years? What then? Not even there did he forget his virtue. I have yet to mention the bonds of one and therewith will close my discourse. Our Master Himself was bound, He who loosed the world from sins. Those hands were bound, those hands that wrought ten thousand good deeds. For, "they bound Him," it saith, "and led Him away to Caiaphas;" ([Matt. xxvii. 2; John xviii. 24.](#)) yes, He was bound who had wrought so many marvellous works.

Reflecting on these things, let us never repine; but whether we be in bonds, let us rejoice; or whether we be not in bonds, let us be as though we were bound together with Him. See how great a blessing are bonds! Knowing all these things, let us send up our thanksgiving for all things to God, through Christ Jesus our Lord with whom to the Father, together with the Holy Ghost, be glory, might, and honor, now and forever and ever. Amen.

Homily IX.

Chapter IV. Verses 1-3

“I therefore, the prisoner in the Lord, beseech you, to walk worthily of the calling wherewith ye were called, with all lowliness and meekness, with long-suffering, forbearing one another in love; giving diligence to keep the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace.”

Great has the power of Paul’s chain been shown to be, and more glorious than miracles. It is not in vain then, as it should seem, nor without an object, that he here holds it forward, but as the means of all others most likely to touch them. And what saith he? “I therefore, the prisoner in the Lord, beseech you, to walk worthily of the calling wherewith ye were called.” And how is that? “with all lowliness and meekness, with long-suffering, forbearing one another in love.”

It is not the being merely a prisoner that is honorable, but the being so for Christ’s sake. Hence he saith, “in the Lord,” i.e., the prisoner for Christ’s sake. Nothing is equal to this. But now the chain is dragging me away still more from my subject, and pulling me back again, and I cannot bear to resist it, but am drawn along willingly,—yea, rather, with all my heart; and would that it were always my lot to be descanting on Paul’s chain.

But now do not become drowsy: for I am yet desirous to solve that other question, which many raise, when they say, Why, if tribulation be a glory, how came Paul himself to say in his defence²⁷⁰ to Agrippa, “I would to God that whether with little or with much not thou only, but also all that hear me this day, might become such as I am, except these bonds?” (Acts xxvi. 29.) He said not this, God forbid! as deeming the thing a matter to be deprecated; no; for had it been such, he would not have gloried in bonds, in imprisonments, in those other tribulations; and when writing elsewhere he saith, “Most gladly will I rather glory in my weaknesses.” (2 Cor. xii. 9.) But what is the case? This was itself a proof how great a thing he considered those bonds; for as in writing to the Corinthians he said, “I fed you with milk, not with meat, for ye were not yet able to bear it;” (1 Cor. iii. 2.) so also here. They before whom he spoke were not able to hear of the beauty, nor the comeliness, nor the blessing of those bonds. Hence²⁷¹ it was he added, “except these bonds.” To the Hebrews however he spoke not thus, but exhorted them to “be bound with” (Heb. xiii. 3.) them that were in bonds. And hence too did he himself rejoice in his bonds, and was bound, and was led with the prisoners into the inner prison. Mighty is the power of Paul’s chain! A spectacle



270 [Field’s text has here a much shorter reading as follows: For a question now suggests itself to me; for since Paul in his defence, etc. This reading leaves the sense incomplete. The reading of the Oxford translator, as given above, is internally more satisfactory and is attested by several excellent authorities.—G.A.]

271 [It is very doubtful that this was Paul’s design in saying “except these bonds.” It is more probable he wished that others might enjoy the blessings of Christianity without sharing in those sufferings which he himself was glad to endure.—G.A.]

this, which may suffice for every other, to behold Paul bound, and led forth from his prison; to behold him bound, and sitting within it, what pleasure can come up to this? What would I not give for such a sight? Do ye see the emperors, the consuls, borne along in their chariots and arrayed in gold, and their body-guard with every thing about them of gold? Their halberds of gold, their shields of gold, their raiment of gold, their horses with trappings of gold? How much more delightful than such a spectacle is his! I would rather see Paul once, going forth with the prisoners from his prison, than behold these ten thousand times over, parading along with all that retinue. When he was thus led forth, how many Angels, suppose ye, led the way before him? And to show that I speak no fiction, I will make the fact manifest to you from a certain ancient narrative.

Elisha the prophet, (perhaps ye know the man,) at the time ([2 Kings vi. 8–12.](#)) when the king of Syria was at war with the king of Israel, sitting at his own home, brought to light all the counsels which the king of Syria was taking in his chamber with them that were privy to his designs, and rendered the king's counsels of none effect, by telling beforehand his secrets, and not suffering the king of Israel to fall into the snares which he was laying. This sorely troubled the king; he was disheartened, and was reduced to greater perplexity, not knowing how to discover him who was disclosing all that passed, and plotting against him, and disappointing his schemes. Whilst therefore he was in this perplexity, and enquiring into the cause, one of his armor-bearers told him, that there was a certain prophet, one Elisha, dwelling in Samaria, who suffered not the king's designs to stand, but disclosed all that passed. The king imagined that he had discovered the whole matter. Sure, never was any one more miserably misled than he. When he ought to have honored the man, to have revered him, to have been awed that he really possessed so great power, as that, seated, as he was, so many furlongs off, he should know all that passed in the king's chamber, without any one at all to tell him; this indeed he did not, but being exasperated, and wholly carried away by his passion, he equips horsemen, and soldiers, and dispatches them to bring the prophet before him.

Now Elisha had a disciple as yet only on the threshold of prophecy, ([2 Kings vi. 13ff.](#)) as yet far from being judged worthy of revelations of this kind. The king's soldiers arrived at the spot, as intending to bind the man, or rather the prophet.—Again I am falling upon bonds, so entirely is this discourse interwoven with them.—And when the disciple saw the host of soldiers, he was affrighted, and ran full of trembling to his master, and told him the calamity, as he thought, and informed him of the inevitable peril. The prophet smiled at him for fearing things not worthy to be feared, and bade him be of good cheer. The disciple, however, being as yet imperfect, did not listen to him, but being still amazed at the sight, remained in fear. Upon this, what did the prophet do? “Lord,” said he, “open the eyes of this young man, and let him see that they which are with us, are more than they which are with them;” ([2 Kings vi. 16, 17.](#)) and immediately he beheld the whole mountain, where the

prophet then dwelt, filled with so great a multitude of horses and chariots of fire. Now these were nothing else than ranks of Angels. But if only for an occasion like this so great a band of Angels attended Elisha what must Paul have had? This is what the prophet David tells us. “The Angel of the Lord encampeth round about them that fear Him.” (Ps. xxxiv. 7.) And again; “They shall bear thee up in their hands, lest thou dash thy foot against a stone.” (Ps. xci. 2.) And why do I speak of Angels? The Lord Himself was with him then as he went forth; for surely it cannot be that He was seen by Abraham, and yet was not with Paul. No, it was His own promise, “I am with you alway, even unto the end of the world.” (Matt. xxviii. 20.) And again, when He appeared to him, He said, “Be not afraid, but speak, for I am with

thee, and no man shall set on thee to harm thee.” (Acts xviii. 9, 10.) Again, He stood by him in a dream, and said, “Be of good cheer, for as thou hast testified concerning me at Jerusalem, so must thou bear witness also at Rome.” (Acts xxiii. 11.)

The saints, though they are at all times a glorious sight, and are full of abundant grace, yet are so, most of all, when they are in perils for Christ’s sake, when they are prisoners; for as a brave soldier is at all times and of himself a pleasing spectacle to them that behold him, but most of all when he is standing, and in ranks at the king’s side; thus also imagine to yourselves Paul, how great a thing it was to see him teaching in his bonds.

Shall I mention, in passing, a thought, which just at this moment occurs to me? The blessed martyr Babylas²⁷² was bound, and he too for the very same cause as John also was, because he reprov’d a king in his transgression. This man when he was dying gave charge that his bonds should be laid with his body, and that the body should be buried bound; and to this day the fetters lie mingled with his ashes, so devoted was his affection for the bonds he had worn for Christ’s sake. “He was laid in chains of iron” as the Prophet saith of Joseph. (Ps. cv. 18.) And even women have before now had trial of these bonds.

We however are not in bonds, nor am I recommending this, since now is not the time for them. But thou, bind not thine hands, but bind thy heart and mind. There are yet other bonds, and they that wear not the one, shall have to wear the other. Hear what Christ saith, “Bind him hand and foot.” (Matt. xxii. 13.) But God forbid we should have trial of those bonds! but of these may He grant us even to take our fill!

On these accounts he saith, “I, the prisoner in the Lord, beseech you to walk worthily of the calling wherewith ye were called.” But what is this calling? Ye were called as His body, it is said. Ye have Christ as your head; and though you were “enemies,” and had committed

272 S. Babylas, whom Chrysostom has commemorated in a Homily on his feast day and elsewhere, (*Hom. de Bab.* t. 2. p. 531. Ed. Ben. *Hom. in Jul. et Gent.* t. 2. p. 536.) was Bishop of Antioch about 237–250, when he was martyred in the Decian persecution, being put into prison, and dying there. The circumstance mentioned in the text is also to be found in *Gent.* p. 554.—[See *Homily on Babylas*, Vol. ix. p. 141, of this Series.—G.A.]

misdeeds out of number, yet “hath He raised you up with Him and made you to sit with Him.” (Eph. ii. 6.) A high calling this, and to high privileges, not only in that we have been called from that former state, but in that we are called both to such privileges, and by such a method.

But how is it possible to “walk worthily” of it? “With all lowliness.” Such an one walks worthily. This is the basis of all virtue. If thou be lowly, and bethink thee what thou art, and how thou wast saved, thou wilt take this recollection as a motive to all virtue. Thou wilt neither be elated with bonds, nor with those very privileges which I mentioned, but as knowing that all is of grace, thou wilt humble thyself. The lowly-minded man is able to be at once a generous and a grateful servant. “For what hast thou,” saith he, “that thou didst not receive?” (1 Cor. iv. 7.) And again, hear his words, “I labored more abundantly than they all; yet not I, but the grace of God which was with me.” (1 Cor. xv. 10.)

“With all lowliness,” saith he; not that which is in words, nor that which is in actions only, but even in one’s very bearing and tone of voice: not lowly towards one, and rude towards another; be lowly towards all men, be he friend or foe, be he great or small. This is lowliness. Even in thy good deeds be lowly; for hear what Christ saith, “Blessed are the poor in spirit;” (Matt. v. 3.) and He places this first in order. Wherefore also the Apostle himself saith, “With all lowliness, and meekness, and long-suffering.” For it is possible for a man to be lowly, and yet quick and irritable, and thus all is to no purpose; for oftentimes he will be possessed by his anger, and ruin all.

“Forbearing,” he proceeds, “one another in love.”²⁷³

How is it possible to forbear, if a man be passionate or censorious? He hath told us therefore the manner: “in love,” saith he. If thou, he would say, art not forbearing to thy neighbor, how shall God be forbearing to thee? If thou bearest not with thy fellow-servant, how shall the Master bear with thee? Wherever there is love, all things are to be borne.

“Giving diligence²⁷⁴,” saith he, “to keep the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace.” Bind therefore thy hands with moderation. Again that goodly name of “bond.” We had dismissed it, and it has of itself come back on us again. A goodly bond was that, and goodly is this one also, and that other is the fruit of this. Bind thyself to thy brother. They bear all things lightly who are bound together in love. Bind thyself to him and him to thee; thou art lord of both, for whomsoever I may be desirous to make my friend, I can by means of kindness accomplish it.

“Giving diligence,” he says; a thing not to be done easily, and not in every one’s power.

273 [“The reciprocal forbearance in love (ethical habit) (Rom. xv. 1; Gal. vi. 2.) is the practical expression of the ‘longsuffering.’”—Meyer.—G.A.]

274 [“Giving diligence,” participial clause parallel to “forbearing one another” which is characterized by the effort by which it must be upheld.”—Meyer.—G.A.]

“Giving diligence,” he proceeds, “to keep the unity of the Spirit.” What is this “unity of Spirit?” In the human body there is a spirit which holds all together, though in different members. So is it also here; for to this end was the Spirit given, that He might unite those who are separated by race and by different manners; for old and young, rich and poor, child and youth, woman and man, and every soul become in a manner one, and more entirely so than if there were one body. For this spiritual relation is far higher than the other natural one, and the perfectness of the union more entire; because the conjunction of the soul is more perfect, inasmuch as it is both simple and uniform. And how then is this unity preserved? “In the bond of peace²⁷⁵.” It is not possible for this to exist in enmity and discord. “For whereas there is,” saith he, “among you jealousy and strife, are ye not carnal, and walk after the manner of men?” (1 Cor. iii. 3.) For as fire when it finds dry pieces of wood works up all together into one blazing pile, but when wet does not act at all nor unite them; so also it is here. Nothing that is of a cold nature can bring about this union, whereas any warm one for the most part can. Hence at least it is that the glow of charity is produced; by the “bond of peace,” he is desirous to bind us all together. For just in the same way, he would say, as if thou wouldest attach thyself to another, thou canst do it in no other way except by attaching him to thyself; and if thou shouldest wish to make the tie double, he must needs in turn attach himself to thee; so also here he would have us tied one to another; not simply that we be at peace, not simply that we love one another, but that all should be only even one soul. A glorious bond is this; with this bond let us bind ourselves together with one another and unto God. This is a bond that bruises not, nor cramps the hands it binds, but it leaves them free, and gives them ample play, and greater courage than those which are at liberty. The strong if he be bound to the weak, will support him, and not suffer him to perish: and if again he be tied to the indolent, him he will rather rouse and animate. “Brother helped by brother,” it is said, “is as a strong city²⁷⁶.” This chain no distance of place can interrupt, neither heaven, nor earth, nor death, nor any thing else, but it is more powerful and strong than all things. This, though it issue from but one soul, is able to embrace numbers at once; for hear what Paul saith, “Ye are not straitened in us, but ye are straitened in your own affections; be ye also enlarged.” (2 Cor. vi. 12.)

Now then, what impairs this bond? Love of money, passion for power, for glory, and the like, loosens them, and severs them asunder. How then are we to see that they be not cut asunder? If these tempers be got rid of, and none of those things which destroy charity come in by the way to trouble us. For hear what Christ saith, (Matt. xxiv. 12.) “Because

275 [“While peace one towards another must be the bond which is to envelope them.”—Meyer.—G.A.]

276 [This is the rendering of the Septuagint in Prov. xviii. 19, which Chrysostom follows exactly: ἀδελφὸς ὑπὸ ἀδελφοῦ βοηθούμενος ὡς πόλις ὄχυρά. The Rev. Ver. following the Hebrew, has “A brother offended is harder to be won than a strong city.”—G.A.]

iniquity shall be multiplied, the love of the many shall wax cold.” Nothing is so opposed to love as sin, and I mean not love towards God, but that towards our neighbor also. But how then, it may be said, are even robbers at peace? When are they, tell me? Not when they are acting in a spirit which is that of robbers; for if they fail to observe the rules of justice amongst those with whom they divide the spoil, and to render to every one his right, you will find them too in wars and broils. So that neither amongst the wicked is it possible to find peace: but where men are living in righteousness and virtue, you may find it every where. But again, are rivals ever at peace? Never. And whom then would ye have me mention? The covetous man can never possibly be at peace with the covetous. So that were there not just and good persons, even though wronged by them, to stand between them, the whole race of them would be torn to pieces. When two wild beasts are famished, if there be not something put between them to consume, they will devour one another. The same would be the case with the covetous and the vicious. So that it is not possible there should be peace where virtue is not already put in practice beforehand. Let us form, if you please, a city entirely of covetous men, give them equal privileges, and let no one bear to be wronged, but let all wrong one another. Can that city possibly hold together? It is impossible. Again, is there peace amongst adulterers? No, not any two will you find of the same mind.

So then, to return, there is no other reason for this, than that “love hath waxed cold;” and the cause again why love hath waxed cold, is that “iniquity abounds.” For this leads to selfishness, and divides and severs the body, and relaxes it and rends it to pieces. But where virtue is, it does the reverse. Because the man that is virtuous is also above money; so that were there ten thousand such in poverty they would still be peaceable; whilst the covetous, where there are but two, can never be at peace. Thus then if we are virtuous, love will not perish, for virtue springs from love, and love from virtue. And how this is, I will tell you. The virtuous man does not value money above friendship, nor does he remember injuries, nor does wrong to his neighbor; he is not insolent, he endures all things nobly. Of these things love consists. Again, he who loves submits to all these things, and thus do they reciprocally produce one another. And this indeed, that love springs from virtue, appears from hence, because our Lord when He saith, “because iniquity shall be multiplied, the love of the many shall wax cold,” plainly tells us this. And that virtue springs from love, Paul tells us, saying, “He that loveth his neighbor hath fulfilled the law.” (*Rom. xiii. 10.*) So then a man must be one of the two, either very affectionate and much beloved, or else very virtuous; for he who has the one, of necessity possesses the other; and, on the contrary, he who knows not how to love, will therefore commit many evil actions; and he who commits evil actions, knows not what it is to love.

Moral. Let us therefore follow after charity; it is a safeguard which will not allow us to suffer any evil. Let us bind ourselves together. Let there be no deceit amongst us, no hollowness. For where friendship is, there nothing of the sort is found. This too another certain



wise man tells us. "Though thou drewest a sword at thy friend, yet despair not: for there may be a returning again to favor. If thou hast opened thy mouth against thy friend, fear not; for there may be a reconciliation: except for upbraiding, or disclosing of secrets, or a treacherous wound: for for these things a friend will depart." (*Ecclus. xxii. 21, 22.*) For "disclosing," saith he, "of secrets." Now if we be all friends, there is no need of secrets; for as no man has any secret with himself and cannot conceal anything from himself, so neither will he from his friends. Where then no secrets exist, separation arising from this is impossible. For no other reason have we secrets, than because we have not confidence in all men. So then it is the waxing cold of love, which has produced secrets. For what secret hast thou? Dost thou desire to wrong thy neighbor? Or, art thou hindering him from sharing some benefit, and on this account concealest it? But, no, perhaps it is none of these things. What then, is it that thou art ashamed? If so, then this is a token of want of confidence. Now then if there be love, there will be no "revealing of secrets," neither any "upbraiding." For who, tell me, would ever upbraid his own soul? And suppose even such a thing were done, it would be for some good; for we upbraid children, we know, when we desire to make them feel. And so Christ too on that occasion began to upbraid the cities, saying, "Woe unto thee, Chorazin! woe unto thee, Bethsaida!" (*Luke x. 13.*) in order that He might deliver them from upbraidings. For nothing has such power to lay hold of the mind, or can more strongly arouse it, or brace it up when relaxed. Let us then never use upbraiding to one another merely for the sake of upbraiding. For what? Wilt thou upbraid thy friend on the score of money? Surely not, if at least thou possessest what thou hast in common. Wilt thou then for his faults? No nor this, but thou wilt rather in that case correct him. Or, as it goes on, "for a treacherous wound;" who in the world will kill himself, or who wound himself? No one.

Let us then "follow after love;" he saith not simply let us love; but let us "follow after love." (*1 Cor. xiv. 1.*) There is need of much eagerness: she is soon out of sight, she is most rapid in her flight; so many things are there in life which injure her. If we follow her, she will not outstrip us and get away, but we shall speedily recover her. The love of God is that which united earth to Heaven. It was the love of God that seated man upon the kingly throne. It was the love of God that manifested God upon earth. It was the love of God that made the Lord a servant. It was the love of God that caused the Beloved to be delivered up for His enemies, the Son for them that hated Him, the Lord for His servants, God for men, the free for slaves. Nor did it stop here, but called us to yet greater things. Yes, not only did it release us from our former evils, but promised, moreover, to bestow upon us other much greater blessings. For these things then let us give thanks to God, and follow after every virtue; and before all things, let us with all strictness practice love, that we may be counted worthy to attain the promised blessings; through the grace and loving-kindness of our Lord Jesus

Christ, with whom, to the Father together with the Holy Ghost, be glory, might, and honor, now and for ever and ever. Amen. _____

Homily X.

[Ephesians iv. 4](#)

“There is one body, and one Spirit, even as ye are called in one hope of your calling.”

When the blessed Paul exhorts us to anything of special importance, so truly wise and spiritual as he is, he grounds his exhortation upon things in Heaven: this itself being a lesson he had learned from the Lord. Thus he saith also elsewhere, “Walk in love, even as Christ also hath loved us.” ([ch. v. 2.](#)) And again, “Have this mind in you, which was also in Christ Jesus, who being in the form of God, counted it not a prize to be on an equality with God.” ([Philip. ii. 5, 6.](#)) This is what he is doing here also, for whenever the examples he is setting before us are great, he is intense in his zeal and feeling. What then does he say, now he is inciting us to unity? “There is one body, and one Spirit, even as ye are called in one hope of your calling:”

[Ver. 5.](#) “One Lord, one faith, one baptism.”

Now what is this one body? The faithful throughout the whole world, both which are, and which have been, and which shall be. And again, they that before Christ’s coming pleased God, are “one body.” How so? Because they also knew Christ. Whence does this appear? “Your father Abraham,” saith He, “rejoiced to see My day, and he saw it, and was glad.” ([John viii. 56.](#)) And again, “If ye had believed Moses,” He saith, “ye would have believed Me, for he wrote of Me.” ([John v. 46.](#)) And the prophets too would not have written of One, of whom they knew not what they said; whereas they both knew Him, and worshiped Him. Thus then were they also “one body.”

The body is not disjoined from the spirit, for then would it not be a body. Thus it is customary also with us, touching things which are united, and which have any great consistency or coherence, to say, they are one body. And thus again, touching union, we take that to be a body which is under one head. If there be one head, then is there one body. The body is composed of members both honorable and dishonorable. Only the greater is not to rise up even against the meanest, nor this latter to envy the other. They do not all indeed contribute the same share, but severally according to the proportion of need. And forasmuch as all are formed for necessary and for different purposes, all are of equal honor. Some indeed there are, which are more especially principal members, others less so: for example, the head is more a principal member than all the rest of the body, as containing within itself all the senses, and the governing principle of the soul. And to live without the head is impossible; whereas many persons have lived for a long time with their feet cut off. So that it is better than they, not only by its position, but also by its very vital energy and its function.

Now why am I saying this? There are great numbers in the Church; there are those who, like the head, are raised up to a height; who, like the eyes that are in the head, survey heavenly things, who stand far aloof from the earth, and have nothing in common with it, whilst others occupy the rank of feet, and tread upon the earth; of healthy feet indeed, for to tread



upon the earth is no crime in feet, but to run to evil. "Their feet," saith the Prophet, "run to evil." ([Isa. lix. 7.](#)) Neither then let these, the head, saith he, be high-minded against the feet, nor the feet look with evil eye at them. For thus the peculiar beauty of each is destroyed, and the perfectness of its function impeded. And naturally enough; inasmuch as he who lays snares for his neighbor will be laying snares first of all for himself. And should the feet therefore not choose to convey the head anywhere upon its necessary journey, they will at the same time be injuring themselves by their inactivity and sloth. Or again, should the head not choose to take any care of the feet, itself will be the first to sustain the damage. However, those members do not rise up one against the other; it is not likely, for it has been so ordered by nature that they should not. But with man, how is it possible for him not to rise up against man? No one, we know, ever rises up against Angels; since neither do they rise against the Archangels. Nor, on the other hand, can the irrational creatures proudly exalt themselves over us; but where the nature is equal in dignity, and the gift one, and where one has no more than another, how shall this be prevented?

And yet surely these are the very reasons why thou oughtest not to rise up against thy neighbors. For if all things are common, and one has nothing more than another, whence this mad folly? We partake of the same nature, partake alike of soul and body, we breathe the same air, we use the same food. Whence this rebellious rising of one against another? And yet truly the being able by one's virtue to overcome the incorporeal powers, that were enough to lead to arrogance; or rather arrogance it would not be, for with good reason am I high-minded, and exceedingly high-minded against the evil spirit. And behold even Paul, how high-minded he was against that evil spirit. For when the evil spirit was speaking great and marvelous things concerning him, he made him hold his peace, and endured him not even in his flattery. For when that damsel, "who had the spirit of divination," cried, saying, "These men are the servants of the most high God, which show unto us the way of salvation" ([Acts xvi. 16, 17.](#)), he rebuked him severely, and silenced his forward tongue. And again he elsewhere writes, and says, "God shall bruise Satan under your feet shortly." ([Rom. xvi. 20.](#)) Will the difference of nature have any effect? Perceivest thou not that the difference between natures has no effect whatever, but only the difference of purpose? Because of their principle therefore they are far worse than all. Well, a man may say, but I am not rising up against an Angel, because there is so vast a distance between my nature and his. And yet surely thou oughtest no more to rise up against a man than against an Angel, for the Angel indeed differs from thee in nature, a matter which can be neither an honor to him, nor a disgrace to thee: whereas man differs from man not at all in nature, but in principle; and there is such a thing as an Angel too even amongst men. So that if thou rise not up against Angels, much more shouldst thou not against men, against those who have become angels in this our nature; for should any one among men become as virtuous as an Angel, that man is in a far higher degree superior to thee, than an Angel is. And why so? Because what the one possesses by



nature, the other has achieved of his own purpose. And again, because the Angel has his home far from thee in distance also, and dwelleth in Heaven; whereas this man is living with thee, and giving an impulse to thy emulation. And indeed he lives farther apart from thee than the Angel. For “our citizenship,” saith the Apostle, “is in Heaven.” ([Philip. iii. 20.](#)) And to show thee that this man hath his home still farther distant, hear where his Head is seated; upon the throne, saith he, the royal throne! And the farther distant that throne is from us, the farther is he also.

Well, but I see him, thou wilt say, in the enjoyment of honor, and I am led to jealousy. Why, this is the very thing which has turned all things upside down, which has filled not the world only, but the Church also, with countless troubles. And just as fierce blasts setting in across a calm harbor, render it more dangerous than any rock, or than any strait whatever; so the lust of glory entering in, overturns and confounds everything.

Ye have oftentimes been present at the burning of large houses. Ye have seen how the smoke keeps rising up to Heaven; and if no one comes near to put a stop to the mischief, but every one keeps looking to himself, the flame spreads freely on, and devours everything. And oftentimes the whole city will stand around; they will stand round indeed as spectators of the evil, not to aid nor assist. And there you may see them one and all standing round, and doing nothing but each individual stretching out his hand, and pointing out to some one who may be just come to the spot, either a flaming brand that moment flying through a window, or beams hurled down, or the whole circuit of the walls forced out, and tumbling violently to the ground. Many too there are of the more daring and venturesome, who will have the hardihood even to come close to the very buildings themselves whilst they are burning, not in order to stretch forth a hand towards them, and to put a stop to the mischief, but that they may the more fully enjoy the sight, being able from the nearer place to observe closely all that which often escapes those at a distance. Then if the house happen to be large and magnificent, it appears to them a pitiable spectacle, and deserving of many tears. And truly there is a pitiable spectacle for us to behold; capitals of columns crumbled to dust, and many columns themselves shattered to pieces, some consumed by the fire, others thrown down often by the very hands which erected them, that they may not add fuel to the flame. Statues again, which stood with so much gracefulness, with the ceiling resting on them, these you may see all exposed, with the roof torn off, and themselves standing hideously disfigured in the open air. And why should one go on to describe the wealth stored up within? the tissues of gold, and the vessels of silver? And where the lord of the house and his consort scarcely entered, where was the treasurehouse of tissues and perfumes, and the caskets of the costly jewels,—all has become one blazing fire, and within now, are bath-men and street-cleaners, and runaway slaves, and everybody; and everything within is one mass of fire and water, of mud, and dust, and half-burnt beams!

Now why have I drawn out so full a picture as this? Not simply because I wish to represent to you the conflagration of a house, (for what concern is that of mine?) but because I wish to set before your eyes, as vividly as I can, the calamities of the Church. For like a conflagration indeed, or like a thunderbolt hurled from on high, have they lighted upon the roof of the Church, and yet they rouse up no one; but whilst our Father's house is burning, we are sleeping, as it were, a deep and stupid sleep. And yet who is there whom this fire does not touch? Which of the statues that stand in the Church? for the Church is nothing else than a house built of the souls of us men. Now this house is not of equal honor throughout, but of the stones which contribute to it, some are bright and shining, whilst others are smaller and more dull than they, and yet superior again to others.²⁷⁷ There we may see many who are in the place of gold also, the gold which adorns the ceiling. Others again we may see, who give the beauty and gracefulness produced by statues. Many²⁷⁸ we may see, standing like pillars. For he is accustomed to call men also "pillars" (Gal. ii. 9.), not only on account of their strength but also on account of their beauty, adding as they do, much grace, and having their heads overlaid with gold. We may see a multitude, forming generally the wide middle space and the whole extent of the circumference; for the body at large occupies the place of those stones of which the outer walls are built. Or rather we must go on to a more splendid picture yet. This Church, of which I speak, is not built of these stones, such as we see around us, but of gold and silver, and of precious stones, and there is abundance of gold dispersed everywhere throughout it. But, oh the bitter tears this calls forth! For all these things hath the lawless rule of vainglory consumed; that all-devouring flame, which no one has yet got under. And we stand gazing in amazement at the flames, but no longer able to quench the evil: or if we do quench it for a short time, yet after two or three days as a spark blown up from a heap of ashes overturns all, and consumes no less than it did before, so it is here also: for this is just what is wont to happen in such a conflagration. And as to the cause, it has devoured the supports of the very pillars of the Church; those of us who supported the roof, and who formerly held the whole building together it has enveloped in the flame. Hence too was a ready communication to the rest of the outer walls: for so also in the case of buildings, when the fire lays hold of the timbers, it is better armed for its attack upon the stones; but when it has brought down the pillars and leveled them with the ground, nothing more is wanted to consume all the rest in the flames. For when the props and supports of the upper parts fall down, those parts also themselves will speedily enough follow



277 [Field's text has here πολλῶ δὲ ἐκείνων βελτίους instead of πολλῶ δὲ ἄλλων βελτίους, which is clearly better than Field's, because it gives a better sense and is well attested. Indeed, Field, while giving ἐκείνων in his text, says it is used "*durius pro ἑτέρων*," and mentions Chrysostom's negligent use of pronouns.—G.A.]

278 [In Field's text the word "many," πολλούς, is put in the preceding sentence; but it is better where it stands here, to complete the sentence and to make it correspond with the two preceding sentences.—G.A.]

them. Thus is it also at this moment with the Church: the fire has laid hold on every part. We seek the honors that come from man, we burn for glory, and we hearken not to Job when he saith,

“If like Adam (or after the manner of men) I covered my transgressions
By hiding mine iniquity in my bosom,
Because I feared the great multitude.”²⁷⁹

Behold ye a virtuous spirit? I was not ashamed, he saith, to own before the whole multitude my involuntary sins: And if he was not ashamed to confess, much more were it our duty to do so. For saith the prophet, “Set thou forth thy cause, that thou mayest be justified.” (Isa. xliii. 26.) Great is the violence of this evil, everything is overturned by it and annihilated. We have forsaken the Lord, and are become slaves of honor. We are no longer able to rebuke those who are under our rule, because we ourselves also are possessed with the same fever as they. We who are appointed by God to heal others, need the physician ourselves. What further hope of recovery is there left, when even the very physicians themselves need the healing hand of others?

I have not said these things without an object, nor am I making lamentations to no purpose, but with the view that one and all, with our women and children, having sprinkled ourselves with ashes, and girded ourselves about with sackcloth, may keep a long fast, may beseech God Himself to stretch forth His hand to us, and to stay the peril. For need is there indeed of His hand, that mighty, that marvelous hand. Greater things are required of us than of the Ninevites. “Yet three days,” said the prophet, “and Nineveh shall be overthrown.”²⁸⁰ (Jonah iii. 4.) A fearful message, and burdened with tremendous threat. And how should it be otherwise? to expect that within three days, the city should become their tomb, and that all should perish in one common judgment. For if, when it happens that two children die at the same time in one house, the hardship becomes intolerable, and if to Job this of all things seemed the most intolerable, that the roof fell in upon all his children, and they were thus killed; what must it be to behold not one house, nor two children, but a nation of a hundred and twenty thousand buried beneath the ruins!

Ye know how terrible a disaster is this, for lately has this very warning happened to us, not that any prophet uttered a voice, for we are not worthy to hear such a voice, but the



279 Job xxxi. 33, 34. The verses in the Sept. stand thus: Εἰ δὲ καὶ ἀμαρτῶν ἀκουσίως ἔκρυψα τὴν ἀμαρτίαν μου. Οὐ γὰρ διετράπην πολυοχλίαν πλήθους, τοῦ μὴ ἔξαγορευῆσαι ἐνώπιον αὐτῶν [but Chrysostom quotes only these words: εἰ καὶ ἀμαρτῶν ἀκουσίως διετράπην πολυοχλίαν. The Hebrew is quite different, as shown in rendering of Rev. Ver. (above).—G.A.]

280 [The Septuagint has yet *three* days, &c., ἔτι τρεῖς ἡμέραι κ.τ.λ. So Chrysostom quotes it. The Hebrew text and the Rev. Ver., following it, have *forty* days.—G.A.]

warning crying aloud from on high more distinctly than any trumpet.²⁸¹ However, as I was saying, “Yet three days,” said the prophet, “and Nineveh shall be overthrown.” A terrible warning indeed, but now we have nothing even like that; no, there are no longer “three days,”²⁸² nor is there a Nineveh to be overthrown, but many days are already past since the Church throughout all the world has been overthrown, and leveled with the ground, and all alike are overwhelmed in the evil; nay more, of those that are in high places the stress is so much the greater. Wonder not therefore if I should exhort you to do greater things than the Ninevites; and why? nay more, I do not now proclaim a fast only, but I suggest to you the remedy which raised up that city also when falling. And what was that? “God saw their works,” saith the prophet, “that they turned from their evil way, and God repented of the evil which He said He would do unto them.” ([Jonah iii. 10.](#)) This let us do, both we and you. Let us renounce the passion for riches, the lust for glory, beseeching God to stretch forth His hand, and to raise up our fallen members. And well may we, for our fear is not for the same objects as theirs; for then indeed it was only stones and timbers that were to fall, and bodies that were to perish; but now it is none of these; no, but souls are about to be delivered over to hell fire. Let us implore, let us confess unto Him, let us give thanks unto Him for what is past, let us entreat Him for what is to come, that we may be counted worthy to be delivered from this fierce and most terrible monster, and to lift up our thanksgivings to the loving God and Father with whom, to the Son, together with the Holy Ghost, be glory, might, and honor, now, henceforth, and for ever and ever. Amen.

281 Antioch was exposed to earthquakes. One happened A.D. 395, which might be about the date of these Homilies. In A.D. 458 it was almost overthrown from this cause.

282 [See note on preceding page.—G.A.]

Homily XI.

[Ephesians iv. 4-7](#)

“There is one body, and one Spirit, even as also ye were called in one hope of your calling; one Lord, one faith, one baptism, one God and Father of all, who is over all, and through all, and in all. But unto each one of us was the grace given according to the measure of the gift of Christ.”

The love Paul requires of us is no common love, but that which cements us together, and makes us cleave inseparably to one another, and effects as great and as perfect a union as though it were between limb and limb. For this is that love which produces great and glorious fruits. Hence he saith, there is “one body”; one, both by sympathy, and by not opposing the good of others, and by sharing their joy, having expressed all at once by this figure. He then beautifully adds, “and one Spirit,” showing²⁸³ that from the one body there will be one Spirit: or, that it is possible that there may be indeed one body, and yet not one Spirit; as, for instance, if any member of it should be a friend of heretics: or else he is, by this expression, shaming them into unanimity, saying, as it were, “Ye who have received one Spirit, and have been made to drink at one fountain, ought not to be divided in mind”; or else by spirit here he means their zeal. Then he adds, “Even as ye were called in one hope of your calling,” that is, God hath called you all on the same terms. He hath bestowed nothing upon one more than upon another. To all He hath freely given immortality, to all eternal life, to all immortal glory, to all brotherhood, to all inheritance. He is the common Head of all; “He hath raised all” up, “and made them sit with Him.” ([Eph. ii. 6.](#)) Ye then who in the spiritual world have so great equality of privileges, whence is it that ye are high-minded? Is it that one is wealthy and another strong? How ridiculous must this be? For tell me, if the emperor some day were to take ten persons, and to array them all in purple, and seat them on the royal throne, and to bestow upon all the same honor, would any one of these, think ye, venture to reproach another, as being more wealthy or more illustrious than he? Surely never. And I have not yet said all; for the difference is not so great in heaven as here below we differ. There is “one Lord, one faith, one baptism.”²⁸⁴ Behold “the hope of your calling. One God and Father of all, who is over all, and through all, and in all.” For can it be, that thou art called by the name of a greater God, another, of a lesser God? That thou



283 [“The ἓν σῶμα means the totality of Christians as the *corpus (Christi) mysticum*; comp. [Eph. ii. 16](#); [Rom. xii. 5](#); [1 Cor. x. 17](#). The ἓν πνεῦμα is the Holy Spirit, the spirit of the *corpus mysticum*; comp. [Eph. ii. 18](#); [1 Cor. xii. 13](#). The explanation, ‘one body and one soul,’ is excluded, as at variance with the context by the specifically Christian character of the other elements, and rendered impossible by the correct supplying of ἑστί (and not ‘ye ought to be’).”—Meyer.—G.A.]

284 [Note the triad of trinities:— - one body. 1. The Church: - one spirit. - one hope. - one Lord. 2. Christ: - one faith. - one baptism. - over all. 3. God: - through all. - in all. —Meyer, substantially.—G.A.]

art saved by faith, and another by works? That thou hast received remission in baptism, whilst another has not? “There is one God and Father of all, who is over all, and through all, and in all.” “Who is over all,” that is, the Lord and above all; and “through all,” that is, providing for, ordering all; and “in you all,” that is, who dwelleth in you all. Now this they own to be an attribute of the Son; so that were it an argument of inferiority, it never would have been said of the Father.

“But²⁸⁵ unto each one of us was the grace given.”

What then? he saith, whence are those diverse spiritual gifts? For this subject was continually carrying away both the Ephesians themselves, and the Corinthians, and many others, some into vain arrogance, and others into despondency or envy. Hence he everywhere takes along with him this illustration of the body. Hence it is that now also he has proposed it, inasmuch as he was about to make mention of diverse gifts. He enters indeed into the subject more fully in the Epistle to the Corinthians, because it was among them that this malady most especially reigned: here however he has only alluded to it. And mark what he says: he does not say, “according to the faith of each,” lest he should throw those who have no large attainments into despondency. But what saith he? “According to the measure of the gift of Christ.” The chief and principal points of all, he saith,—Baptism, the being saved by faith, the having God for our Father, our all partaking of the same Spirit,—these are common to all. If then this or that man possesses any superiority in any spiritual gift, grieve not at it; since his labor also is greater. He that had received the five talents, had five required of him; whilst he that had received the two, brought only two, and yet received no less a reward than the other. And therefore the Apostle here also encourages the hearer on the same ground, showing that gifts are bestowed not for the honor of one above another, but for the work of the church, even as he says further on:

“For the perfecting of the saints unto the work of ministering unto the building up of the body of Christ.”

Hence it is that even he himself saith, “Woe is unto me, if I preach not the Gospel.” (1 Cor. ix. 16.) For example: he received the grace of Apostleship, but for this very reason, “woe unto him,” because he received it: whereas thou art free from the danger.

“According to the measure.”

What is meant by, “according to the measure”? It means, “not according to our merit,” for then would no one have received what he has received: but of the free gift we have all received. And why then one more, and another less? There is nothing to cause this, he would say, but the matter itself is indifferent; for every one contributes towards “the building.” And by this too he shows, that it is not of his own intrinsic merit that one has received more

285 [“But (δέ) forms the transition from the summary ‘all,’ ‘all,’ ‘all’ to ‘each individual’ among the Christians.”—Meyer.—G.A.]

and another less, but that it is for the sake of others, as God Himself hath measured it; since he saith also elsewhere, “But now hath God set the members each one of them in the body, even as it pleased Him.” (1 Cor. xii. 18.) And he mentions not the reason, lest he should deject or dispirit the hearers.

Ver. 8. “Wherefore he saith, When He ascended on high, He led captivity captive, and gave gifts unto men.”

As though he had said, Why art thou high-minded? The whole is of God. The Prophet saith in the Psalm, “Thou hast received gifts among men” (Ps. lxxviii. 18.), whereas the Apostle saith, “He gave gifts unto men.” The one is the same as the other.²⁸⁶

Ver. 9, 10. “Now this, He ascended, what is it, but that He also descended into the lower parts of the earth? He that descended, is the same also that ascended far above all the Heavens, that He might fill all things.”

When thou hearest these words, think not of a mere removal from one place to another; for what Paul establishes in the Epistle to the Philippians (Philip. ii. 5–8.), that very argument²⁸⁷ is he also insisting upon here. In the same way as there, when exhorting them concerning lowliness, he brings forward Christ as an example, so does he here also, saying, “He descended into the lower parts of the earth.” For were not this so, this expression which he uses, “He became obedient even unto death” (Philip. ii. 8, 9.), were superfluous; whereas from His ascending, he implies His descent, and by “the lower parts of the earth,” he means “death,” according to the notions of men; as Jacob also said, “Then shall ye bring down my gray hairs with sorrow to the grave.” (Gen. xxxii. 48.) And again as it is in the Psalm, “Lest I become like them that go down into the pit” (Ps. cxliii. 7.), that is like the dead. Why does he descant upon this region here? And of what captivity does he speak? Of that of the devil; for He took the tyrant captive, the devil, I mean, and death, and the curse, and sin. Behold His spoils and His trophies.

“Now this, He ascended, what is it but that He also descended?”

This strikes at Paul of Samosata and his school.²⁸⁸

286 [“He quotes Ps. lxxviii. 18, with the freedom of a Messianic interpretation of the words, and his exposition of the Hebrew words yielded essentially the sense expressed by him. So he took ~~XXXXXXXXXX~~ in the sense: ‘Thou didst take away gifts to distribute them among men,’ and then translated this in an explanatory way, ἔδωκε, &c.”—Meyer.—G.A.]

287 [This view of Chrysostom is quite at variance with the context. Ellicott says: To evince still more clearly the correctness of the Messianic application of the words just cited, St. Paul urges the antithesis implied by ἀνέβη, namely, κατέβη, a predication applicable to Christ only, the tacit assumption being that He who is the subject of the citation is one whose seat was heaven. Compare John iii. 13.—G.A.]

288 Paul was Bishop of Antioch A.D. 260–269, when he was deposed for heresy. Very different accounts are given of his particular doctrines: St. Athanasius may be securely followed, however, who says that he denied the doctrine of our Lord’s preëxistence, asserted that He was a mere man, and that the Word of God was *in* Him.

“He that descended, is the same also that ascended far above all the Heavens, that He might fill all things.”

He descended, saith he, into the lower parts of the earth, beyond which there are none other: and He ascended up far above all things, to that place, beyond which there is none other. This is to show His divine energy, and supreme dominion. For indeed even of old had all things been filled.

Ver. 11, 12. “And He gave some to be apostles; and some, prophets; and some, evangelists; and some, pastors and teachers; for the perfecting of the saints, unto the work of ministering, unto the building up of the body of Christ.”

What he said elsewhere, “Wherefore also God hath highly exalted Him” (**Philip. ii. 9.**), that saith he also here. “He that descended, is the same also that ascended.” It did Him no injury that He came down into the lower parts of the earth, nor was it any hindrance to His becoming far higher than the Heavens. So that the more a man is humbled, so much the more is he exalted. For as in the case of water, the more a man presses it downwards, the more he forces it up; and the further a man retires to hurl a javelin, the surer his aim; so is it also with humility. However, when we speak of ascents with reference to God, we must needs conceive a descent first; but when with reference to man, not at all so. Then he goes on to show further His providential care, and His wisdom, for He who hath wrought such things as these, who had such might, and who refused not to go down even to those lower parts for our sakes, never would He have made these distributions of spiritual gifts without a purpose. Now elsewhere he tells us that this was the work of the Spirit, in the words, “In the which the Holy Ghost hath made you bishops to feed the Church of God.”²⁸⁹ And here he saith that it is the Son; and elsewhere that it is God. “And He gave to the Church some apostles, and some prophets.” But in the Epistle to the Corinthians, he saith, “I planted, Apollos watered; but God gave the increase.” And again, “Now he that planteth and he that watereth are one: but each shall receive his own reward according to his own labor.” (**1 Cor. iii. 6–8.**) So is it also here; for what if thou bring in but little? Thou hast received so much. First, he says, “apostles”;²⁹⁰ for these had all gifts; secondarily, “prophets,” for there were some who were not indeed apostles, but prophets, as Agabus; thirdly, “evangelists,” who

vid. *Orat.* i. 25, 38; ii. 13; iii. 51. *De decret.* 24, &c., &c. [See Schaff's *History of Christian Ch.*, Vol. II., pp. 575, 576.—G.A.]

289 [Both here and in Hom. xliv. on Acts (xx. 28) Chrysostom reads *κυρίου* instead of *θεοῦ*. The latter is, however, the reading of B., and is adopted by W. & H. and the Rev. Ver. (as well as the *textus receptus*).—G.A.]

290 [“The Apostles had an immediate call from Christ, a destination for all lands and a special power of miracles. Prophets: not only in the special sense, but also those who spoke under the *immediate* impulse of the Holy Spirit; Evangelists were subordinates of the Apostles who traveled about. Pastors and teachers, constituting one and the same class, were stationary, and probably included presbyters.—Ellicott.—G.A.]

did not go about everywhere, but only preached the Gospel, as Priscilla and Aquila; “pastors and teachers,” those who were entrusted with the charge of a whole nation. What then? are the pastors and the teachers inferior? Yes, surely; those who were settled and employed about one spot, as Timothy and Titus, were inferior to those who went about the world and preached the Gospel. However, it is not possible from this passage to frame the subordination and precedence, but from another Epistle. “He gave,” saith he; thou must not say a word to gainsay it. Or perhaps by “evangelists” he means those who wrote the Gospel.

“For the perfecting of the saints unto the work of ministering, unto the building up of the body of Christ.”²⁹¹

Perceive ye the dignity of the office? Each one edifies, each one perfects, each one ministers.

Ver. 13. “Till we all attain,” he proceeds, “unto the unity of the faith and of the knowledge of the Son of God, unto a full-grown man, unto the measure of the stature of the fullness of Christ.”

By “stature” here he means perfect “knowledge”; for as a man will stand firmly, whereas children are carried about and waver in mind, so is it also with believers.

“To the unity,” saith he, “of the faith.”

That is, until we shall be shown to have all one faith: for this is unity of faith, when we all are one, when we shall all alike acknowledge the common bond. Till then thou must labor to this end. If for this thou hast received a gift, that thou mightest edify others, look well that thou overturn not thyself, by envying another. God hath honored thee, and ordained thee, that thou shouldest build up another. Yea, for about this was the Apostle also engaged; and for this was the prophet prophesying and persuading, and the Evangelist preaching the Gospel, and for this was the pastor and teacher; all had undertaken one common work. For tell me not of the difference of the spiritual gifts; but that all had one work. Now when we shall all believe alike then shall there be unity; for that this is what he calls “a perfect man,” is plain. And yet he elsewhere calls us “babes” (**1 Cor. xiii. 11.**), even when we are of mature age; but he is there looking to another comparison, for there it is in comparison with our future knowledge that he there calls us babes. For having said, “We know in part” (**1 Cor. xiii. 9, 12.**), he adds also the word “darkly,” and the like: whereas here he speaks with reference to another thing, with reference to changeableness, as he saith also elsewhere, “But solid food is for full-grown men.” (**Heb. v. 14.**) Do you see then also in what sense he there calls them full-grown? Observe also in what sense he calls men “perfect” here, by the words next added, where he says, “that we may be no longer children.” That we keep, he means to say,



291 [The proper relation of these prepositional phrases is brought out in Meyer’s translation: He has, with a view to the full furnishing of the saints, given those teachers for the work of ministering, for the edification of the body of Christ. So Ellicott.—G.A.]

that little measure, which we may have received, with all diligence, with firmness and steadfastness.

Ver. 14. “That we may be no longer.”—The word, “no longer,” shows that they had of old been in this case, and he reckons himself moreover as a subject for correction, and corrects himself. For this cause, he would say, are there so many workmen, that the building may not be shaken, may not be “carried about,” that the stones may be firmly fixed.²⁹² For this is the character of children, to be tossed to and fro, to be carried about and shaken. “That we may be no longer,” saith he, “children, tossed to and fro, and carried about with every wind of doctrine, by the sleight of men, in craftiness, after the wiles of error.” “And carried about,” saith he, “with every wind.” He comes to this figure of speech, to point out in how great peril doubting souls are. “With every wind,” saith he, “by the sleight of men, in craftiness, after the wiles of error.” The word “sleight”²⁹³ means the art of gamesters. Such are the “crafty,” whenever they lay hold on the simpler sort. For they also change and shift about everything. He here glances also at human life.

Ver. 15, 16. “But speaking truth,”²⁹⁴ saith he, “in love, may grow up in all things into Him, which is the Head, even Christ, from whom,” (that is, from Christ,) “all the body fitly framed and knit together, through that which every joint supplieth, according to the working in due measure of each several part, maketh increase of the body unto the building up of itself in love.”

He expresses himself with great obscurity, from his desire to utter everything at once. What he means, however, is this. In the same way as the spirit, or vital principle, which descends from the brain, communicates the sensitive faculty which is conveyed through the nerves, not simply to all the members, but according to the proportion of each member, to that which is capable of receiving more, more, to that which is capable of less, less, (for the spirit is the root or source;) so also is Christ. For the souls of men being dependent upon Him as members, His provident care, and supply of the spiritual gifts according to a due proportion in the measure of every single member, effects their increase. But what is the meaning of this, “by the touch of the supply”?²⁹⁵ that is to say, by the sensitive faculty.²⁹⁶

292 [“It is not the figure of a building which Paul employs here, but of a ship abandoned to the breakers, on which figurative expression of restless passive subjection to influences, compare [Jas. i. 6.](#)”—Meyer.—G.A.]

293 κυβεία κυβευταί.

294 [“ἀληθεύοντες; The common meaning, ‘To speak truth,’ is clearly unsatisfactory here. It means ‘holding the truth.’”—Ellicott. “Professing the truth,” Thayer, *Lexicon*. Rev. Ver. has in margin “dealing truly.” Meyer says it means here, as always, “speaking the truth,” and correctly.—G.A.]

295 ἀφῆς, “joint,” Eng. Tr. Theodoret, too, *in loc.* interprets *touch*, and considers that it stands for all the senses. S. Austin translates *tactus in Psalm x. 7, de Civ. D. xxii. 18*, but in the received meaning. [See Meyer.—G.A.]

296 [“Meyer still retains the interpretation of Chrysostom and Theodoret that ἀφή=αἴσθησις, “feeling,” “perception,” and connects the clause with αὐξήσιν ποιεῖται: but the parallel passage, [Col. ii. 19](#), leaves it scarcely

For that spirit which is supplied to the members from the head, “touches,”²⁹⁷ each single member, and thus actuates it. As though one should say, “the body receiving the supply according to the proportion of its several members, thus maketh the increase”; or, in other words, “the members receiving the supply according to the proportion of their proper measure, thus make increase”; or otherwise again thus, “the spirit flowing plenteously from above, and touching²⁹⁸ all the members, and supplying them as each is capable of “receiving it, thus maketh increase.” But wherefore doth he add, “in love”? Because in no other way is it possible for that Spirit to descend. For as, in case a hand should happen to be torn from the body, the spirit which proceeds from the brain seeks the limb, and if it finds it not, does not leap forth from the body, and fly about and go to the hand, but if it finds it not in its place, does not touch it; so also will it be here, if we be not bound together in love. All these expressions he uses as tending to humility. For what, he seems to say, if this or that man receives more than another? He has received the same Spirit, sent forth from the same Head, effectually working in all alike, communicating itself to all alike.

“Fitly framed and knit together.”

That is, having great care bestowed upon it; for the body must not be put together anyhow, but with exceeding art and nicety, since if it gets out of place, it is no longer. So that each must not only be united to the body, but also occupy his proper place, since if thou shalt go beyond this, thou art not united to it, neither dost thou receive the Spirit. Dost thou not see, that in those dislocations of the bones which take place in any accident, when a bone gets out of its proper place and occupies that of another, how it injures the whole body, and oftentimes will produce death? So that sometimes it will be found to be no longer worth preserving. For many in many cases will cut it off, and leave a void in its place; because everywhere what is in excess is an evil. And so again with the elements, if they lose their proper proportion and be in excess, they impair the whole system. This is the meaning of the being “fitly framed and knit together.” Consider then of how vast importance it is, that each should remain in his own proper place, and not encroach on another which in nowise appertains to him. Thou putteth the members together, He supplieth them from above. For as there are in the body such recipient organs, as we have seen, so is it also with the Spirit, the whole root or source being from above. For example, the heart is the recipient of the breath, the liver of the blood, the spleen of the bile, and the other organs, some of one thing, others of another, but all these have their source from the brain. So also hath God done, highly honoring man, and being unwilling to be far from him, He hath made Himself indeed

doubtful that the meaning usually assigned is correct, and that the clause is to be connected with the participles.”—Ellicott. So Thayer, *Lex.*, Rev. Ver.—G.A.]

297 ἀπτόμενον.

298 ἀπτόμενον.

the source of his dependence, and hath constituted them fellow-workers with Himself; and some He hath appointed to one office, and others to another. For example, the Apostle is the most vital vessel of the whole body, receiving everything from Him; so that He maketh eternal life to run through them to all, as through veins and arteries, I mean through their discourse. The Prophet foretells things to come, whilst He alone ordereth the same; Thou puttest the members together,²⁹⁹ but He supplies them with life, “For the perfecting of the saints, for the work of the ministry.” Love builds up, and makes men cleave one to another, and be fastened and fitted together.

Moral. If therefore we desire to have the benefit of that Spirit which is from the Head, let us cleave one to another. For there are two kinds of separation from the body of the Church; the one, when we wax cold in love, the other, when we dare commit things unworthy of our belonging to that body; for in either way we cut ourselves off from the “fullness of Christ.” But if we are appointed to build up others also, what shall not be done to them who are first to make division? Nothing will so avail to divide the Church as love of power. Nothing so provokes God’s anger as the division of the Church. Yea, though we have achieved ten thousand glorious acts, yet shall we, if we cut to pieces the fullness of the Church, suffer punishment no less sore than they who mangled His body. For that indeed was brought to pass for the benefit of the world, even though it was done with no such intention; whereas this produces no advantage in any case, but the injury is excessive. These remarks I am addressing not to the governors only, but also to the governed. Now a certain holy man said what might seem to be a bold thing; yet, nevertheless, he spoke it out. What then is this? He said, that not even the blood of martyrdom can wash out this sin.³⁰⁰ For tell me for what dost thou suffer as a martyr? Is it not for the glory of Christ? Thou then that yieldest up thy life for Christ’s sake, how dost thou lay waste the Church, for whose sake Christ yielded up His life? Hear what Paul saith, “I am not meet to be called an Apostle (1 Cor. xv. 9.), because I persecuted the Church of God and made havoc of it.” (Gal. i. 13.) This injury is not less than that received at the hands of enemies, nay, it is far greater. For that indeed renders her even more glorious, whereas this, when she is warred upon by her own children, disgraces her even before her enemies. Because it seems to them a great mark of hypocrisy, that those

299 [The text fluctuates here. We have given that of Field, though neither it nor any of the other readings yields a satisfactory sense. Field’s text is, συντιθεῖς τὰ μέλη, αὐτὸς αὐτοῖς ζωὴν χορηγεῖ. Another text, attested by three mss., has συντιθεῖς τὰ μέσα, αὐτὸς αὐτοῖς ζωὴν χορηγεῖ. Savile’s text, supported by three mss., has καὶ ἐκεῖνος μὲν συντιθεῖ τὰ ὀστέα, αὐτὸς δὲ ζωὴν χορηγεῖ. It will be noticed that this same expression occurs a little above, followed by a clause like that which follows here.—G.A.]

300 “What sacrifice do they believe they celebrate who are rivals of the Priests?” “If such men were even killed for confession of the Christian name, not even by their blood is this stain washed out...He cannot be a Martyr, who is not in the Church.”—St. Cyprian, *Treat.* v. 12, p. 141.

who have been born in her, and nurtured in her bosom, and have learned perfectly her secrets, that these should of a sudden change, and do her enemies' work.

I mean these remarks for those who give themselves up indiscriminately to the men who are dividing the Church. For if on the one hand those men have doctrines also contrary to ours, then on that account further it is not right to mix with them: if, on the other hand, they hold the same opinions, the reason for not mixing with them is greater still. And why so? Because then the disease is from lust of authority. Know ye not what was the fate of Korah, Dathan, and Abiram? ([Num. xvi. 1–35.](#)) Of them only did I say? Was it not also of them that were with them? What wilt thou say? Shall it be said, "Their faith is the same, they are orthodox as well as we"? If so, why then are they not with us? There is "one Lord, one faith, one baptism." If their cause is right, then is ours wrong; if ours is right, then is theirs wrong. "Children," saith he, "tossed to and fro, and carried about with every wind." Tell me, dost thou think this is enough, to say that they are orthodox? Is then the ordination³⁰¹ of clergy³⁰² past and done away? And what is the advantage of other things,³⁰³ if this be not strictly observed? For as we must needs contend for the faith; so must we for this also. For if it is lawful for any one, according to the phrase of them of old, "to fill his hands,"³⁰⁴ and to become a priest, let all approach to minister. In vain has this altar been raised, in vain the fullness of the Church, in vain the number of the priests. Let us take them away and destroy them. "God forbid!" ye will say. You are doing these things, and do ye say, "God forbid"? How say ye, "God forbid," when the very things are taking place? I speak and testify, not looking to my own interest, but to your salvation. But if any one be indifferent, he must see to it himself: if these things are a care to no one else, yet are they a care to me. "I planted," saith he, "Apollos watered, but God gave the increase." ([1 Cor. iii. 6.](#)) How shall we bear the ridicule of the Greeks? For if they reproach us on account of our heresies, what will they not say of these things? "If they have the same doctrines, if the same mysteries, wherefore does a ruler in one Church invade another? See ye," say they, "how all things amongst the Christians are full of vainglory? And there is an ambition among them, and

301 [See Bingham, *Ant. Bk. iv. ch. vi. sec. 11.*—G.A.]

302 χειροτονίας. At this time there were two orthodox successions in Antioch, that of Paulinus and Evagrius, who were successively representatives of the old line which the Arians had dispossessed, and which Western Christendom supported; and that of Meletius and Flavian, to which St. Chrysostom adhered, and the Eastern Church generally, being the Arian succession conformed to orthodoxy. The schism was terminated A.D. 392, on the death of Evagrius, though his party continued for twenty years longer.

303 [τῶν ἄλλων, wanting in the text of Field, is attested by four good authorities, and yields the only sense that suits the context.—G.A.]

304 [Exodus xxix. 9.](#) Our translation has, "Thou shalt consecrate Aaron and his sons"; the margin gives the literal rendering, "Thou shalt fill the hands of Aaron."

hypocrisy. Strip them,” say they, “of their numbers, and they are nothing. Cut out the disease, the corrupt multitude.” Would ye have me tell what they say of our city, how they accuse us on the score of our easy compliances? Any one, say they, that chooses may find followers, and would never be at a loss for them. Oh, what a sneer is that, what a disgrace are these things! And yet the sneer is one thing, the disgrace is another. If any amongst us are convicted of deeds the most disgraceful, and are about to meet with some penalty, great is the alarm, great is the fear on all sides, lest he should start away, people say, and join the other side. Yea, let such an one start away ten thousand times, and let him join them. And I speak not only of those who have sinned, but if there be any one free from offense, and he has a mind to depart, let him depart. I am grieved indeed at it, and bewail and lament it, and am cut to the very heart, as though I were being deprived of one of my own limbs; and yet I am not so grieved, as to be compelled to do anything wrong through such fear as this. We have “not lordship over your faith” (2 Cor. i. 24.), beloved, nor command we these things as your lords and masters. We are appointed for the teaching of the word, not for power, nor for absolute authority. We hold the place of counselors to advise you. The counselor speaks his own sentiments, not forcing the hearer, but leaving him full master of his choice upon what is said; in this case alone is he blameable, if he fail to utter the things which present themselves. For this cause do we also say these things, these things do we assert, that it may not be in your power in that day to say, “No one told us, no one gave us commandment, we were ignorant, we thought it was no sin at all.” Therefore I assert and protest, that to make a schism in the Church is no less an evil than to fall into heresy. Tell me, suppose a subject of some king, though he did not join himself to another king, nor give himself to any other, yet should take and keep hold of his king’s royal purple, and should tear it all from its clasp, and rend it into many shreds; would he suffer less punishment than those who join themselves to the service of another? And what, if withal he were to seize the king himself by the throat and slay him, and tear his body limb from limb, what punishment could he undergo, that should be equal to his deserts? Now if in doing this toward a king, his fellow-servant, he would be committing an act too great for any punishment to reach; of what hell shall not he be worthy who slays Christ, and plucks Him limb from limb? of that one which is threatened? No, I think not, but of another far more dreadful.

Speak, ye women, that are present,—for this generally is a failing of women,³⁰⁵—relate to them that are absent this similitude which I have made; startle them. If any think to grieve me and thus to have their revenge, let them be well aware that they do these things in vain.

305 St. Chrysostom was eventually banished and brought to his end by the Empress Eudoxia. Women had taken a strong part with the Arians from the first, to which perhaps he alludes. When Arius began his heresy, he was joined by seven hundred single women. Epiphanius. *Hæres.* 69, 3; vid. also Socrates. ii. 2, *of the Court*, Greg. Naz. *Or.* 48, of Constantinople, &c., &c.

For if thou wishest to revenge thyself on me, I will give thee a method by which thou mayest take vengeance without injury to thyself; or rather without injury it is not possible to revenge thyself, but at all events with less injury. Buffet me, woman, spit upon me, when thou meetest me in the public way, and aim blows at me. Dost thou shudder at hearing this? When I bid thee buffet me, dost thou shudder, and dost thou tear thy Lord and Master and not shudder? Dost thou pluck asunder the limbs of thy Lord and Master, and not tremble? The Church is our Father's house. "There is one body, and one Spirit." But dost thou wish to revenge thyself on me? Yet stop at me. Why dost thou revenge thyself on Christ in my stead? nay, rather, why kick against the nails? In no case indeed is revenge good and right, but to assault one when another has done the wrong is far worse. Is it I that wronged you? Why then inflict pain on Him who hath not wronged you? This is the very extreme of madness. I speak not in irony what I am about to say, nor without purpose, but as I really think and as I feel. I would that every one of those who with you are exasperated against me, and who by this exasperation are injuring themselves, and departing elsewhere, would direct his blows at me in my very face, would strip me and scourge me, be his charge against me just or unjust, and let loose his wrath upon me, rather than that they should dare to commit what they now dare. If this were done, it were nothing; nothing, that a man who is a mere nothing and of no account whatever, should be so treated. And besides, I, the wronged and injured person, might call upon God, and He might forgive you your sins. Not because I have so great confidence; but because when he who has been wronged, entreats for him who has done the wrong, he gains great confidence. "If one man sin against another," it is said, "then shall they pray for him"³⁰⁶ (1 Sam. ii. 25.); and if I were unable, I might seek for other holy men, and entreat them, and they might do it. But now whom shall we even entreat, when God is outraged by us?

Mark the consistency; for of those who belong to this Church, some never approach to communicate at all, or but once in the year, and then without purpose, and just as it may happen; others more regularly indeed, yet they too carelessly and without purpose, and while engaged in conversation, and trifling about nothing; whilst those who, forsooth, seem to be in earnest, these are the very persons who work this mischief. Yet surely, if it is for these things ye are in earnest, it were better that ye also were in the ranks of the indifferent; or rather it were better still, that neither they should be indifferent, nor you such as ye are. I speak not of you that are present, but of those who are deserting from us. The act is adultery. And if ye bear not to hear these things of them, neither should ye of us. There must be breach of the law either on the one side or the other. If then thou hast these suspicions concerning

306 [This is the reading of the Septuagint, as follows: ἄν εἰς ἀνθρώπῳν τις ἀμάρτη, προσεύξονται περὶ αὐτοῦ. The Hebrew, however, is different, and reads, "If one man sin against another, God shall judge him; but if a man sin against the Lord, who shall entreat for him?" So the Rev. Ver.—G.A.]

me, I am ready to retire from my office, and resign it to whomsoever ye may choose. Only let the Church be one. But if I have been lawfully made and consecrated, entreat those who have contrary to the law mounted the episcopal throne to resign it.

These things I have said, not as dictating to you, but only to secure and protect you. Since every one of you is come to age, and will have to give account of the things which he has done, I entreat you not to cast the whole matter on us, and consider yourselves to be irresponsible, that ye may not go on fruitlessly deceiving yourselves, and at last bewail it. An account indeed we shall have to give of your souls; but it will be when we have been wanting on our part, when we fail to exhort, when we fail to admonish, when we fail to protest. But after these words, allow even me to say that "I am pure from the blood of all men" (*Acts xx. 26.*); and that "God will deliver my soul." (*Ezek. iii. 19, 21.*) Say what ye will, give a just cause why ye depart, and I will answer you. But no, ye will not state it. Wherefore I entreat you, endeavor henceforward both to resist nobly and to bring back those who have seceded, that we may with one accord lift up thanksgiving to God; for to Him belongs the glory for ever and ever. Amen. _____

Homily XII.

[Ephesians iv. 17](#)

“This I say therefore, and testify in the Lord, that ye no longer walk as the Gentiles also walk, in the vanity of their mind, being darkened in their understanding.”

It is the duty of the teacher to build up and restore the souls of his disciples, not only by counseling and instructing them, but also by alarming them, and delivering them up to God. For when the words spoken by men as coming from fellow-servants are not sufficient to kindle the soul, it then becomes necessary to make over the case to God. This accordingly Paul does also; for having discoursed³⁰⁷ concerning lowliness, and concerning unity, and concerning our duty not to rise up one against another, hear what he says. “This I say therefore, and testify in the Lord, that ye no longer walk as the Gentiles also walk.” He does not say, “That ye henceforth walk not as ye are now walking,” for that expression would have struck too hard. But he plainly indicates the same thing, only he brings his example from others. And so in writing to the Thessalonians, he does this very same thing, where he says, “Not in the passion of lust, even as the Gentiles which know not God.” ([1 Thess. iv. 5.](#)) Ye differ from them, he means to say, in doctrine, but that is wholly God’s work: what I require on your path is the life and the course of behavior that is after God. This is your own. And I call the Lord to witness what I have said, that I have not shrunk, but have told you how ye ought to walk.

“In the vanity,” saith he, “of their mind.”

What is vanity of mind? It is the being busied about vain things. And what are those vain things, but all things in the present life? Of which the Preacher saith, “Vanity of vanities, all is vanity.” ([Eccles. i. 2.](#)) But a man will say, If they be vain and vanity, wherefore were they made? If they are God’s works, how are they vain? And great is the dispute concerning these things. But hearken, beloved: it is not the works of God which he calls vain; God forbid! The Heaven is not vain, the earth is not vain,—God forbid!—nor the sun, nor the moon and stars, nor our own body. No, all these are “very good.” ([Gen. i. 31.](#)) But what is vain? Let us hear the Preacher himself, what he saith; “I planted me vineyards, I gat me men singers and women singers, I made me pools of water, I had great possession of herds and flocks, I gathered me also silver and gold, and I saw that these are vanity.” ([Eccles. ii. 4–8.](#)) And again, “Vanity of vanities, all things are vanity.” ([Eccles. xii. 8.](#)) Hear also what the Prophet saith, “He heapeth up riches, and knoweth not who shall gather them.” ([Ps. xxxix.](#)

307 [Modern exegesis has made more logical analysis, and indicated more carefully and correctly the transitions from one thought or branch of the subject to another, than the ancient. Comp. Meyer, Lightfoot, Schaff, and especially the paragraphing of the Rev. Ver. On this passage Meyer says: The exhortation begun at [vv. 1–3](#), and interrupted by the digression [vv. 4–16](#), is here resumed by the οὖν, and the “walking worthily” of [v. 1](#) is now followed up in the form, “that ye no longer walk as the Gentiles also walk,” &c.—G.A.]

6.) Such is “vanity of vanities,” your splendid buildings, your vast and overflowing riches, the herds of slaves that bustle along the public square, your pomp and vainglory, your high thoughts, and your ostentation.³⁰⁸ For all these are vain; they came not from the hand of God, but are of our own creating. But why then are they vain? Because they have no useful end. Riches are vain when they are spent upon luxury; but they cease to be vain when they are “dispersed and given to the needy.” (Ps. cxii. 9.) But when thou hast spent them upon luxury, let us look at the end of them, what it is;—grossness of body, flatulence, pantings, fullness of belly, heaviness of head, softness of flesh, feverishness, enervation; for as a man who shall draw into a leaking vessel labors in vain, so also does the one who lives in luxury and self-indulgence draw into a leaking vessel. But again, that is called “vain,” which is expected indeed to contain something, but contains it not;—that which men call empty, as when they speak of “empty hopes.” And generally that is called “vain,” which is bare and purposeless, which is of no use. Let us see then whether all human things are not of this sort. “Let us eat and drink, for tomorrow we die.” (1 Cor. xv. 32.) What then, tell me, is the end? Corruption. Let us put on clothing and raiment. And what is the result? Nothing. Such are the lives of the Greeks. They philosophized, but in vain. They made a show of a life of hardship, but of mere hardship, not looking to any beneficial end, but to vainglory, and to honor from the many. But what is the honor of the many? It is nothing, for if they themselves which render the honor perish, much more does the honor. He that renders honor to another, ought first to render it to himself; for if he gain not honor for himself, how can he ever render it to another? Whereas now we seek even honors from vile and despicable characters, themselves dishonorable, and objects of reproach. What kind of honor then is this? Perceive ye, how that all things are “vanity of vanities”? Therefore, saith he, “in the vanity of their mind.”

But further, is not their religion of this sort, wood and stone? He hath made the sun to shine for a lamp to light us. Who will worship his own lamp? The sun supplies us with light, but where he cannot, a lamp can do it. Then why not worship thy lamp? “Nay,” one will say, “I worship the fire.” Oh, how ridiculous! So great is the absurdity, and yet look again at another absurdity. Why extinguish the object of thy worship? Why destroy, why annihilate thy god? Wherefore dost thou not suffer thy house to be filled with him? For if the fire be god, let him feed upon thy body. Put not thy god under the bottom of thy kettle, or thy cauldron.³⁰⁹ Bring him into thy inner chambers, bring him within thy silken draperies.

308 [“Vanity’ here is rather the subjective sphere in which the walk of the other Gentiles takes place, namely, in nothingness of their thinking and willing (νοῦς), and is to be understood of the whole intellectual and moral character of heathenism.”—Meyer.—G.A.]

309 [Compare 1 Kings xviii. 27, the *locus classicus* where Elijah uses his scathing irony against the priests of Baal.—G.A.]

Whereas not only dost thou not bring him in, but if by any accident he has found entrance, thou drivest him out from every place, thou callest everybody together, and, as though some wild beast had entered, thou weepest and wailest, and callest the presence of thy god an overwhelming calamity. I have a God, and I do all I can to enshrine Him in my bosom, and I deem it my true bliss, not when He visits my dwelling, but when I can draw Him even to my heart. Do thou too draw the fire to thine heart. This is folly and vanity. Fire is good for use, not for adoration; good for ministration and for service, to be my slave, not to be my master. It was made for me, not I for it. If thou art a worshiper of fire, why recline upon thy couch thyself, and order thy cook to stand before thy god? Take up the art of cookery thyself, become a baker if thou wilt, or a coppersmith, for nothing can be more honorable than these arts, since these are they that thy god visits. Why deem that art a disgrace, where thy god is all in all? Why commit it to thy slaves, and not be ambitious of it thyself? Fire is good, inasmuch as it is the work of a good Creator, but it is not God. It is the work of God, it was not called God. Seest thou not how ungovernable is its nature;—how when it lays hold on a building it stops nowhere? But if it seizes anything continuous, it destroys all; and, except the hands of workmen or others quench its fury, it knows not friends nor foes, but deals with all alike. Is this then your god, and are ye not ashamed? Well indeed does he say, “in the vanity of their mind.”

But the sun, they say, is God. Tell me, how and wherefore. Is it that he sheds abundance of light? Yet dost thou not see him overcome by clouds, and in bondage to the necessity of nature, and eclipsed, and hidden by the moon? And yet the cloud is weaker than the sun; but still it often gains the mastery of him. And this indeed is the work of God’s wisdom. God must needs be all sufficient: but the sun needs many things; and this is not like a god. For he requires air to shine in, and that, too, thin air; since the air, when it is greatly condensed, suffers not the rays to pass through it. He requires also water, and other restraining power, to prevent him from consuming. For were it not that fountains, and lakes, and rivers, and seas, formed some moisture by the emission of their vapors, there would be nothing to prevent an universal conflagration. Dost thou see then, say ye, that he is a god? What folly, what madness! A god, say ye, because he has power to do harm. Nay, rather, for this very reason is he no god, because where he does harm he needs nothing; whereas, where he does good, he requires many things besides. Now to do harm, is foreign to God’s nature; to do good, is His property. Where then the reverse is the case, how can he be God? Seest thou not that poisonous drugs injure, and need nothing; but when they are to do good, need many things? For thy sake then is he such as he is, both good, and powerless; good, that thou mayest acknowledge his Lord; and powerless, that thou mayest not say that he is lord. “But,” say they, “he nourishes the plants and the seeds.” What then, at that rate is not the very dung a god? for even that also nourishes. And why not at that rate the scythe as well, and the hands of the husbandman? Prove to me that the sun alone does the work of nour-

ishing without needing the help of either earth, or water, or tillage; but let the seeds be sown, and let him shed forth his rays, and produce the ears of corn. But now if this work be not his alone, but that of the rains also, wherefore is not the water a god also? But of this I speak not yet. Why is not the earth too a god, and why not the dung, and the hoe? Shall we then, tell me, worship all? Alas, what trifling! And indeed rather might the ear of corn be produced without sun, than without earth and water; and so with plants and all other things. Were there no earth, none of these things could ever appear. And if any one, as children and women do, were to put some earth into a pot, and to fill up the pot with a quantity of dung, and to place it under the roof, plants, though they may be weak ones, will be produced from it. So that the contribution of the earth and of the dung is greater, and these therefore we ought to worship rather than the sun. He requires the sky, he requires the air, he requires these waters, to prevent his doing harm, to be as bridles to curb the fierceness of his power, and to restrain him from letting loose his rays over the world, like some furious horse. And now tell me, where is he at night? Whither has your god taken his departure? For this is not like a god, to be circumscribed and limited. This is in fact the property of bodies only. But, say they, there is some sort of power residing in him, and he has motion. Is this power then, I pray you, itself God? Why then is it insufficient in itself, and why does it not restrain the fire? For again, I come to the same argument. But what is that power? Is it productive of light, or does it by the sun give light, though of itself possessing none of these qualities? If so, then is the sun superior to it. How far shall we unwind this maze?

Again, what is water? is not that too, they say, a god? This again is a matter of truly absurd disputation. Is that not a god, they say, which we make use of for so many purposes? And so again, in like manner, of the earth. Truly “they walk in the vanity of their mind, being darkened in their understanding.”

But these words he is now using concerning life and conduct. The Greeks are fornicators and adulterers. Of course. They who paint to themselves such gods as these,³¹⁰ will naturally do all these things; and if they can but escape the eyes of men, there is no one to restrain them. For what will avail the argument of a resurrection, if it appear to them a mere fable? Yea, and what that of the torments of hell?—they too are but a fable. And mark the Satanic notion. When they are told of gods who are fornicators, they deny that these are fables, but believe them. Yet whenever any shall discourse to them of punishment, “these,” they say, “are poets, men who turn everything into fable, that man’s happy condition may be on all sides overturned.”

But the philosophers, it is said, discovered something truly grand, and far better than these. How? They who introduced fate, and who tell us that nothing is providential, and



310 [See Schaff’s *History of the Christian Church*, Vol. I., pp. 72–74, with Literature there noted.—G.A.]

that there is no one to care for anything, but that all things consist of atoms?³¹¹ Or, others again who say that God is a body? Or who, tell me, are they? Are they those who would turn the souls of men into the souls of dogs, and would pervade mankind that one was once a dog, and a lion, and a fish? How long will ye go on and never cease trifling, “being darkened in the understanding”? for they say and do all things as though they were indeed in the dark, both in those things which concern doctrine, and those which concern life and conduct; for the man who is in darkness sees none of the things which lie before him, but oftentimes when he sees a rope, he will take it for a live serpent;³¹² or again, if he is caught by a hedge, he will think that a man or an evil spirit has hold of him, and great is the alarm, and great the perturbation. Such as these are the things they fear. “There were they in great fear,” it saith, “where no fear was” (Ps. liii. 5.); but the things which they ought to fear, these they fear not. But just as children in their nurses’ arms thrust their hands incautiously into the fire, and boldly into the candle also, and yet are scared at a man clothed in sackcloth; just so these Greeks, as if they were really always children, (as some one also amongst themselves has said,³¹³ the Greeks are always children,) fear those things that are no sins, such as filthiness of the body, the pollution of a funeral,³¹⁴ a bed, or the keeping of days, and the like: whereas those which are really sins, unnatural lust, adultery, fornication, of these they make no account at all. No, you may see a man washing himself from the pollution of a dead body, but from dead works, never; and, again, spending much zeal in the pursuit of riches, and yet supposing the whole is undone by the crowing of a single cock. “So darkened are they in their understanding.” Their soul is filled with all sorts of terrors. For instance: “Such a person,” one will say, “was the first who met me, as I was going out of the house”; of course ten thousand evils must certainly ensue. At another time, “the wretch of a servant in giving me my shoes,³¹⁵ held out the left shoe first,”—terrible mishaps and mischiefs! “I myself in coming out set forth with the left foot foremost”; and this too is a token of misfortune. And these are the evils that occur about the house. Then, as I go out, my right eye shoots up from beneath. This is a sure sign of tears. Again the women, when the reeds strike against the standards, and ring, or when they themselves are scratched by the shuttle, turn

311 [On Democritus and Leucippus, founders of the Atomistic philosophy, see Ueberweg’s *Hist. of Philosophy* (Amer. ed.), Vol. I., pp. 67–71; on Epicurus, Vol. I., pp. 205–207.—G.A.]

312 This was the instance in the Schools. Vid. Sextus Empiricus, *Pyrrh. Hypot.* I. 33.

313 The Egyptian priest to Solon. Plat. *Tim.* p. 22, B.

314 Vid. Theophr. *Charact.* xvi. περὶ δεισιδαιμονίας; Guther *de Jure Manium in Græv. Thes.* 12, 1175; Hes. *Opp. et D.* 765, sqq.

315 Vid. Plin. *N. H.* 2, 7; Juv. *Sat.* 6, 579. These and like superstitions are condemned also by Clem. Alex. *Strom.* vii. 4, pp. 842–844; St. Cyril of Jerus. iv. 37, and St. Aust. *de Doctr. Christ.* ii. 20, 21. This series, Vol. II., p. 545. See also St. Chrys. *ad Illum Catech.* ii. 5. This series, Vol. IX., p. 170.—G.A.

this also into a sign. And again, when they strike the web with the shuttle, and do it with some vehemence, and then the reeds on the top from the intensity of the blow strike against the standards and ring, this again they make a sign, and ten thousand things besides, deserving of ridicule. And so if an ass should bray, or a cock should crow, or a man should sneeze, or whatever else may happen, like men bound with ten thousand chains, or, as I was saying, like men confined in the dark, they suspect everything, and are more slavish than all the slaves in the world.³¹⁶



But let it not be so with us. But scorning all these things, as men living in the light, and having our citizenship in Heaven, and having nothing in common with earth, let us regard but one thing as terrible, that is, sin, and offending against God. And if there be not this, let us scorn all the rest, and him that brought them in, the Devil. For these things let us give thanks to God. Let us be diligent, not only that we ourselves be never caught by this slavery, but if any of those who are dear to us have been caught, let us break his bonds asunder, let us release him from this most bitter and contemptible captivity, let us make him free and unshackled for his course toward Heaven, let us raise up his flagging wings, and teach him to be wise for life and doctrine's sake. Let us give thanks to God for all things. Let us beseech Him that He will not declare us unworthy of the gifts offered to us, and let us ourselves withal endeavor to contribute our own part, that we may teach not only by speaking, but by acting also. For thus shall we be able to attain His unnumbered blessings, of which God grant we may all be counted worthy, in Christ Jesus our Lord with whom, to the Father and the Holy Ghost together, be glory, might, and honor, now, henceforth, and for ever and ever. Amen.

316 [Compare Chrysostom's Commentary on [Gal. i. 7.](#)—G.A.]

Homily XIII.

[Ephesians iv. 17–19](#)

“This I say therefore, and testify in the Lord, that ye no longer walk as the Gentiles also walk, in the vanity of their mind, being darkened in their understanding, alienated from the life of God, because of the ignorance that is in them, because of the hardening of their heart: who being past feeling, gave themselves up to lasciviousness, to work all uncleanness with greediness.”

These words are not addressed to the Ephesians only, but are now addressed also to you; and that, not from me, but from Paul; or rather, neither from me nor from Paul, but from the grace of the Spirit. And we then ought so to feel, as though that grace itself were uttering them. And now hear what it saith. “This I say therefore, and testify in the Lord, that ye no longer walk as the Gentiles also walk, in the vanity of their mind, being darkened in their understanding, alienated from the life of God because of the ignorance that is in them, because of the hardening of their heart.” If then it is ignorance, if it is hardening, why blame it?³¹⁷ if a man is ignorant, it were just, not that he should be ill-treated for it, nor be blamed, but that he should be informed of those things of which he is ignorant. But mark how at once he cuts them off from all excuse. “Who being past feeling,” saith he, “gave themselves up to lasciviousness, to work all uncleanness with greediness; but ye did not so learn Christ.” Here he shows us, that the cause of their hardening was their way of life, and that their life was the consequence of their own indolence and want of feeling.

“Who being past feeling,”³¹⁸ saith he, “gave themselves up.”

Whenever then ye hear, that “God gave them up unto a reprobate mind” ([Rom. i. 28.](#)), remember this expression, that “they gave themselves up.” If then they gave themselves over, how did God give them over? and if again God gave them over, how did they give themselves over? Thou seest the seeming contradiction. The word, “gave them over,” then, means this, He permitted³¹⁹ them to be given over. Seest thou, that the impure life is the ground for like doctrines also? “Every one,” saith the Lord, “that doeth ill hateth the light, and cometh not to the light.” ([John iii. 20.](#)) For how could a profligate man, one more immersed in the practice of indiscriminate lewdness than the swine³²⁰ that wallow in the mire, and who is a lover of money, and has not so much as any desire after temperance, enter

317 [“The *cause* of this estrangement of the Gentiles from the life of God is the *ignorance* which is in them through *hardening* of heart, consequently due to their own fault.”—Meyer.—G.A.]

318 [“The estrangement of the Gentiles from the divine life, indicated in the preceding verse, is here proved in conformity with *experience*.”—Meyer.—G.A.]

319 [“The word implies an *active giving up*, not mere permission.”—Meyer, Ellicott, Thayer.—G.A.]

320 [The word “swine” (χοίρων), though omitted from Field’s text, is clearly attested, and cannot be omitted without leaving the sense difficult and obscure.—G.A.]

upon a life like this? They made the thing, saith he, their “work.”³²¹ Hence their “hardening” (ver. 19), hence the “darkness of their understanding.” There is such a thing as being in the dark, even while the light is shining, when the eyes are weak; and weak they become, either by the influx of ill humors, or by superabundance of rheum. And so surely is it also here; when the strong current of the affairs of this life overwhelms the perceptive power of the understanding, it is thrown into a state of darkness. And in the same way as if we were placed in the depths under water, we should be unable to see the sun through the quantity of water lying, like a sort of barrier, above us, so surely, in the eyes of the understanding also a blindness of the heart takes place, that is, an insensibility, whenever there is no fear to agitate the soul. “There is no fear of God,” it saith, “before his eyes” (Ps. xxxvi. 1.); and again, “The fool hath said in his heart, There is no God.” (Ps. xiv. 1.) Now blindness arises from no other cause than from want of feeling; this clogs the channel; for whenever the fluids are curdled and collected into one place, the limb becomes dead and void of feeling; and though thou burn it, or cut it, or do what thou wilt with it, still it feels not. So is it also with those persons, when they have once given themselves over to lasciviousness: though thou apply the word to them like fire, or steel, yet nothing touches, nothing reaches them; their limb is utterly dead. And unless thou canst remove the insensibility, so as to touch the healthy members, everything thou doest is vain.

“With greediness,” saith he.

Here he has most completely taken away their excuse; for it was in their power, if at least they chose it, not to be “greedy,”³²² nor to be “lascivious,” nor gluttonous, and yet to enjoy their desires. It was in their power to partake in moderation³²³ of riches, and even of pleasure and of luxury; but when they indulged the thing immoderately,³²⁴ they destroyed all.

321 [Namely, “to *work* all uncleanness,” &c.—G.A.]

322 [From the word used by Chrysostom as the antithesis of *πλεονεκτεῖν*, namely, *μετὰ συμμετρίας* (and compare *ἀμέτρως* below) it is evident he understood the phrase *ἐν πλεονεξίᾳ* 139, as the Revisers of Eng. Ver. do, “with greediness.” But Meyer denies that the word *πλεονεξία* ever means anything but “covetousness” in the New Test. So also Ellicott.—G.A.]

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“To work all uncleanness,” saith he.

Ye see how he strips them of all excuse by speaking of “working uncleanness.” They did not sin, he means, by making a false step, but they worked out these horrid deeds, and they made the thing a matter of study. “All uncleanness”; uncleanness is all adultery, fornication, unnatural lust, envy, every kind of profligacy and lasciviousness.

Ver. 20, 21. “But ye did not so learn Christ,” he continues, “if so be that ye heard Him, and were taught in Him even as truth is in Jesus.”

The expression, “If so be that ye heard Him,” is not that of one doubting, but of one even strongly affirming: as he also speaks elsewhere, “If so be that it is a righteous thing with God to recompense affliction to them that afflict you.” (2 Thess. i. 6.) That is to say, It was not for these purposes that “ye learned Christ.”

Ver. 22. “That ye put away as concerning your former manner of life, the old man.”

This then surely is to learn Christ, to live rightly; for he that lives wickedly knows not God, neither is known of Him; for hear what he saith elsewhere, “They profess that they know God, but by their works they deny Him.” (Tit. i. 16.)

“As truth is in Jesus; that ye put away as concerning your former manner of life, the old man.”

That is to say, It was not on these terms that thou enteredst into covenant. What is found among us is not vanity, but truth. As the doctrines are true, so is the life also. Sin is vanity and falsehood; but a right life is truth. For temperance is indeed truth, for it has a great end; whereas profligacy ends in nothing.

“Which waxeth corrupt,” saith he, “after the lusts of deceit.” As his lusts became corrupt, so himself also. How then do his lusts become corrupt? By death all things are dissolved; for hear the Prophet, how he saith, “In that very day his thoughts perish.” (Ps. cxlvi. 4.) And not by death only, but by many things besides; for instance, beauty, at the advance of either disease or old age, withdraws and dies away, and suffers corruption. Bodily vigor again is destroyed by the same means; nor does luxury itself afford the same pleasure in old age, as is evident from the case of Barzillai:³²⁵ the history, no doubt, ye know. Or again, in another sense, lust corrupts and destroys the old man; for as wool is destroyed by the very same means by which it is produced, so likewise is the old man. For love of glory destroys him, and pleasures will often destroy him, and “lust” will utterly “deceive” him. For this is not really pleasure but bitterness and deceit, all pretense and outward show. The surface, indeed, of the things is bright, but the things themselves are only full of misery and extreme

325 [And David said to Barzillai, “Come and I will sustain thee in Jerusalem.” And Barzillai said unto the king, “I am this day fourscore years old: can thy servant taste what I eat or what I drink? can I hear any more the voice of singing men and singing women? wherefore then should thy servant be yet a burden unto my lord the king?”—2 Sam. xix. 31–35.—G.A.]

wretchedness, and loathsomeness, and utter poverty. Take off the mask, and lay bare the true face, and thou shalt see the cheat, for cheat it is, when that which is, appears not, and that which is not, is displayed. And it is thus that impositions are effected.

The Apostle delineates for us four men.³²⁶ Of these I shall give an explanation. In this place he mentions two, speaking thus, “Putting away the old man, be ye renewed in the spirit of your mind, and put on the new man.” And in the Epistle to the Romans, two more, as where he saith, “But I see a different law in my members warring against the law of my mind, and bringing me into captivity under the law of sin which is in my members.” (Rom. vii. 23.) And these latter bear affinity to those former two, the “new man” to the “inner man,” and the “old man” to the “outer man.” However, three of these four were subject to corruption. Or rather there are three, the new man, the old, and this, man in his substance and nature.³²⁷

Ver. 23. “And that ye be renewed,” saith he, “in the spirit of your mind.”

In order that no one may suppose that, whereas he speaks of old and new, he is introducing a different person, observe his expression, “That ye be renewed.” To be renewed is, when the selfsame thing which has grown old is renewed, changed from one thing into the other. So that the subject indeed is the same, but the change is in that which is accidental. Just as the body indeed is the same, and the change in that which is accidental, so is it here. How then is the renewal to take place? “In the spirit of your mind,” saith he. Whosoever therefore has the Spirit, will perform no old deed, for the Spirit will not endure old deeds. “In the spirit,” saith he, “of your mind,” that is, in the spirit which is in your mind.³²⁸

Ver. 24. “And put on the new man.”

Seest thou that the subject is one, but the clothing is twofold, that which is put off, and that which is put on? “The new man,” he continues, “which after God hath been created in righteousness and holiness of truth.” Now wherefore does he call virtue a man? And wherefore vice, a man? Because a man cannot be shown without acting; so that these things, no less than nature, show a man, whether he be good or evil. Now as to undress one’s self and to dress one’s self is easy, so may we see it is with virtue and vice. The young man is strong; wherefore let us also become strong for the performance of good actions. The young

326 τέσσαρας ἀνθρώπους ὑπογράφει.

327 μᾶλλον δὲ τρεῖς εἰσι, καινὸς καὶ παλαιός, καὶ οὗτος ὁ οὐσιώδης καὶ φυσικός.

328 [Meyer takes a different view, and says: The Holy Spirit is never, in the New Test., designated in such a way that man appears as the subject of the Spirit (thus never: τὸ πνεῦμα ὑμῶν, and the like, or as here: τὸ πνεῦμα τοῦ νοῦς ὑμῶν). In the second place, the Apostle is here putting forward the moral self-activity of the Christian life, and hence had no occasion to introduce the point: “Through the Holy Spirit.” Hence πνεῦμα here is the “human” spirit, the spirit by which your νοῦς is governed. Otherwise Ellicott: Divine spirit united with the human; and so he understands Meyer, but incorrectly. See Ellicott and Meyer *in loc.*—G.A.]

man has no wrinkle, therefore neither should we have. The young man wavers not, nor is he easily taken with diseases, therefore neither should we be.

Observe here how he calls this realizing of virtue, this bringing of it into being from nothing, a “creation.” But what? was not that other former creation after God? No, in no-wise, but after the devil. He is the sole creator of sin.

How is this? For man is created henceforth, not of water, nor of earth, but “in righteousness and holiness of truth.” What is this? He straightway created him, he means, to be a son: for this takes place from Baptism. This it is which is the reality, “in righteousness and holiness of truth.” There was of old a righteousness, there was likewise a holiness with the Jews. Yet was that righteousness not in truth, but in figure. For the being clean in body was a type of purity, not the truth of purity; was a type of righteousness, not the truth of righteousness. “In righteousness,” saith he, “and holiness,” which are “of truth.”

And this expression is used with reference to falsehood; for many there are, who to them that are without, seem to be righteous, yet are false. Now by righteousness is meant universal virtue. For hearken to Christ, how He saith, “Except your righteousness shall exceed the righteousness of the scribes and Pharisees, ye shall in nowise enter into the kingdom of heaven.” ([Matt. v. 20.](#)) And again, he is called righteous, who has no charge against him; for so even in courts of justice we say that that man is righteous, who has been unrighteously treated, and has not done unrighteously in return. If therefore we also before the terrible Tribunal shall be able to appear righteous one towards another, we may meet with some lovingkindness. Toward God indeed it is impossible we should appear so, whatever we may have to show. For everywhere He overcometh in what is righteous, as the Prophet³²⁹ also saith, “That Thou mightest prevail when Thou comest into judgment.” But if we violate not what is righteous towards each other, then shall we be righteous. If we shall be able to show that we have been treated unrighteously, then shall we be righteous.

How does he say to them who are already clothed, “put on”? He is now speaking of that clothing which is from life and good works. Before, the clothing was from Baptism, whereas now it is from the daily life and from works; no longer “after the lusts of deceit,” but “after God.” But what means the word “holy”? It is that which is pure, that which is due; hence also we use the word of the last duty in the case of the departed, as much as to say, “I owe them nothing further, I have nothing else to answer for.” Thus it is usual for us to say, “I have acquitted myself of all obligations,”³³⁰ and the like, meaning, “I owe nothing more.”

329 [This passage in the Hebrew ([Ps. li. 4.](#)) reads, “And (that thou mayest) be clear when thou judgest.” In the Sept. it is: καὶ νικήσης ἐν τῷ κρίνεσθαί σε, which is followed by Paul in [Rom. iii. 4](#) (except νικήσεις, fut. ind., instead of aor. subj.). We have given here the rendering of the Rev. Ver. of [Rom. iii. 4.](#)—G.A.]

330 ἀφωσιωσάμην.

Moral. Our part then is, never to put off the garment of righteousness, which also the Prophet calls, “the garment of salvation” (Isa. lxi. 10.), that so we may be made like unto God. For He indeed hath put on righteousness. This garment let us put on. Now the word, “put on,” plainly declares nothing else, than that we should never at all put it off. For hear the Prophet, where he saith, “He clothed himself also with cursing as with his garment, and it came into his inward parts.” (Ps. cix. 18.) And again, “Who coverest Thyself with light as with a garment.” (Ps. civ. 2.) And again, it is usual with us to speak concerning men, such an one has “put on” such an one. So then it is not for one day, nor for two, nor for three, but he would have us ever arrayed in virtue, and never stripped of this garment. For a man is not so disfigured when he is stripped of his clothing, as when he is stripped of his virtue. In the former case his fellow-servants behold his nakedness, in the latter his Lord and the Angels. If ever thou happen to see any one going out naked through the public square, tell me, art thou not distressed? When then thou goest about stripped of this garment, what shall we say? Seest not those beggars whom we are wont to call strollers,³³¹ how they roam about, how we pity even them? And yet nevertheless they are without excuse. We do not excuse them when they have lost their clothes by gaming; and how then, if we lose this garment, shall God pardon us? For whenever the devil sees a man stripped of his virtue, he straightway disguises and disfigures his face, and wounds him, and drives him to great straits.

Let us strip ourselves of our riches, that we be not stripped of righteousness. The garb of wealth mars this garment. It is a robe of thorns. Thorns are of this nature; and the more closely they are wrapped around us, the more naked are we made. Lasciviousness strips us of this garment; for it is a fire, and the fire will consume this garment. Wealth is a moth; and as the moth eats through all things alike, and spares not even silken garments, so does this also. All these therefore let us put off, that we may become righteous, that we may “put on the new man.” Let us keep nothing old, nothing outward, nothing that is “corrupt.” Virtue is not toilsome, she is not difficult to attain. Dost thou not see them that are in the mountains? They forsake both houses, and wives, and children, and all preëminence, and shut themselves away from the world, and clothe themselves in sackcloth, and strew ashes beneath them; they wear collars hung about their necks, and have pent themselves up in a

331 λώταγας. The word occurs also in the *Constit. Apost.* viii. 32 [along with such words as βλάξ, “dolt”; μάγος, “sorcerer”; μάντις, “soothsayer”; θηρεπωδός, “beast-charmer”; ὄχλαγωγός, “mob-leader”; περιάμματα ποιῶν, “amulet-maker.”—G.A.]. Its derivation is somewhat uncertain. [Zonaras (Constantinople, 12 cent.), in his Lexicon, gives among other definitions, ἀὐλητῆς, “flute-player”; so also Eustathius (Constantinople, d. 1198), in his famous commentary on Homer, Il. 2, 776, defines it, from the fact that λῶτος sometimes means a “flute.” But this derivation is questioned.—G.A.] The persons denoted by it were wandering musicians or buffoons.

narrow cell.³³² Nor do they stop here, but torture themselves with fastings and continual hunger. Did I now enjoin you to do the like, would ye not all start away? Would ye not say, it is intolerable? But no, I say not that we must needs do anything like this:—I would fain indeed that it were so, still I lay down no law. What then? Enjoy thy baths, take care of thy body, and throw thyself freely into the world, and keep a household, have thy servants to wait on thee, and make free use of thy meats and drinks! But everywhere drive out excess, for that it is which causes sin, and the same thing, whatever it be, if it becomes excessive, becomes a sin; so that excess is nothing else than sin. For observe, when anger is excited above what is meet, then it rushes out into insult, then it commits every sort of injury; so does inordinate passion for beauty, for riches, for glory, or for anything else. And tell me not, that indeed, those of whom I spoke were strong; for many far weaker and richer, and more luxurious than thou art, have taken upon them that austere and rugged life. And why speak I of men? Damsels not yet twenty years old, who have spent their whole time in inner chambers, and in a delicate and effeminate mode of life, in inner chambers full of sweet ointments and perfumes, reclining on soft couches, themselves soft in their nature, and rendered yet more tender by their over indulgence, who all the day long have had no other business than to adorn themselves, to wear jewels, and to enjoy every luxury, who never waited on themselves, but had numerous handmaids standing beside them, who wore soft raiment softer than their skin, fine linen and delicate, who reveled continually in roses and such like sweet odors,—yea, these very ones, in a moment, seized with Christ's flame, have put off all that indolence and even their very nature, have forgotten their delicateness and youth, and like so many noble wrestlers, have stripped themselves of that soft clothing, and rushed into the midst of the contest. And perhaps I shall appear to be telling things incredible, yet nevertheless are they true. These then, these very tender damsels, as I myself have heard, have brought themselves to such a degree of severe training, that they will wrap the coarsest horsehair about their own naked bodies, and go with those tender soles unsandaled, and will lie upon a bed of leaves: nay more, that they watch the greater part of the night, and that they take no heed of perfumes nor of any other of their old delights, but will even let their head, once so carefully dressed, go without special care, with the hair just plainly and simply bound up, so as not to fall into unseemliness. And their only meal is in the evening, a meal not even of herbs nor of bread, but of flour and beans and pulse and olives and figs. They spin without intermission, and labor far harder than their handmaids at home. What more? they will take upon them to wait upon women who are sick, carrying their beds, and



332 [This reference to the Monks in the mountains (in the neighborhood of Antioch) is one of the indications that these Homilies on Ephesians were delivered while Chrysostom was still at Antioch, and before his elevation to the archbishopric of Constantinople. Compare also Hom. vi. on Ephesians.—G.A.]

washing their feet. Nay, many of them even cook. So great is the power of the flame of Christ; so far does their zeal surpass their very nature.

However, I demand nothing like this of you, seeing ye have a mind to be outstripped by women. Yet at least, if there be any tasks not too laborious, at least perform these: restrain the rude hand, and the incontinent eye. What is there, tell me, so hard, what so difficult? Do what is just and right, wrong no man, be ye poor or rich, shopkeepers or hired servants; for unrighteousness may extend even to the poor. Or see ye not how many broils these engage in, and turn all things upside down? Marry freely, and have children. Paul also gave charge to such, to such he wrote. Is that struggle I spoke of too great, and the rock too lofty, and its top too high unto Heaven, and art thou unable to attain to such an height? At least then lay hold on lesser things, and aim at those which are lower. Hast thou not courage to get rid of thine own riches? At least then forbear to seize on the things of others, and to do them wrong. Art thou unable to fast? At least then give not thyself to self-indulgence. Art thou unable to lie upon a bed of leaves? Still, prepare not for yourselves couches inlaid with silver; but use a couch and coverings formed not for display, but for refreshment; not couches of ivory. Make thyself small. Why fill thy vessel with overwhelming cargoes? If thou be lightly equipped, thou shalt have nothing to fear, no envy, no robbers, no liars in wait. For indeed thou art not so rich in money as thou art in cares. Thou aboundest not so much in possessions, as in anxieties and in perils, “which bring in many temptations and lusts.” (1 Tim. vi. 9.) These things they endure, who desire to gain great possessions. I say not, minister unto the sick; yet, at least, bid thy servant do it. Seest thou then how that this is no toilsome task? No, for how can it be, when tender damsels surpass us by so great a distance? Let us be ashamed of ourselves, I entreat you; for in worldly matters, to be sure, we in no point yield to them, neither in wars, nor in games; but in the spiritual contest they get the advantage of us, and are the first to seize the prize, and soar higher, like so many eagles:³³³ whilst we, like jackdaws, are ever living in the steam and smoke; for truly is it the business of jackdaws, and of greedy dogs, to be setting one’s thoughts upon caterers and cooks. Hearken about the women of old; they were great characters, great women and admirable; such were Sarah, Rebekah, Rachel, Deborah, and Hannah; and such there were also in the days of Christ. Yet did they in no case outstrip the men, but occupied the second rank. But now it is the very contrary; women outstrip and eclipse us. How contemptible! What a shame is this! We hold the place of the head, and are surpassed by the body. We are ordained to rule over them; not merely that we may rule, but that we may rule in goodness also; for he that ruleth, ought especially to rule in this respect, by excelling in virtue; whereas if he is surpassed, he is no

333 [This passage is so like a passage in one of Pindar’s Nemean odes that some have thought Chrysostom must have had that in mind. Pind. *Nem.* 3. 138: ἔστι δ’ αἰετός ὠκὺς ἐν πετανοῖς, ὃς ἔλαβεν αἶψα, τῆλόθε μεταμαιόμενος, δαφοινὸν ἄγραν ποσίν· κραγέται δὲ κολοιοὶ ταπεινὰ νέμονται.—G.A.]

longer ruler.³³⁴ Perceive ye how great is the power of Christ's coming? how He dissolved the curse? For indeed there are more virgins than before among women, there is more modesty in those virgins, and there are more widows. No woman would lightly utter so much as an unseemly word. Wherefore then, tell me, dost thou use filthy speech? For tell me not that they were virgins in despondency or despair.

The sex is fond of ornament, and it has this failing. Yet even in this you husbands surpass them, who pride yourselves even upon them, as your own proper ornament; for I do not think that the wife is so ostentatious of her own jewels, as the husband is of those of his wife. He is not so proud of his own golden girdle, as he is of his wife's wearing jewels of gold. So that even of this you are the causes, who light the spark and kindle up the flame. But what is more, it is not so great a sin in a woman as in a man. Thou art ordained to regulate her; in every way thou claimest to have the preëminence. Show her then in this also, that thou takest no interest in this costliness of hers, by thine own apparel. It is more suitable for a woman to adorn herself, than for a man. If then thou escape not the temptation, how shall she escape it? They have moreover their share of vainglory, but this is common to them with men. They are in a measure passionate, and this again is common to them with men. But as to those things wherein they excel, these are no longer common to them with men; their sanctity, I mean, their fervency, their devotion, their love towards Christ. Wherefore then, one may say, did Paul exclude them from the teacher's seat? And here again is a proof how great a distance they were from the men, and that the women of those days were great. For, tell me, while Paul was teaching, or Peter, or those saints of old, had it been right that a woman should intrude into the office? Whereas we have gone on till we have come so debased, that it is worthy of question, why women are not teachers. So truly have we come to the same weakness as they. These things I have said not from any desire to elate them, but to shame ourselves, to chastise, and to admonish us, that so we may resume the authority that belongs to us, not inasmuch as we are greater in size, but because of our foresight, our protection of them, and our virtue. For thus shall the body also be in the order which befits it, when it has the best head to rule. And God grant that all, both wives and husbands, may live according to His good pleasure, that we may all in that terrible day be counted worthy to enjoy the lovingkindness of our Master, and to attain those good things which are promised in Jesus Christ our Lord, with whom to the Father, together with the Holy Ghost, be glory, might, and honor, now and forever and ever. Amen.



334 [Compare Carlyle's lecture on Cromwell and Napoleon in *Heroes and Hero-Worship*.—G.A.]

Homily XIV.

[Ephesians iv. 25–27](#)

“Wherefore, putting away falsehood, speak ye truth each one with his neighbor; for we are members one of another. Be ye angry, and sin not; let not the sun go down upon your wrath: neither give place to the devil.”

Having spoken of the “old man” generally, he next draws him also in detail;³³⁵ for this kind of teaching is more easily learned when we learn by particulars. And what saith he? “Wherefore, putting away falsehood.” What sort of falsehood? Idols does he mean? Surely not; not indeed but that they are falsehood also. However, he is not now speaking of them, because these persons had nothing to do with them; but he is speaking of that which passes between one man and another, meaning that which is deceitful and false. “Speak ye truth, each one,” saith he, “with his neighbor”; then what is more touching to the conscience³³⁶ still, “because we are members one of another.” Let no man deceive his neighbor. As the Psalmist says here and there; “With flattering lip and with a double heart do they speak.” (Ps. xii. 2.) For there is nothing, no, nothing so productive of enmity as deceit and guile.

Observe how everywhere he shames them by this similitude of the body. Let not the eye, saith he, lie to the foot, nor the foot to the eye. For example, if there shall be a deep pit, and then by having reeds laid across upon the mouth of it upon the earth, and yet concealed under earth, it shall by its appearance furnish to the eye an expectation of solid ground, will not the eye use the foot, and discover whether it yields³³⁷ and is hollow underneath, or whether it is firm and resists?³³⁸ Will the foot tell a lie, and not report the truth as it is? And what again? If the eye were to spy a serpent or a wild beast, will it lie to the foot? Will it not at once inform it, and the foot thus informed by it refrain from going on? And what again, when neither the foot nor the eye shall know how to distinguish, but all shall depend upon the smelling, as, for example, whether a drug be deadly or not; will the smelling lie to the mouth? And why not? Because it will be destroying itself also. But it tells the truth as it appears to itself. And what again? Will the tongue lie to the stomach? Does it not, when a thing is bitter, reject it, and, if it is sweet, pass it on? Observe ministration, and interchange of service; observe a provident care arising from truth, and, as one might say, spontaneously from the heart. So surely should it be with us also; let us not lie, since we are “members one of another.” This is a sure token of friendship; whereas the contrary is of enmity. What then,

335 [“And the *first* exhortation here was suggested by the immediately preceding ἀλήθεια. The figurative form of the precept also (ἀποθέμενοι, ‘putting off’) is an echo from what precedes.”—Meyer.—G.A.]

336 [“‘Members’ one of another, and to ‘lie’ to one another,—how contradictory!”—Meyer.—G.A.]

337 [εἶκει, Field’s emendation for the reading εἰκῆ of the mss. He cites the phrase τὸ εἶκον καὶ μὴ ἀντιτυποῦν from Plato, *Cratylus*, 420 D.—G.A.]

338 ἀντιτυπεῖ.

thou wilt ask, if a man shall use treachery against thee? Hearken to the truth. If he use treachery, he is not a member; whereas he saith, “lie not towards the members.”

“Be ye angry, and sin not.”

Observe his wisdom. He both speaks to prevent our sinning, and, if we do not listen, still does not forsake us; for his fatherly compassion does not desert him. For just as the physician prescribes to the sick what he must do, and if he does not submit to it, still does not treat him with contempt, but proceeding to add what advice he can by persuasion, again goes on with the cure; so also does Paul. For he indeed who does otherwise, aims only at reputation, and is annoyed at being disregarded; whereas he who on all occasions aims at the recovery of the patient, has this single object in view, how he may restore the patient, and raise him up again. This then is what Paul is doing. He has said, “Lie not.” Yet if ever lying should produce anger,³³⁹ he goes on again to cure this also. For what saith he? “Be ye angry, and sin not.” It were good indeed never to be angry. Yet if ever any one should fall into passion, still let him not fall into so great a degree. “For let not the sun,” saith he, “go down upon your wrath.” Wouldest thou have thy fill of anger? One hour, or two, or three, is enough for thee; let not the sun depart, and leave you both at enmity. It was of God’s goodness that he rose: let him not depart, having shone on unworthy men. For if the Lord of His great goodness sent him, and hath Himself forgiven thee thy sins, and yet thou forgivest not thy neighbor, look, how great an evil is this! And there is yet another besides this. The blessed Paul dreads the night,³⁴⁰ lest overtaking in solitude him that was wronged, still burning with anger, it should again kindle up the fire. For as long as there are many things in the daytime to banish it, thou art free to indulge it; but as soon as ever the evening comes on, be reconciled, extinguish the evil whilst it is yet fresh; for should night overtake it, the morrow will not avail to extinguish the further evil which will have been collected in the night. Nay, even though thou shouldst cut off the greater portion, and yet not be able to



339 [This seems to be a correct account of the new connection, but the exact force of the first imperative it is not easy to determine. Winer (*Grammar of N.T.*, Thayer’s translation, pp. 311, 312) takes it *permissively*: Be angry (I give you leave), but do not sin. He cites in proof [Jer. x. 24](#), which, however, can be otherwise explained, namely, as the imperative of request, used in prayer. Compare the Lord’s prayer. Meyer says it does not seem logical to connect two imperatives by *kai* unless they are taken in the *same* sense. If the first imperative were *permissive*, the combination would be *exceptive*, and ἀλλά, μόνον or πλὴν ([Jer. x. 24](#).) would be required. Both imperatives then are jussive, and there is an anger which a man not only may, but *ought*, to feel. So Ellicott and Riddle.—G.A.]

340 [“There does not appear any allusion to the possible effect of *night* upon anger, as Chrysostom here, and Theophylact also.”—Ellicott. The parallel Pythagorean custom is cited by Ellicott (*Hammond and Wetstein*): “If they were ever carried away by anger into railing, before the setting of the sun they gave the right hand to each other, embraced each other, and were reconciled.”—G.A.]

cut off the whole, it will again supply from what is left for the following night, to make the blaze more violent. And just as, should the sun be unable by the heat of the day to soften and disperse that part of the air which has been during the night condensed into cloud, it affords material for a tempest, night overtaking the remainder, and feeding it again with fresh vapors: so also is it in the case of anger.

“Neither give place to the devil.”

So then to be at war with one another, is “to give place to the devil”; for, whereas we had need to be all in close array, and to make our stand against him, we have relaxed our enmity against him, and are giving the signal for turning against each other; for never has the devil such *place* as in our enmities.³⁴¹ Numberless are the evils thence produced. And as stones in a building, so long as they are closely fitted together and leave no interstice, will stand firm, while if there is but a single needle’s passage through, or a crevice no broader than a hair, this destroys and ruins all; so is it with the devil. So long indeed as we are closely set and compacted together, he cannot introduce one of his wiles; but when he causes us to relax a little, he rushes in like a torrent. In every case he needs only a beginning, and this is the thing which it is difficult to accomplish; but this done, he makes room on all sides for himself. For henceforth he opens the ear to slanders, and they who speak lies are the more trusted: they have enmity which plays the advocate, not truth which judges justly. And as, where friendship³⁴² is, even those evils which are true appear false, so where there is enmity, even the false appear true. There is a different mind, a different tribunal, which does not hear fairly, but with great bias and partiality. As, in a balance, if lead is cast into the scale, it will drag down the whole; so is it also here, only that the weight of enmity is far heavier than any lead. Wherefore, let us, I beseech you, do all we can to extinguish our enmities before the going down of the sun. For if you fail to master it on the very first day, both on the following, and oftentimes even for a year, you will be protracting it, and the enmity will thenceforward augment itself, and require nothing to aid it. For by causing us to suspect that words spoken in one sense were meant in another, and gestures also, and everything, it infuriates and exasperates us, and makes us more distempered than madmen, not enduring either to utter a name, or to hear it, but saying everything in invective and abuse. How then are we to allay this passion? How shall we extinguish the flame? By reflecting on our own sins, and how much we have to answer for to God; by reflecting that we are wreaking vengeance, not on an enemy, but on ourselves; by reflecting that we are delighting the devil,

341 [This reference to church life is not implied in the context. He follows up what he said before by saying, Give not to the devil opportunity for being active by an angry state of mind.—G.A.]

342 [Compare Goethe: Die Freundschaft ist gerecht. Sie kann allein, Den ganzen Umfang seines Werths erkennen.—G.A.]

that we are strengthening our enemy, our real enemy, and that for him we are doing wrong to our own members. Wouldest thou be revengeful and be at enmity? Be at enmity, but be so with the devil, and not with a member of thine own. For this purpose it is that God hath armed us with anger, not that we should thrust the sword against our own bodies, but that we should baptize³⁴³ the whole blade in the devil's breast. There bury the sword up to the hilt; yea, if thou wilt, hilt and all, and never draw it out again, but add yet another and another. And this actually comes to pass when we are merciful to those of our own spiritual family and peaceably disposed one towards another. Perish money, perish glory and reputation; mine own member is dearer to me than they all. Thus let us say to ourselves; let us not do violence to our own nature to gain wealth, to obtain glory.

Ver. 28. "Let him that stole,"³⁴⁴ saith he, "steal no more."

Seest thou what are the members of the old man? Falsehood, revenge, theft. Why said he not, "Let him that stole" be punished, be tortured, be racked; but, "let him steal no more"? "But rather let him labor, working with his hands the thing that is good, that he may have whereof to give to him that hath need."

Where are they which are called pure;³⁴⁵ they that are full of all defilement, and yet dare to give themselves a name like this? For it is possible, very possible, to put off the reproach,

343 βαπτίζωμεν τὴν μάχαιραν εἰς τὸ τοῦ διαβόλου στήθος.

344 ["The stealer (ὁκλέπτων) is to steal no more.' The present participle does not stand for the past, but is used substantively (like ὁσπείρων, *Matt. xiii. 3.*). As there were in the apostolic church 'fornicators' (*1 Cor. v. 1.*), so there were also 'stealers,' and the attempts to tone down the word are arbitrary and superfluous."—Meyer.—G.A.]

345 καθαροί. The Cathari, or pure, was the title which the Novatians indirectly assumed, by maintaining that none were in God's favor but those who had not sinned after baptism, or who were pure as baptism made them, and by separating from the Church for granting absolution to penitents. The schism originated at Rome in the middle of the third century. Accordingly St. Chrysostom in the text says, that whereas all men need pardon continually, they who affected to be clean or pure without securing it were, as being without it, of all men most unclean. [And he strongly asserts, as against the Novatians, that it is possible to put away the guilt of sins committed after baptism, by ceasing from the practice of them and working that which is good. This view, however, differs from the Protestant view, that the putting away the guilt of sin is at first and always through God's mercy and grace in Jesus Christ.—G.A.] In the sixth of eleven new Homilies edited by the Benedictines, t. xii. p. 355, he says that we may as well talk of the sea being clear of waves as any soul pure from daily sins, though not from transgressing express commandment, yet from vainglory, willfulness, impure thoughts, coveting, lying, resentment, envy, &c., and he mentions as means of washing away sins, coming to Church, grieving for them, confessing them, doing alms, praying, helping the injured, and forgiving injuries. "Let us provide ourselves with these," he proceeds, "every day, washing, wiping ourselves clean, and withal confessing ourselves unprofitable," unlike the Pharisee. "Thus ordering ourselves, we shall be able to find mercy and pardon in that fearful day, &c." This homily was delivered at Constantinople. [On the Novatians, see Schaff, *Church History*, II., pp. 196, 197.—G.A.]

not only by ceasing from the sin, but by working some good thing also. Perceive ye how we ought to get quit of the sin? “They stole.” This is the sin. “They steal no more.” This is not to do away the sin. But how shall they? If they labor, and charitably communicate to others, thus will they do away the sin. He does not simply desire that we should work, but so “work” as to “labor,” so as that we may “communicate” to others. For the thief indeed works, but it is that which is evil.

Ver. 29. “Let no corrupt speech proceed out of your mouth.”

What is “corrupt speech”? That which is said elsewhere to be also “idle, backbiting, filthy communication, jesting, foolish talking.” See ye how he is cutting up the very roots of anger? Lying, theft, unseasonable conversation. The words, however, “Let him steal no more,” he does not say so much excusing them, as to pacify the injured parties, and to recommend them to be content, if they never suffer the like again. And well too does he give advice concerning conversation,³⁴⁶ inasmuch as we shall pay the penalty, not for our deeds only, but also for our words.

“But such as is good,” he proceeds, “for edifying, as the need may be, that it may give grace to them that hear.”

That is to say, What edifies thy neighbor, that only speak, not a word more. For to this end God gave thee a mouth and a tongue, that thou mightest give thanks to Him, that thou mightest build up thy neighbor. So that if thou destroy that building, better were it to be silent, and never to speak at all. For indeed the hands of the workmen, if instead of raising the walls, they should learn to pull them down, would justly deserve to be cut off. For so also saith the Psalmist; “The Lord shall cut off all flattering lips.” (Ps. xii. 3.) The mouth,—this is the cause of all evil; or rather not the mouth, but they that make an evil use of it. From thence proceed insults, revilings, blasphemies, incentives to lusts, murders, adulteries, thefts, all have their origin from this. And how, you will say, do murders? Because from insult thou wilt go on to anger, from anger to blows, from blows to murder. And how, again, adultery? “Such a woman,” one will say, “loves thee, she said something nice about thee.” This at once unstrings thy firmness, and thus are thy passions kindled within thee.

Therefore Paul said, “such as is good.” Since then there is so vast a flow of words, he with good reason speaks indefinitely, charging us to use expressions of that kind, and giving us a pattern of communication. What then is this? By saying, “for edifying,” either he means this, that he who hears thee may be grateful to thee: as, for instance, a brother has committed

346 [The clause, “And well does he give instruction concerning our words also” (καλῶς δὲ καὶ περὶ λόγων διδάσκει), is omitted in the text of Field, but is well attested (three mss., Sav. text), and almost indispensable to the sense of the passage. Compare note, p. 82, on Field’s text in general.—G.A.]

fornication; do not make a display of the offense, nor revel in it; thou wilt be doing no good to him that hears thee; rather, it is likely, thou wilt hurt him, by giving him a stimulus. Whereas, advise him what to do, and thou art conferring on him a great obligation. Discipline him how to keep silence, teach him to revile no man, and thou hast taught him his best lesson, thou wilt have conferred upon him the highest obligation. Discourse with him on contrition, on piety, on almsgiving; all these things will soften his soul, for all these things he will own his obligation. Whereas by exciting his laughter, or by filthy communication, thou wilt rather be inflaming him. Applaud the wickedness, and thou wilt overturn and ruin him.

Or else he means³⁴⁷ thus, “that it may make them, the hearers, full of grace.” For as sweet ointment gives grace to them that partake of it, so also does good speech. Hence it was moreover that one said, “Thy name is as ointment poured forth.” (*Cant. i. 3.*) It caused them to exhale that sweet perfume. Thou seest that what he continually recommends, he is saying now also, charging every one according to his several ability to edify his neighbors. Thou then that givest such advice to others, how much more to thyself!

Ver. 30. “And grieve not,” he adds, “the Holy Spirit of God.”

A matter this more terrible and startling, as he also says in the Epistle to the Thessalonians; for there too he uses an expression of this sort. “He that rejecteth, rejecteth not man, but God.” (*1 Thess. iv. 8.*) So also here. If thou utter a reproachful word, if thou strike thy brother, thou art not striking him, thou art “grieving the Holy Spirit.” And then is added further the benefit bestowed, in order to heighten the rebuke.

“And grieve not the Holy Spirit,” saith He, “in whom ye were sealed unto the day of redemption.”

He it is who marks us as a royal flock; He, who separates us from all former things; He, who suffers us not to lie amongst them that are exposed to the wrath of God,—and dost thou grieve Him? Look how startling are his words there; “For he that rejecteth,” saith he, “rejecteth not man, but God:” and how cutting they are here, “Grieve not the Holy Spirit,” saith he, “in whom ye were sealed.”

Moral. Let this seal then abide upon thy mouth,³⁴⁸ and never destroy the impression. A spiritual mouth never utters a thing of the kind. Say not, “It is nothing, if I do utter an unseemly word, if I do insult such an one.” For this very reason is it a great evil, because it seems to be nothing. For things which seem to be nothing are thus easily thought lightly of; and those which are thought lightly of go on increasing; and those which go on increasing become incurable.

347 [“It means ‘that it may impart a blessing, bestow a benefit, on the hearers.’”—Meyer and Ellicott.—G.A.]

348 [This is probably a misapplication of Paul’s words here. The sealing here mentioned is quite the same as at *chap. i. 13.*—G.A.]

Thou hast a spiritual mouth. Think what words thou didst utter immediately upon being born,³⁴⁹—what words are worthy of thy mouth. Thou callest God, “Father,” and dost thou straightway revile thy brother? Think, whence is it thou callest God, “Father”? Is it from nature? No, thou couldest never say so. Is it from thy goodness? No, nor is it thus. But whence then is it? It is from pure lovingkindness, from tenderness, from His great mercy. Whenever then thou callest God, “Father,” consider not only this, that by reviling thou art committing things unworthy of that, thy high birth, but also that it is of lovingkindness that thou hast that high birth. Disgrace it not then, after receiving it from pure lovingkindness, by showing cruelty towards thy brethren. Dost thou call God “Father,” and yet revile? No, these are not the works of the Son of God. These are very far from Him. The work of the Son of God was to forgive His enemies, to pray for them that crucified Him, to shed His blood for them that hated Him. These are works worthy of the Son of God, to make His enemies,—the ungrateful, the dishonest, the reckless, the treacherous,—to make these brethren and heirs: not to treat them that are become brethren with ignominy like slaves.

³⁵⁰Think what words thy mouth uttered,—of what table these words are worthy. Think what thy mouth touches, what it tastes, of what manner of food it partakes! Dost thou deem thyself to be doing nothing grievous in railing at thy brother? How then dost thou call him brother? And yet if he be not a brother, how sayest thou, “Our Father”? For the word “Our” is indicative of many persons. Think with whom thou standest at the time of the mysteries! With the Cherubim, with the Seraphim! The Seraphim revile not: no, their mouth fulfills this one only duty, to sing the Hymn of praise, to glorify³⁵¹ God. And how then shalt thou be able to say with them, “Holy, Holy, Holy,”³⁵² if thou use thy mouth for reviling? Tell me, I pray. Suppose there were a royal vessel, and that always full of royal dainties, and set apart

349 [ἐννόησον τίνα εὐθέως ἐφθέγγω ῥ& 208-ματα τέχθεις, κ.τ.λ. This evidently refers to baptism and the services and words used in connection therewith. Bingham says, “The catechumens did not learn the creed and the Lord’s prayer till immediately before baptism.” And Chrysostom says, “An unbaptized person cannot yet call God his Father.” St. Augustine also says in one of his homilies, “Now learn the Lord’s prayer, which ye must repeat eight days hence, when ye are to be baptized.” So they received it (that is, the Lord’s prayer) only on Saturday before Palm Sunday, in order to repeat it on Saturday before Easter, which was the day of their baptism. *Antiquities*, Bk. x. ch. v. sec. 9.—G.A.]

350 [This paragraph has reference to the celebration of the Eucharist, concerning which, see Chrysostom’s Hom. xviii. on 2 Cor. (viii. 24).—G.A.]

351 ἀγιάζειν.

352 ἅγιος, ἅγιος, ἅγιος.

for that purpose, and then that any one of the servants were to take and use it for holding dung. Would he ever venture again, after it had been filled with dung, to store it away with those other vessels, set apart for those other uses? Surely not. Now railing is like this, reviling is like this. "Our Father!" But what? is this all? Hear also the words, which follow, "which art in Heaven." The moment thou sayest, "Our Father, which art in Heaven," the word raises thee up, it gives wings to thy mind, it points out to thee that thou hast a Father in Heaven. Do then nothing, speak nothing of things upon earth. He hath set thee amongst that host above, He hath numbered thee with that heavenly choir. Why dost thou drag thyself down? Thou art standing beside the royal throne, and thou revilest? Art thou not afraid lest the king should deem it an outrage? Why, if a servant, even with us, beats his fellow-servant or assaults him, even though he do it justly, yet we at once rebuke him, and deem the act an outrage; and yet dost thou, who art standing with the Cherubim beside the king's throne, revile thy brother? Seest thou not these holy vessels? Are they not used continually for only one purpose? Does any one ever venture to use them for any other? Yet art thou holier than these vessels, yea, far holier. Why then defile, why contaminate thyself? Standest thou in Heaven, and dost thou revile? Hast thou thy citizenship with Angels, and dost thou revile? Art thou counted worthy the Lord's kiss, and dost thou revile? Hath God graced thy mouth with so many and great things, with hymns angelic, with food, not angelic, no, but more than angelic, with His own kiss, with His own embrace, and dost thou revile? Oh, no, I implore thee. Vast are the evils of which this is the source; far be it from a Christian soul. Do I not convince thee as I am speaking, do I not shame thee? Then does it now become my duty to alarm you. For hear what Christ saith: "Whosoever shall say to his brother, Thou fool, shall be in danger of the hell of fire." (*Matt. v. 22.*) Now if that which is lightest of all leads to hell, of what shall not he be worthy, who utters presumptuous words? Let us discipline our mouth to silence. Great is the advantage from this, great the mischief from ill language. We must not spend our riches here. Let us put door and bolt upon them. Let us devour ourselves alive if ever a vexatious word slip out of our mouth. Let us entreat God, let us entreat him whom we have reviled. Let us not think it beneath us to do so. It is ourselves we have wounded, not him. Let us apply the remedy, prayer, and reconciliation with him whom we have reviled. If in our words we are to take such forethought, much more let us impose laws upon ourselves in our deeds. Yea, and if we have friends, whoever they may be, and they should speak evil to any man or revile him, demand of them and exact satisfaction. Let us by all means learn that such conduct is even sin; for if we learn this, we shall soon depart from it.

Now the God of peace keep both your mind and your tongue, and fence you with a sure fence, even His fear, through Jesus Christ our Lord, with whom to the Father, together with the Holy Spirit, be glory forever. Amen.



Homily XV.

[Ephesians iv. 31](#)

“Let all bitterness, and wrath, and anger, and clamor, and railing, be put away from you, with all malice.”

As bees³⁵³ will never settle down in an unclean vessel,—and this is the reason why those who are skilled in these matters sprinkle the spot with perfumes, and scented ointments, and sweet odors; and the wicker baskets also, in which they will have to settle as soon as they come out of the hives they sprinkle with fragrant wines, and all other sweets, that there may be no noisome smell to annoy them, and drive them away again,—so in truth is it also with the Holy Spirit. Our soul is a sort of vessel or basket, capable of receiving the swarms of spiritual gifts; but if there shall be within it gall, and “bitterness, and wrath,” the swarms will fly away. Hence this blessed and wise husbandman well and thoroughly cleanses our vessels, withholding neither knife nor any other instrument of iron, and invites us to this spiritual swarm; and as he gathers it, he cleanses us with prayers, and labors, and all the rest. Mark then how he cleanses out our heart. He has banished lying, he has banished anger. Now, again, he is pointing out how that evil may be yet more entirely eradicated; if we be not, saith he, “bitter” in spirit. For it is as is wont to happen with our bile, if there chance to be but little of it, there will be but little disturbance if the receptacle should burst: but if ever the strength and acridness of this quality becomes excessive, the vessel which before held it, containing it no longer, is as if it were eaten through by a scorching fire, and it is no longer able to hold it and contain it within its appointed bounds, but, rent asunder by its intense sharpness, it lets it escape and injure the whole body. And it is like some very fierce and frightful wild beast, that has been brought into a city; as long as it is confined in the cages made for it, however it may rage, however it may roar, it will be unable to do harm to any one; but if it is overcome by rage, and breaks through the intervening bars, and is able to leap out, it fills the city with all sorts of confusion and disturbance, and puts everybody to flight. Such indeed is the nature also of bile. As long as it is kept within its proper limits, it will do us no great mischief; but as soon as ever the membrane that incloses it bursts, and there is nothing to hinder its being at once dispersed over the whole system, then, I say, at



353 [Chrysostom seems to have observed everything, and he had the “homiletical habit,” as Dr. Shedd calls it (Hom. p. 108), in gathering material for illustration. What has been said of a great modern preacher, may be said of Chrysostom: “He watched ships and sailors; he acquainted himself with the customs, good and bad, of commercial life; he curiously inspected a great variety of mechanical processes; he closely observed agricultural operations, and the various phases of rural life; he constantly saw and heard what occurred in his own home and other homes; and always and everywhere he asked himself, What is this like? what will this illustrate?” Dr. Broadus, in *Preparation and Delivery of Sermons*.—G.A.]

that moment, though it be so very trifling in quantity,³⁵⁴ yet by reason of the inordinate strength of its quality it taints all the other elements of our nature with its own peculiar virulence. For finding the blood, for instance, near to it, alike in place and in quality, and rendering the heat which is in that blood more acrid, and everything else in fact which is near it; passing from its just temperature it overflows its bounds, turns all into gall, and therewith at once attacks likewise the other parts of the body; and thus infusing into all its own poisonous quality, it renders the man speechless, and causes him to expire, expelling life. Now, why have I stated all these things with such minuteness? It is in order that, understanding from this bitterness which is of the body the intolerable evil of that bitterness which is of the soul, and how entirely it destroys first of all the very soul that engenders it, making everything bitter, we may escape experience of it. For as the one inflames the whole constitution, so does the other the thoughts, and carries away its captive to the abyss of hell. In order then that by carefully examining these matters we may escape this evil, and bridle the monster, or rather utterly root it out, let us hearken to what Paul saith, “Let all bitterness be” (not destroyed, but) “put away” from you. For what need have I of trouble to restrain it, what necessity is there to keep watch on a monster, when it is in my power to expel him from my soul, to remove him and drive him out, as it were, into banishment? Let us hearken then to Paul when he saith, “Let all bitterness be put away from you.” But, ah, the perversity that possesses us! Though we ought to do everything to effect this, yet are there some so truly senseless as to congratulate themselves upon this evil, and to pride themselves upon it, and to glory in it, and who are envied by others. “Such a one,” say they, “is a bitter man, he is a scorpion, a serpent, a viper.” They look upon him as one to be feared. But wherefore, good man, dost thou fear the bitter person? “I fear,” you say, “lest he injure me, lest he destroy me; I am not proof against his malice, I am afraid lest he should take me who am a simple man, and unable to foresee any of his schemes, and throw me into his snares, and entangle us in the toils which he has set to deceive us.” Now I cannot but smile. And why forsooth? Because these are the arguments of children, who fear things which are not to be feared. Surely there is nothing we ought so to despise, nothing we ought so to laugh to scorn, as a bitter and malicious man. For there is nothing so powerless³⁵⁵ as bitterness. It makes men fools and senseless.

Do ye not see that malice is blind? Have ye never heard, that he that diggeth a pit for his neighbors, diggeth it for himself? How, it may be said, ought we not to fear a soul full

354 [This seems to be in direct contradiction to what is said a few lines above, to wit, “If there chance to be but little of it, there will be but little disturbance if the receptacle should burst.” The text in the former passage is in great uncertainty, however, and confusion. Field calls it a *locus conclamatus*. Perhaps, if the true text of that passage could be recovered, it would not be in conflict with the passage here.—G.A.]

355 [Compare [Prov. xxv. 28.](#)—G.A.]

of tumult? If indeed we are to fear the bitter in the same way as we fear evil spirits, and fools and madmen, (for they indeed do everything at random,) I grant it myself; but if we are to fear them as men skillful in the conduct of affairs, that never. For nothing is so necessary for the proper conduct of affairs as prudence; and there is no greater hindrance to prudence than wickedness, and malice, and hollowness. Look at bilious persons, how unsightly they are, with all their bloom withered away. How weak they are, and puny, and unfit for anything. So also are souls of this nature. What else is wickedness, but a jaundice of the soul? Wickedness then has no strength in it, indeed it has not. Have ye a mind that I again make what I am saying plain to you by an instance, by setting before you the portraits of a treacherous and a guileless man? Absalom was a treacherous man, and “stole all men’s hearts.” (2 Sam. xv. 6.) And observe how great was his treachery. “He went about,” it saith, “and said, ‘Hast thou no judgment?’”³⁵⁶ wishing to conciliate every one to himself. But David was guileless. What then? Look at the end of them both, look, how full of utter madness was the former! For inasmuch as he looked solely to the hurt of his father, in all other things he was blinded. But not so David. For “he that walketh uprightly, walketh surely” (Prov. x. 9.); and reasonably; he is one that manages nothing over-subtily, the man who devises no evil. Let us listen then to the blessed Paul, and let us pity, yea, let us weep for the bitter-minded, and let us practice every method, let us do everything to extirpate this vice from their souls. For how is it not absurd, that when there is bile within us (though that indeed is a useful element, for without bile a man cannot possibly exist, that bile, I mean, which is an element of his nature,) how then, I say, is it not absurd that we should do all we can to get rid of this, though we are so highly benefited by it; and yet that we should do nothing, nor take any pains, to get rid of that which is in the soul, though it is in no case beneficial, but even in the highest degree injurious. He that thinketh that he is “wise among you,” saith he, “let him become a fool, that he may become wise.” (1 Cor. iii. 18.) Hearken too again to what Luke saith, “They did take their food with gladness and singleness of heart, praising God, and having favor with all the people.” (Acts ii. 46, 47.) Why, do we not see even now that the simple and guileless enjoy the common esteem of all? No one envies such an one when he is in prosperity, no one tramples upon him when he is in adversity, but all rejoice with him when he does well, and grieve with him in misfortune. Whereas whenever a bitter man fares prosperously, one and all lament it, as though some evil thing happened; but if he is unfortunate, one and all rejoice. Let us then pity them, for they have common enemies all over the world. Jacob was a guileless man, yet he overcame the treacherous Esau. “For into a malicious soul wisdom shall not enter.” (Wisd. i. 4.) “Let all bitterness be put away from you.” Let not even a remnant remain, for it will be sure, if stirred, as if from a smoul-



356 [μή ἔστι σοι κρίσις; but Sept. (2 Sam. xv. 3.) has ὁ ἀκούων οὐκ ἔστι σοι παρὰ τοῦ βασιλέως, which is well rendered by the Rev. Ver., “But there is no man deputed of the king to hear thee.”—G.A.]

dering brand, to turn all within to an entire blaze. Let us then distinctly understand what this bitterness is. Take, for example, the hollow-hearted man, the crafty, the man who is on the watch to do mischief, the man of evil suspicion. From him then “wrath” and “anger” are ever produced; for it is not possible for a soul like this to be in tranquillity, but the very root of “anger” and “wrath” is “bitterness.” The man of this character is both sullen, and never unbends his soul; he is always moody, always gloomy. For as I was saying, they themselves are the first to reap the fruit of their own evil ways.

“And clamor,” he adds.

What now, and dost thou take away clamor also? Yes, for the mild man must needs be of such a character, because clamor carries anger, as a horse his rider; trip the horse, and you will throw the rider.

Moral. This let women above all attend to, them who on every occasion cry aloud and bawl. There is but one thing in which it is useful to cry aloud, in preaching and in teaching. But in no other case whatever, no, not even in prayer. And if thou wouldest learn a practical lesson, never cry aloud at all, and then wilt thou never be angry at all. Behold a way to keep your temper; for as it is not possible that the man that does not cry out should be enraged, so is it not that the man who does cry out should be otherwise than enraged. For tell me not of a man being implacable, and revengeful, and of pure natural bitterness, and natural choler. We are now speaking of the sudden paroxysm of this passion.

It contributes then no little to this end, to discipline the soul never to raise the voice and cry aloud at all. Cut off clamor, and thou wilt clip the wings of anger, thou dost repress the first rising of the heart. For as it is impossible for a man to wrestle without lifting up his hands, so is it not possible that he should be entangled in a quarrel without lifting up his voice. Bind the hands of the boxer, and then bid him strike. He will be unable to do so. So likewise will wrath be disarmed. But clamor raises it, even where it does not exist. And hence it is especially that the female sex are so easily overtaken in it. Women, whenever they are angry with their maid-servants, fill the whole house with their own clamor. And oftentimes too, if the house happens to be built along a narrow street, then all the passers-by hear the mistress scolding, and the maid weeping and wailing. What can possibly be more disgraceful than the sound of those wailings?³⁵⁷ What in the world has happened there? All the women round immediately peep in and one of them says, “Such a one is beating her own maid.” Whatever can be more shameless than this? “What then, ought one not to strike at all?” No, I say not so, (for it must be done,) but then it must be neither frequently, nor immoderately, nor for any wrongs of thine own, as I am constantly saying, nor for any little failure in her service, but only if she is doing harm to her own soul. If thou chastise her for a fault of this

357 [We have here followed the text of three codices as against the emendations of Field, Savile, and the Benedictine ed.—G.A.]

kind, all will applaud, and there will be none to upbraid thee; but if thou do it for any reasons of thine own, all will condemn thy cruelty and harshness. And what is more base than all, there are some so fierce and so savage as to lash them to such a degree, that the bruises will not disappear with the day. For they will strip the damsels, and call their husbands for the purpose, and oftentimes tie them to the pallets. Alas! at that moment, tell me, does no recollection of hell come over thee? What? dost thou strip thy handmaid, and expose her to thy husband? And art thou not ashamed, lest he should condemn thee for it? And then dost thou exasperate him yet more, and threaten to put her in chains, having first taunted the wretched and pitiable creature with ten thousand reproachful names, and called her “Thessalian witch,³⁵⁸ runaway, and prostitute”?

For her passion allows her not to spare even her own mouth, but she looks to one single object, how she may wreak her vengeance on the other, even though she disgrace herself. And then after all these things forsooth, she will sit in state like any tyrant, and call her children, and summon her foolish husband, and treat him as a hangman. Ought these things to take place in the houses of Christians? “Aye” say ye, “but slaves are a troublesome, audacious, impudent, incorrigible race.” True, I know it myself, but there are other ways to keep them in order; by terrors, by threats, by words; which may both touch her more powerfully, and save thee from disgrace. Thou who art a free woman hast uttered foul words, and dost thou not disgrace thyself more than her? Then if she shall have occasion to go out to the bath, there are bruises on her back when she is naked, and she carries about with her the marks of thy cruelty. “But,” say ye, “the whole tribe of slaves is intolerable if it meet with indulgence.” True, I know it myself. But then, as I was saying, correct them in some other way, not by the scourge only, and by terror, but even by flattering them, and by acts of kindness. If she is a believer, she is thy sister. Consider that thou art her mistress, and that she ministers unto thee. If she be intemperate, cut off the occasions of drunkenness; call thy husband, and admonish her. Or dost thou not feel how disgraceful a thing it is for a woman to be beaten? They at least who have enacted ten thousand punishments for men,—the stake, and the rack,—will scarcely ever hang a woman, but limit men’s anger to smiting her on the cheek; and so great respect have they observed towards the sex, that not even when there is absolute necessity have they often hung a woman, if she happen to be pregnant. For it is a disgrace for a man to strike a woman; and if for a man, much more for one of her own sex. It is moreover by these things that women become odious to their husbands. “What then,” ye may say, “if she shall act the harlot?” Marry her to a husband; cut off the occasions of fornication, suffer her not to be too high fed. “What then, if she shall steal?” Take care of her, and watch her.—“Extravagant!” thou wilt say; “What, am I to be her keeper? How ab-

358 Vid. Aristoph. *Nub.* 749, γυναῖκα φαρμακίδ’ εἰ πριάμενος Θετταλήν. Schol., μέχρι καὶ νῦν φαρμακίδες αἱ Θετταλαὶ καλοῦνται. [What a fearful picture of the cruelties of the mistresses of Chrysostom’s day!—G.A.]

surd!” And why, I pray, art thou not to be her keeper? Has she not the same kind of soul as thou? Has she not been vouchsafed the same privileges by God? Does she not partake of the same table? Does she not share with thee the same high birth? “But what then,” ye will say, “if she shall be a railer, or a gossip, or a drunkard?” Yet, how many free women are such? Now, with all the failings of women God hath charged men to bear: only, He saith, let not a woman be an harlot, but every other failing besides bear with. Yea, be she drunkard, or railer, or gossip, or evil-eyed, or extravagant, and a squanderer of thy substance, thou hast her for the partner of thy life. Train and restrain her. Necessity is upon thee. It is for this thou art the head. Regulate her therefore, do thy own part. Yea, and if she remain incorrigible, yea, though she steal, take care of thy goods, and do not punish her so much. If she be a gossip, silence her. This is the very highest philosophy.

Now, however, some are come to such a height of indecency as to uncover the head, and to drag their maid-servants by the hair.—Why do ye all blush?³⁵⁹ I am not addressing myself to all, but to those who are carried away into such brutal conduct. Paul saith, “Let not a woman be uncovered.” (1 Cor. xi. 5–15.) And dost thou then entirely strip off her headdress? Dost thou see how thou art doing outrage to thyself? If indeed she makes her appearance to thee with her head bare, thou callest it an insult. And dost thou say that there is nothing shocking when thou barest it thyself? Then ye will say, “What if she be not corrected?” Chasten her then with the rod and with stripes. And yet how many failings hast thou also thyself, and yet thou art not corrected! These things I am saying not for their sakes, but for the sake of you free-women, that ye do nothing so unworthy, nothing to disgrace you, that ye do yourselves no wrong.³⁶⁰ If thou wilt learn this lesson in thy household in dealing with thy maid-servant, and not be harsh but gentle and forbearing, much more wilt thou be so in thy behavior to thy husband. For she who, though having authority, does nothing of the sort, will do it much less where there is a check. So that the discipline employed about your maid-servants, will be of the greatest service to you in gaining the goodwill of your husbands. “For with what measure ye mete,” He saith, “it shall be measured unto you.” (Matt. vii. 2.) Set a bridle upon thy mouth. If thou art disciplined to bear bravely with a servant when she answers back, thou wilt not be annoyed with the insolence of an equal, and in being above annoyance, wilt have attained to the highest philosophy. But some there are who add even oaths, but there is nothing more shocking than a woman so enraged. But what again, ye will say, if she dress gaily? Why then, forbid this; thou hast my consent; but check it by first beginning with thyself, not so much by fear as by example. Be in everything thyself a perfect pattern.

359 [This is direct preaching. Some would call it personal. But as Daniel Webster said of preaching, so ought we “make it a personal matter, a personal matter, a personal matter.”—G.A.]

360 [And what a graceful and conciliatory turn he gives his discourse here!—G.A.]

“And let railing,” saith he, “be put away from you.” Observe the progress of mischief. Bitterness produces wrath, wrath anger, anger clamor, clamor railing, that is, revilings; next from evil-speaking it goes on to blows, from blows to wounds, from wounds to death. Paul, however, did not wish to mention any of these, but only this, “let this,” saith he, “be put away from you, with all malice.”³⁶¹ What is “with all malice”? It ends with this. For there are some, like those dogs that bite secretly, which do not bark at all at those that come near them, nor are angry, but which fawn, and display a gentle aspect; but when they catch us off our guard, will fix their teeth in us. These are more dangerous than those that take up open enmity. Now since there are men too that are dogs, who neither cry out, nor fly in a passion, nor threaten us when they are offended, yet in secret are weaving plots, and contriving ten thousand mischiefs, and revenging themselves not in words but in deeds; he hints at these. Let those things be put away from you, saith he, “with all malice.” Do not spare thy words, and then revenge thyself in acts. My purpose in chastising my tongue and curtailing its clamor, is to prevent its kindling up a more violent blaze. But if thou without any clamor art doing the same thing, and art cherishing the fire and the live coals within, where is the good of thy silence? Dost thou not know that those conflagrations are the most destructive of all which are fed within, and appear not to those that are without? And that those wounds are the deadliest which never break out to the surface; and those fevers the worst which burn up the vitals? So also is this anger the most dangerous that preys upon the soul. But let this too be put away from you, saith he, “with all malice,” of every kind and degree, great and little. Let us then hearken to him, let us cast out all “bitterness and all malice,” that we “grieve not the Holy Spirit.” Let us destroy all bitterness; let us cut it up by the very roots. Nothing good, nothing healthful, can ever come from a bitter soul; nothing but misfortunes, nothing but tears, nothing but weeping and wailing. Do ye not see those beasts that roar or cry out, how we turn away from them; the lion, for instance, and the bear? But not so from the sheep; for there is no roaring, but a mild and gentle voice. And so again with musical instruments, those which are loud and harsh are the most unpleasant to the ear, such as the drum and trumpet; whereas those which are not so, but are soothing, these are pleasant, as the flute and lyre and pipe. Let us then prepare our soul so as never to cry aloud, and thus shall we be enabled also to gain the mastery over our anger. And when we have cut out this, we ourselves shall be the first to enjoy the calm, and we shall sail into that peaceful haven, which God grant we may all attain, in Jesus Christ our Lord, with whom, together with the Holy Ghost, be unto the Father, glory, might, and honor, now, and ever, and throughout all ages. Amen.

361 [κακία: “Malice,” the genus to which all the above-mentioned vices belong, or rather the active principle to which they are all due,—*animi pravitas, humanitati et equitati opposita* (Calvin).—Ellicott.—G.A.]

Homily XVI.

[Ephesians iv. 31, 32](#)

“Let all bitterness, and wrath, and anger, and clamor, and railing be put away from you, with all malice. And be ye kind one to another, tender-hearted, forgiving each other, even as God also in Christ forgave you.”

If we are to attain to the kingdom of Heaven, it is not enough to abandon wickedness, but there must be abundant practice of that which is good also. To be delivered indeed from hell we must abstain from wickedness; but to attain to the kingdom we must cleave fast to virtue.³⁶² Know ye not that even in the tribunals of the heathen, when examination is made of men’s deeds, and the whole city is assembled, this is the case? Nay, there was an ancient custom amongst the heathen, to crown with a golden crown,³⁶³—not the man who had done no evil to his country, for this were in itself no more than enough to save him from punishment;—but him who had displayed great public services. It was thus that a man was to be advanced to this distinction. But what I had especial need to say, had, I know not how, well nigh escaped me. Accordingly having made some slight correction of what I have said, I retract the first portion of this division.

For as I was saying that the departure from evil is sufficient to prevent our falling into hell, whilst I was speaking, there stole upon me a certain awful sentence, which does not merely bring down vengeance on them that dare to commit evil, but which also punishes those who omit any opportunity of doing good. What sentence then is this? When the day, the dreadful day, He saith, was arrived, and the set time was come, the Judge, seated on the judgment seat, set the sheep on the right hand and the goats on the left; and to the sheep He said, “Come, ye blessed of My Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world: for I was an hungered, and ye gave me meat.” ([Matt. xxv. 34.](#)) So far, well. For it was meet that for such compassion they should receive this reward. That those, however, who did not communicate of their own possessions to them that were in need, that they should be punished, not merely by the loss of blessings, but by being also sent to hell-fire, what just reason, I say, can there be in this? Most certainly this too will have a fair show of reason, no less than the other case: for we are hence instructed, that they that have done good shall enjoy those good things that are in heaven, but they, who, though they have no evil indeed to be charged with, yet have omitted to do good, will be hurried away with them that have done evil into hell-fire. Unless one might indeed say this, that the very not doing good is a part of wickedness, inasmuch as it comes of indolence, and indolence



362 [This way of putting it would imply that there is an intermediate place, neither hell nor heaven, which Chrysostom felt; and so he corrects himself a little below. This does not appear to be a trick of the orator.—G.A.]

363 [The Athenians, for example, bestowed a golden crown upon Demosthenes, and his celebrated oration “On the Crown” was occasioned by this custom to which Chrysostom refers.]

is a part of vice, or rather, not a part, but a source and baneful root of it. For idleness is the teacher of all vice. Let us not then foolishly ask such questions as these, what place shall he occupy, who has done neither any evil nor any good? For the very not doing good, is in itself doing evil. Tell me, if thou hadst a servant, who should neither steal, nor insult, nor contradict thee, who moreover should keep from drunkenness and every other kind of vice, and yet should sit perpetually in idleness, and not doing one of those duties which a servant owes to his master, wouldest thou not chastise him, wouldest thou not put him to the rack? Tell me. And yet forsooth he has done no evil. No, but this is in itself doing evil. But let us, if you please, apply this to other cases in life. Suppose then that of an husbandman. He does no damage to our property, he lays no plots against us, and he is not a thief, he only ties his hands behind him, and sits at home, neither sowing, nor cutting a single furrow, nor harnessing oxen to the yoke, nor looking after a vine, nor in fact discharging any one of those other labors required in husbandry. Now, I say, should we not punish such a man? And yet he has done no wrong to any one; we have no charge to make against him. No, but by this very thing has he done wrong. He does wrong in that he does not contribute his own share to the common stock of good. And what again, tell me, if every single artisan or mechanic were only to do no harm, say to one of a different craft,—nay, were to do no harm, even to one of his own, but only were to be idle, would not our whole life at that rate be utterly at an end and perish? Do you wish that I yet further extend the discourse with reference to the body also? Let the hand then neither strike the head, nor cut out the tongue, nor pluck out the eye, nor do any evil of this sort, but only remain idle, and not render its due service to the body at large; would it not be more fitting that it should be cut off, than that one should carry it about in idleness, and a detriment to the whole body? And what too, if the mouth, without either devouring the hand, or biting the breast, should nevertheless fail in all its proper duties; were it not far better that it should be stopped up? If therefore both in the case of servants, and of mechanics, and of the whole body, not only the commission of evil, but also the omission of what is good, is great unrighteousness, much more will this be the case in regard to the body of Christ.

Moral. And therefore the blessed Paul also, in leading us away from sin, leads us on to virtue. For where, tell me, is the advantage of all the thorns being cut out, if the good seeds be not sown? For our labor, remaining unfinished, will come round and end in the same mischief. And therefore Paul also, in his deep and affectionate anxiety for us, does not let his admonitions stop at eradicating and destroying evil tempers, but urges us at once to evidence the implanting of good ones. For having said, “Let all bitterness, and wrath, and clamor, and railing be put away from you, with all malice,” he adds, “And be³⁶⁴ ye kind one

364 [“Not ‘be’ (ἔσθε), but ‘become’ (γίνεσθε), in keeping with the ἀρθήτω ἀφ’ ὑμῶν, ‘let it be put away’ from you.”—Meyer.—G.A.]

to another, tender-hearted, forgiving each other.” For all these are habits and dispositions. And our abandonment of the one thing is not sufficient to settle us in the habitual practice of the other, but there is need again of some fresh impulse, and of an effort not less than that made in our avoidance of evil dispositions, in order to our acquiring good ones. For so in the case of the body, the black man, if he gets rid of this complexion, does not straightway become white. Or rather let us not conduct our discourse with an argument from physical subjects, but draw our example from those which concern moral choice. He who is not our enemy, is not necessarily our friend; but there is an intermediate state, neither of enmity nor of friendship, which is perhaps that in which the greater part of mankind stand toward us. He that is not crying is not therefore necessarily also laughing, but there is a state between the two. And so, I say, is the case here. He that is not “bitter” is not necessarily “kind,” neither is he that is not “wrathful” necessarily “tender-hearted”; but there is need of a distinct effort, in order to acquire this excellence. And now look how the blessed Paul, according to the rules of the best husbandry, thoroughly cleans and works the land entrusted to him by the Husbandman. He has taken away the bad seeds; he now exhorts us to retain the good plants. “Be ye kind,” saith he, for if, when the thorns are plucked up, the field remains idle, it will again bear unprofitable weeds. And therefore there is need to preoccupy its unoccupied and fallow state by the setting of good seeds and plants. He takes away “anger,” he puts in “kindness”; he takes away “bitterness,” he puts in “tender-heartedness”; he extirpates “malice” and “railing,” he plants “forgiveness” in their stead. For the expression, “forgiving one another,” is this; be disposed, he means, to forgive one another. And this forgiveness is greater than that which is shown in money-matters. For he indeed who forgives a debt of money to him that has borrowed of him, does, it is true, a noble and admirable deed, but then the kindness is confined to the body, though to himself indeed he repays a full recompense by that benefit which is spiritual and concerns the soul; whereas he who forgives trespasses will be benefiting alike his own soul, and the soul of him who receives the forgiveness. For by this way of acting, he not only renders himself, but the other also, more charitable. Because we do not so deeply touch the souls of those who have wronged us by revenging ourselves, as by pardoning them, and thus shaming them and putting them out of countenance. For by the other course we shall be doing no good, either to ourselves or to them, but shall be doing harm to both by seeking ourselves for retaliation, like the rulers of the Jews, and by kindling up the wrath that is in them; but if we return injustice with gentleness, we shall disarm all his anger, and shall be setting up in his breast a tribunal which will give a verdict in our favor, and will condemn him more severely than we ourselves could. For he will convict and will pass sentence upon himself, and will look for every pretext for repaying the share of long-suffering granted him with fuller measure, knowing that, if he repay it in equal measure, he is thus at a disadvantage, in not having himself made the beginning, but received the example from us. He will strive accordingly to exceed in measure, in order to eclipse,

by the excess of his recompense, the disadvantage he himself sustains in having been second in making advances towards requital; and the disadvantage again which accrues to the other from the time, if he was the first sufferer, this he will make up by excess of kindness. For men, if they are right-minded, are not so affected by evil as by the good treatment they may receive at the hands of those whom they have injured. For it is a base sin, and it is matter of reproach and scorn for a man who is well-treated not to return it; whilst for a man who is ill-treated, not to go about to resent it, this has the praise and applause, and the good word of all. And therefore they are more deeply touched by this conduct than any.

So that if thou hast a wish to revenge thyself, revenge thyself in this manner. Return good for evil, that thou mayest render him even thy debtor, and achieve a glorious victory. Hast thou suffered evil? Do good; thus avenge thee of thine enemy. For if thou shalt go about to resent it, all will blame both thee and him alike. Whereas if thou shalt endure it, it will be otherwise. Thee they will applaud and admire; but him they will reproach. And what greater punishment can there be to an enemy, than to behold his enemy admired and applauded by all men? What more bitter to an enemy, than to behold himself reproached by all before his enemy's face? If thou shalt avenge thee on him, thou wilt both be condemned perhaps thyself, and wilt be the sole avenger; whereas, if thou shalt forgive him, all will be avengers in thy stead. And this will be far more severe than any evil he can suffer, that his enemy should have so many to avenge him. If thou openest thy mouth, they will be silent; but if thou art silent, not with one tongue only, but with ten thousand tongues of others, thou smitest him, and art the more avenged. And on thee indeed, if thou shalt reproach him, many again will cast imputations (for they will say that thy words are those of passion); but when others who have suffered no wrong from him thus overwhelm him with reproaches, then is the revenge especially clear of all suspicion. For when they who have suffered no mischief, in consequence of thy excessive forbearance feel and sympathize with thee, as though they had been wronged themselves, this is a vengeance clear of all suspicion. "But what then," ye will say, "if no man should take vengeance?" It cannot be that men will be such stones, as to behold such wisdom and not admire it. And though they wreak not their vengeance on him at the time; still, afterwards, when they are in the mood, they will do so, and they will continue to scoff at him and abuse him. And if no one else admire thee, the man himself will most surely admire thee, though he may not own it. For our judgment of what is right, even though we be come to the very depth of wickedness, remains impartial and unbiased. Why, suppose ye, did our Lord Christ say, "Whosoever smiteth thee on the right cheek, turn to him the other also"? ([Matt. v. 39.](#)) Is it not because the more long-suffering a man is, the more signal the benefit he confers both on himself and on the other? For this cause He charges us to "turn the other also," to satisfy the desire of the enraged. For who is such a monster as not to be at once put to shame? The very dogs are said to feel it; for if they bark and attack a man, and he throws himself on his back and does nothing,

he puts a stop to all their wrath.³⁶⁵ If they then reverence the man who is ready to suffer evil from them, much more will the race of man do so, inasmuch as they are more rational.

However, it is right not to overlook what a little before came into my recollection, and was brought forward for a testimony. And what then was this? We were speaking of the Jews, and of the chief rulers amongst them, how that they were blamed, as seeking retaliation. And yet this the law permitted them; “eye for eye, and tooth for tooth.” (Lev. xxiv. 20.) True, but not to the intent that men should pluck out each other’s eyes, but that they should check boldness in aggression, by fear of suffering in return, and thus should neither do any evil to others, nor suffer any evil from others themselves. Therefore it was said, “eye for eye,” to bind the hands of the aggressor, not to let thine loose against him; not to ward off the hurt from thine eyes only, but also to preserve his eyes safe and sound.

But, as to what I was enquiring about,—why, if retaliation was allowed, were they arraigned who practiced it? Whatever can this mean? He here speaks of vindictiveness; for on the spur of the moment he allows the sufferer to act, as I was saying, in order to check the aggressor; but to bear a grudge he permits no longer; because the act then is no longer one of passion, nor of boiling rage, but of malice premeditated. Now God forgives those who may be carried away, perhaps upon a sense of outrage, and rush out to resent it. Hence He says, “eye for eye”; and yet again, “the ways of the revengeful lead to death.”³⁶⁶ Now, if, where it was permitted to put out eye for eye, so great a punishment is reserved for the revengeful, how much more for those who are bidden even to expose themselves to ill-treatment. Let us not then be revengeful, but let us quench our anger, that we may be counted worthy of the lovingkindness, which comes from God (“for with what measure,” saith Christ, “ye mete, it shall be measured unto you, and with what judgment ye judge, ye shall be judged”) (Matt. vii. 2.), and that we may both escape the snares of this present life, and in the day that is at hand, may obtain pardon at His hands, through the grace and loving-kindness of our Lord Jesus Christ, with whom, to the Father, together with the Holy Ghost, be glory, power, honor, both now and forever and ever. Amen.

365 [Compare Odyssey, Bk. xiv. 33–36, where Ulysses thus quiets the dogs of Eumæus:— “Soon as Ulysses near the enclosure drew, With open mouths the furious mastiffs flew; Down sat the sage, and, cautious to withstand, Let fall the offensive truncheon from his hand.” Pope’s translation.—G.A.]

366 [Prov. xii. 28, according to Septuagint, which has ὁδοὶ δὲ μνησικακῶν εἰς θάνατον. The Rev. Ver., following the Hebrew, has, “And in the pathway thereof (righteousness) there is no death.”—G.A.]

Homily XVII.

[Ephesians iv. 32 and v. 1, 2](#)

“And be ye kind one to another, tender hearted, forgiving each other, even as God also in Christ forgave you. Be ye therefore imitators of God, as beloved children; and walk in love, even as Christ also loved you, and gave Himself up for us, an offering and a sacrifice to God for an odor of a sweet smell.”

The events which are past have greater force than those which are yet to come, and appear to be both more wonderful and more convincing. And hence accordingly Paul founds his exhortation upon the things which have already been done for us, inasmuch as they, on Christ’s account, have a greater force. For to say, “Forgive, and ye shall be forgiven” ([Matt. vi. 14.](#)), and “if ye forgive not, ye shall in nowise be forgiven” ([Matt. vi. 15.](#)),—this addressed to men of understanding, and men who believe in the things to come, is of great weight; but Paul appeals to the conscience not by these arguments only, but also by things already done for us. In the former way we may escape punishment, whereas in this latter we may have our share of some positive good. Thou imitatest Christ. This alone is enough to recommend virtue, that it is “to imitate God.” This is a higher principle than the other, “for He maketh His sun to rise on the evil and the good, and sendeth rain on the just and the unjust.” ([Matt. v. 45.](#)) Because he does not merely say that we are “imitating God,” but that we do so in those things wherein we receive ourselves such benefits. He would have us cherish the tender heart of fathers towards each other. For by heart, here, is meant lovingkindness and compassion. For inasmuch as it cannot be that, being men, we shall avoid either giving pain or suffering it, he does the next thing, he devises a remedy,—that we should forgive one another. And yet there is no comparison. For if thou indeed shouldst at this moment forgive any one, he will forgive thee again in return; whereas to God thou hast neither given nor forgiven anything. And thou indeed art forgiving a fellow-servant; whereas God is forgiving a servant, and an enemy, and one that hates Him.

“Even as God,” saith he, “also in Christ forgave you.”

And this, moreover, contains a high allusion. Not simply, he would say, hath He forgiven us, and at no risk or cost, but at the sacrifice of His Son; for that He might forgive thee, He sacrificed the Son; whereas thou, oftentimes, even when thou seest pardon to be both without risk and without cost, yet dost not grant it.

“Be ye therefore imitators of God as beloved children; and walk in love, even as Christ also loved you, and gave Himself up for us an offering and sacrifice to God for an odor of a sweet smell.”

That thou mayest not then think it an act of necessity, hear how He saith, that “He gave Himself up.” As thy Master loved thee, love thou thy friend. Nay, but neither wilt thou be able so to love; yet still do so as far as thou art able. Oh, what can be more blessed than a sound like this! Tell me of royalty or whatever else thou wilt, there is no comparison. Forgive



another, and thou art “imitating God,” thou art made like unto God. It is more our duty to forgive trespasses than debts of money; for if thou forgive debts, thou hast not “imitated God”; whereas if thou shalt forgive trespasses, thou art “imitating God.” And yet how shalt thou be able to say, “I am poor, and am not able to forgive it,” that is, a debt, when thou forgivest not that which thou art able to forgive, that is, a trespass? And surely thou dost not deem that in this case there is any loss. Yea, is it not rather wealth, is it not abundance, is it not a plentiful store?

And behold yet another and a nobler incitement:³⁶⁷—“as beloved children,” saith he. Ye have yet another cogent reason to imitate Him, not only in that ye have received such good at His hands, but also in that ye are called His children. And since not all children imitate their fathers, but those which are beloved, therefore he saith, “as beloved children.”

Ver. 2. “Walk in love.”³⁶⁸

Behold, here, the groundwork of all! So then where this is, there is no “wrath, no anger, no clamor, no railing,” but all are done away. Accordingly he puts the chief point last. Whence wast thou made a child? Because thou wast forgiven. On the same ground on which thou hast had so vast a privilege vouch-safed thee, on that selfsame ground forgive thy neighbor. Tell me, I say, if thou wert in prison, and hadst ten thousand misdeeds to answer for, and some one were to bring thee into the palace; or rather to pass over this argument, suppose thou wert in a fever and in the agonies of death, and some one were to benefit thee by some medicine, wouldest thou not value him more than all, yea and the very name of the medicine? For if we thus regard occasions and places by which we are benefited, even as our own souls, much more shall we the things themselves. Be a lover then of love; for by this art thou saved, by this hast thou been made a son. And if thou shalt have it in thy power to save another, wilt thou not use the same remedy, and give the advice to all, “Forgive, that ye may be forgiven”? Thus to incite one another, were the part of grateful, of generous, and noble spirits.

“Even as Christ also,” he adds, “loved you.”

Thou art only sparing friends, He enemies. So then far greater is that boon which cometh from our Master. For how in our case is the “even as” preserved. Surely it is clear that it will be, by our doing good to our enemies.

“And gave Himself up for us an offering and a sacrifice to God for an odor of a sweet smell.”

367 [“Now to be God’s beloved child, and not to become like the loving Father,—how contradictory were this!”—Meyer.—G.A.]

368 [“And walk in love”: “The *καί* annexes that wherein this imitation of God must consist, namely, that ‘love’ is the element in which their life-work was to take place, love such as Christ also has displayed towards us.”—Meyer.—G.A.]

Seest thou that to suffer for one's enemies is "a sweet-smelling savor," and an "acceptable sacrifice"? And if thou shalt die, then wilt thou be indeed a sacrifice. This it is to "imitate God."

Ver. 3. "But fornication, and all uncleanness or covetousness, let it not even be named among you, as becometh saints."

He has spoken of the bitter passion, of wrath; he now comes to the lesser evil: for that lust is the lesser evil, hear how Moses also in the law says, first, "Thou shalt do no murder" (Ex. xx. 13.), which is the work of wrath, and then, "Thou shalt not commit adultery" (Ex. xx. 14.), which is of lust. For as "bitterness," and "clamor," and "all malice," and "railing," and the like, are the works of the passionate man, so likewise are "fornication, uncleanness, covetousness," those of the lustful; since avarice and sensuality spring from the same passion.³⁶⁹ But just as in the former case he took away "clamor" as being the vehicle of "anger," so now does he "filthy talking" and "jesting" as being the vehicle of lust; for he proceeds,

Ver. 4. "Nor filthiness, nor foolish talking, or jesting, which are not befitting; but rather giving of thanks."

Have no witticisms, no obscenities, either in word or in deed, and thou wilt quench the flame—"let them not even be named," saith he, "among you," that is, let them not anywhere even make their appearance. This he says also in writing to the Corinthians. "It is actually reported that there is fornication among you" (1 Cor. v. 1.); as much as to say, Be ye all pure. For words are the way to acts. Then, that he may not appear a forbidding kind of person and austere, and a destroyer of playfulness, he goes on to add the reason, by saying, "which are not befitting," which have nothing to do with us—"but rather giving of thanks." What good is there in uttering a witticism? thou only raisest a laugh. Tell me, will the shoemaker ever busy himself about anything which does not belong to or *benefit* his trade? or will he purchase any tool of that kind? No, never. Because the things we do not need, are nothing to us.

Moral. Let there not be one idle word; for from idle words we fall also into foul words. The present is no season of loose merriment, but of mourning, of tribulation, and lamentation: and dost thou play the jester? What wrestler on entering the ring neglects the struggle with his adversary, and utters witticisms? The devil stands hard at hand, "he is going about roaring" (1 Pet. v. 8.) to catch thee, he is moving everything, and turning everything against thy life, and is scheming to force thee from thy retreat, he is grinding his teeth and bellowing, he is breathing fire against thy salvation; and dost thou sit uttering witticisms, and "talking folly," and uttering things "which are not befitting." Full nobly then wilt thou be able to overcome him! We are in sport, beloved. Wouldest thou know the life of the saints? Listen

369 ["Sensuality" and "covetousness" are the two cardinal vices of the heathen which are to be avoided by Christians.—Meyer on iv. 19.—G.A.]

to what Paul saith. “By the space of three years I ceased not to admonish every one night and day with tears.” ([Acts xx. 31.](#)) And if so great was the zeal he exerted in behalf of them of Miletus and Ephesus, not making pleasant speeches, but introducing his admonition with tears, what should one say of the rest? But hearken again to what he says to the Corinthians. “Out of much affliction and anguish of heart I wrote unto you with many tears.” ([2 Cor. ii. 4.](#)) And again, “Who is weak, and I am not weak?” “Who is made to stumble, and I burn not?” ([2 Cor. xi. 29.](#)) And hearken again to what he says elsewhere, desiring every day, as one might say, to depart out of the world. “For indeed we that are in this tabernacle do groan” ([2 Cor. v. 4.](#)); and dost thou laugh and play? It is war-time, and art thou handling the dancers’ instruments? Look at the countenances of men in battle, their dark and contracted mien, their brow terrible and full of awe. Mark the stern eye, the heart eager and beating and throbbing, their spirit collected, and trembling and intensely anxious. All is good order, all is good discipline, all is silence in the camps of those who are arrayed against each other. They speak not, I do not say, an impertinent word, but they utter not a single sound. Now if they who have visible enemies, and who are in nowise injured by words, yet observe so great silence, dost thou who hast thy warfare, and the chief of thy warfare in words, dost thou leave this part naked and exposed? Or art thou ignorant that it is here that we are most beset with snares? Art thou amusing and enjoying thyself, and uttering witticisms and raising a laugh, and regarding the matter as a mere nothing? How many perjuries, how many injuries, how many filthy speeches have arisen from witticisms! “But no,” ye will say, “pleasantries are not like this.” Yet hear how he excludes all kinds of jesting. It is a time now of war and fighting, of watch and guard, of arming and arraying ourselves. The time of laughter can have no place here; for that is of the world. Hear what Christ saith: “The world shall rejoice, but ye shall be sorrowful.” ([John xvi. 20.](#)) Christ was crucified for thy ills, and dost thou laugh? He was buffeted, and endured so great sufferings because of thy calamity, and the tempest that had overtaken thee; and dost thou play the reveler? And how wilt thou not then rather provoke Him?

But since the matter appears to some to be one of indifference, which moreover is difficult to be guarded against, let us discuss this point a little, to show you how vast an evil it is. For indeed this is a work of the devil, to make us disregard things indifferent. First of all then, even if it were indifferent, not even in that case were it right to disregard it, when one knows that the greatest evils are both produced and increased by it, and that it oftentimes terminates in fornication. However, that it is not even indifferent is evident from hence. Let us see then whence it is produced. Or rather, let us see what sort of a person a saint ought to be:—gentle, meek, sorrowful, mournful, contrite. The man then who deals in jests is no saint. Nay, were he even a Greek, such an one would be scorned. These are things allowed to those only who are on the stage. Where filthiness is, there also is jesting; where unseasonable laughter is, there also is jesting. Hearken to what the Prophet saith, “Serve the Lord in fear, and rejoice

with trembling.” (Ps. ii. 11.) Jestings renders the soul soft and indolent. It excites the soul unduly, and often it teems with acts of violence, and creates wars. But what more? In fine, hast thou not come to be among men? then “put away childish things.” (1 Cor. xiii. 11.) Why, thou wilt not allow thine own servant in the market place to speak an impertinent word: and dost thou then, who sayest thou art a servant of God, go uttering thy witticisms in the public square? It is well if the soul that is “sober” be not stolen away; but one that is relaxed and dissolute, who cannot carry off? It will be its own murderer, and will stand in no need of the crafts or assaults of the devil.

But, moreover, in order to understand this, look too at the very name.³⁷⁰ It means the versatile man, the man of all complexions, the unstable, the pliable, the man that can be anything and everything. But far is this from those who are servants to the Rock. Such a character quickly turns and changes; for he must needs mimic both gesture and speech, and laugh and gait, and everything, aye, and such an one is obliged to invent jokes: for he needs this also. But far be this from a Christian, to play the buffoon. Farther, the man who plays the jester must of necessity incur the signal hatred of the objects of his random ridicule, whether they be present, or being absent hear of it.

If the thing is creditable, why is it left to mountebanks? What, dost thou make thyself a mountebank, and yet art not ashamed? Why is it ye permit not your gentlewomen to do so? Is it not that ye set it down as a mark of an immodest, and not of a discreet character? Great are the evils that dwell in a soul given to jesting; great is the ruin and desolation. Its consistency is broken, the building is decayed, fear is banished, reverence is gone. A tongue thou hast, not that thou mayest ridicule another man, but that thou mayest give thanks unto God. Look at your merriment-makers,³⁷¹ as they are called, those buffoons. These are your jesters. Banish from your souls, I entreat you, this graceless accomplishment. It is the business of parasites, of mountebanks, of dancers, of harlots; far be it from a generous, far be it from a highborn soul, aye, far too even from slaves. If there be any one who has lost respect, if there be any vile person, that man is also a jester. To many indeed the thing appears to be even a virtue, and this truly calls for our sorrow. Just as lust by little and little drives headlong into fornication, so also does a turn for jesting. It seems to have a grace about it, yet there is nothing more graceless than this. For hear the Scripture which says, “Before the thunder goeth lightning, and before a shamefaced man shall go favor.”³⁷² Now there is nothing more shameless than the jester; so that his mouth is not full of favor, but of pain.

370 [“εὐτραπελία, from εὐτράπελος, which is derived from εὖ and τρέπεσθαι, ‘that which easily turns,’ and in this way adapts itself to the moods and conditions of those with whom at the moment it may deal.”—Trench, *Synonyms of N.T.* 1 series, p. 167.—G.A.]

371 [γελωτοποιούς, literally, “laugh-makers.”—G.A.]

372 [πρὸ βροντῆς κατασπεύδει ἀστραπή, καὶ πρὸ αἰσχυντηροῦ προελεύσεται χάρις.—*Ecclus. xxxii. 10.*—G.A.]

Let us banish this custom from our tables. Yet are there some who teach it even to the poor! O monstrous! they make men in affliction play the jester. Why, where shall not this pest be found next? Already has it been brought into the Church itself. Already has it laid hold of the very Scriptures. Need I say anything to prove the enormity of the evil? I am ashamed indeed, but still nevertheless I will speak; for I am desirous to show to what a length the mischief has advanced, that I may not appear to be trifling, or to be discoursing to you on some trifling subject; that even thus I may be enabled to withdraw you from this delusion. And let no one think that I am fabricating, but I will tell you what I have really heard. A certain person happened to be in company with one of those who pride themselves highly on their knowledge (now I know I shall excite a smile, but still I will say it notwithstanding); and when the platter was set before him, he said, "Take and eat, children, lest your belly be angry!"³⁷³ And again, others say, "Woe unto thee, Mammon, and to him that hath thee not;"³⁷⁴ and many like enormities has jesting introduced; as when they say, "Now is there no nativity."³⁷⁵ And this I say to show the enormity of this base temper; for these are the expressions of a soul destitute of all reverence. And are not these things enough to call down thunderbolts? And one might find many other such things which have been said by these men.

Wherefore, I entreat you, let us banish the custom universally, and speak those things which become us. Let not holy mouths utter the words of dishonorable and base men. "For what fellowship have righteousness and iniquity, or what communion hath light with darkness?" (2 Cor. vi. 14.) Happy will it be for us, if, having kept ourselves aloof from all such foul things, we be thus able to attain to the promised blessings; far indeed from dragging such a train after us, and sullyng the purity of our minds by so many. For the man who will play the jester will soon go on to be a railer, and the railer will go on to heap ten thousand other mischiefs on himself. When then we shall have disciplined these two faculties of the soul, anger and desire (vid. Plat. Phædr. cc. 25, 34), and have put them like well-broken horses under the yoke of reason, then let us set over them the mind as charioteer, that we may "gain the prize of our high calling" (Philip. iii. 14.); which God grant that we may all attain, through Jesus Christ our Lord, with Whom, together with the Holy Ghost, be unto the Father, glory, might, and honor, now, and ever, and throughout all ages. Amen.



373 Δράξασθε, παιδιά, μή ποτε ὀργισθῆ κοιλία.

374 οὐαί σοι, μαμωνᾶ, καὶ τῷ μὴ ἔχοντί σε.

375 Ἄρτι οὐκ ἔστι γένεσις. vid. Suicer, *Thesaurus*, voc. γένεσις, n. 3.

Homily XVIII.

[Ephesians v. 5, 6](#)

“For this ye know of a surety, that no fornicator, nor unclean person, nor covetous man, which is an idolater, hath any inheritance in the kingdom of Christ and God. Let no man deceive you with empty words: for because of these things cometh the wrath of God upon the sons of disobedience.”

There were, it is likely, in the time of our forefathers also, some who “weakened the hands of the people” ([Jer. xxxviii. 4.](#)), and brought into practice that which is mentioned by Ezekiel,—or rather who did the works of the false prophets, who “profaned God among His people for handfuls of barley” ([Ezek. xiii. 19.](#)); a thing, by the way, done methinks by some even at this day. When, for example, we say that he who calleth his brother a fool shall depart into hell-fire, others say, “What? Is he that calls his brother a fool to depart into hell-fire? Impossible,” say they. And again, when we say that “the covetous man is an idolater,” in this too again they make abatements, and say the expression is hyperbolic. And in this manner they underrate and explain away all the commandments. It was in allusion then to these that the blessed Paul, at this time when he wrote to the Ephesians, spoke thus, “For this ye know,³⁷⁶ that no fornicator, nor unclean person, nor covetous man, which is an idolater, hath any inheritance in the kingdom of Christ and God”; adding, “let no man³⁷⁷ deceive you with empty words.” Now “empty words” are those which for a while are gratifying, but are in nowise borne out in facts; because the whole case is a deception.

“Because of these things cometh the wrath of God upon the sons of disobedience.”

Because of “fornication,” he means, because of “covetousness,” because of “uncleanness,” or both because of these things, and because of the “deceit,”³⁷⁸ inasmuch as there are deceivers. “Sons of disobedience”; he thus calls those who are utterly disobedient, those who disobey Him.

[Ver. 7, 8.](#) “Be not ye, therefore, partakers with them. For ye were³⁷⁹ once darkness, but are now light in the Lord.”

376 [“Ἰστε γινώσκοντες: ‘This you are aware of from your own knowledge,’ so that I need not first to instruct you with regard to it, ‘that,’ etc. This is not Hebraism, since γινώσκοντες is a different verb from ἴστε, but it is like ὁρῶν καὶ ἀκούων οἶδα, *Xen. Cyr. iv. 1, 14.*”—Meyer.—G.A.]

377 [“In accordance with the context, this refers to unbelieving Gentiles who sought to palliate those Gentile vices, to make them out as matter of indifference, and so to entice Christians back to the Gentile life.”—Meyer.—G.A.]

378 [διὰ ταῦτα refers not “to deceiving with empty words,” but to the “vices” just mentioned. Comp. parallel passage, [Col. iii. 6.](#)—G.A.]

379 [ἦτε γάρ, &c. ἦτε prefixed with significant emphasis, has the force of a “ground”: For your former state of darkness (with which those vices were in keeping) is “past.” Comp. [Rom. vi. 17.](#)—Meyer and Ellicott.—G.A.]

Observe how wisely he urges them forward; first, from the thought of Christ, that ye love one another, and do injury to no man; then, on the other hand, from the thought of punishment and hell-fire. “For ye were once darkness,” says he, “but are now light in the Lord.” Which is what he says also in the Epistle to the Romans; “What fruit then had ye at that time in the things whereof ye are now ashamed?” (Rom. vi. 21.), and reminds them of their former wickedness. That is to say, thinking what ye once were, and what ye are now become, do not run back into your former wickedness, nor do “despite to the grace” (Heb. x. 29.) of God.

“Ye were once darkness, but are now light in the Lord!”

Not, he says, by your own virtue, but through the grace of God has this accrued to you. That is to say, ye also were sometime worthy of the same punishments, but now are so no more. “Walk” therefore “as children of light.” What is meant however by “children of light,” he adds afterwards.

Ver. 9, 10. “For the fruit³⁸⁰ of the light is in all goodness and righteousness and truth, proving what is well-pleasing unto the Lord.”

“In all goodness,”³⁸¹ he says: this is opposed to the angry, and the bitter: “and righteousness”; this to the covetous: “and truth”; this to false pleasure: not those former things, he says, which I was mentioning, but their opposites. “In all”; that is, the fruit of the Spirit ought to be evinced in everything. “Proving what is well-pleasing unto the Lord”; so that those things are tokens of a childish and imperfect mind.

Ver. 11, 12, 13. “And have no fellowship with the unfruitful works of darkness, but rather even reprove them. For the things which are done by them in secret it is a shame even to speak of. But all things when they are reproved, are made manifest by the light.”

He had said, “ye are light.” Now the light reproveth by exposing the things which take place in the darkness. So that if ye, says he, are virtuous, and conspicuous, the wicked will be unable to lie hidden. For just as when a candle is set, all are brought to light, and the thief cannot enter; so if your light shine, the wicked being discovered shall be caught. So then it is our duty to expose them. How then does our Lord say, “Judge not, that ye be not judged”? (Matt. vii. 1, 3.) Paul did not say “judge,” he said “reprove,” that is, correct. And the words, “Judge not, that ye be not judged,” He spoke with reference to very small errors. Indeed, He added, “Why beholdest thou the mote that is in thy brother’s eye, but considerest not the beam that is in thine own eye?” But what Paul is saying is of this sort. As a wound, so long as it is imbedded and concealed outwardly, and runs beneath the surface, receives no atten-

380 [“Fruit of the light’ (not of the spirit, as Chrysostom’s text has) denotes figuratively the aggregate of moral effects which Christian enlightenment produces.”—Meyer.—G.A.]

381 [“Chrysostom’s interpretation is too specific. The words mean ‘good, right, true,’ and embrace the *whole* of Christian morality.”—Meyer.—G.A.]

tion, so also sin, as long as it is concealed, being as it were in darkness, is daringly committed in full security; but as soon as “it is made manifest,” becomes “light”; not indeed the sin itself, (for how could that be?) but the sinner. For when he has been brought out to light, when he has been admonished, when he has repented, when he has obtained pardon, hast thou not cleared away all his darkness? Hast thou not then healed his wound? Hast thou not called his unfruitfulness into fruit? Either this is his meaning,³⁸² or else what I said above, that your life “being manifest, is light.” For no one hides an irreproachable life; whereas things which are hidden, are hidden by darkness covering them.

Ver. 14. “Wherefore he saith, Awake thou that sleepest, and arise from the dead, and Christ shall shine upon thee.”

By the “sleeper” and the “dead,” he means the man that is in sin; for he both exhales noisome odors like the dead, and is inactive like one that is asleep, and like him he sees nothing, but is dreaming, and forming fancies and illusions. Some indeed read,³⁸³ “And thou shalt touch Christ”; but others, “And Christ shall shine upon thee”; and it is rather this latter. Depart from sin, and thou shalt be able to behold Christ. “For every one that doeth ill, hateth the light, and cometh not to the light.” (*John iii. 20.*) He therefore that doeth it not, cometh to the light.

Now he is not saying this with reference to the unbelievers only, for many of the faithful, no less than unbelievers, hold fast by wickedness; nay, some far more. Therefore to these also it is necessary to exclaim, “Awake,³⁸⁴ thou that sleepest, and arise from the dead, and Christ shall shine upon thee.” To these it is fitting to say this also, “God is not the God of the dead, but of the living.” (*Matt. xxii. 32.*) If then he is not the God of the dead, let us live.

Now there are some who say that the words, “the covetous man is an idolater,” are hyperbolic. However, the statement is not hyperbolic, it is true. How, and in what way?

382 [This difficult passage is thus translated by Ellicott: It is true these things are done in secret, but all of them, when reprov'd, are made manifest by the light (thus shed upon them); for everything that is made manifest is light (becomes daylight, is of the nature of light).—G.A.]

383 [ἐπιψάυσεις (instead of ἐπιψάυσει) is the reading of D* and E, and the Latin versions of these mss. (*continges Christum*), but it *never* obtained much acceptance, and hardly appears in extant codices. See Scrivener's *Introd.* 632, and Westcott and Hort, *Appendix*, p. 125.—G.A.]

384 [“The words here quoted are not found exactly in this form in the O.T., but certainly occur in substance in *Isa. lx. 1*. Instead of resorting to the explanation of Meyer or De Wette (which are somewhat rationalistic), it is better to say that Paul, under the inspiration of the Holy Spirit, is expressing in a condensed form the spiritual meaning of the passage.”—Ellicott. Riddle says: “It is *Isa. lx. 1*, partly paraphrased and partly condensed, and interpreted in the light of its fulfillment.” “This call of God to the sons of disobedience to awake, confirms the necessity of the ἐλέγχειν, and the promise, ‘Christ shall shine upon thee,’ confirms the salutary influence of the light.”—Meyer.—G.A.]

Because the covetous man apostatizes from God, just as the idolater does. And lest you should imagine this is a bare assertion, there is a declaration of Christ which saith, “Ye cannot serve God and Mammon.” (*Matt. vi. 24.*) If then it is not possible to serve God and Mammon, they who serve Mammon have thrown themselves out of the service of God; and they who have denied His sovereignty, and serve lifeless gold, it is plain enough that they are idolaters. “But I never made an idol,” a man will say, “nor set up an altar, nor sacrificed sheep, nor poured libations of wine; no, I came into the church, and lifted up my hands to the Only-begotten Son of God; I partake of the mysteries, I communicate in prayer, and in everything else which is a Christian’s duty. How then,” he will say, “am I a worshiper of idols?” Yes, and this is the very thing which is the most astonishing of all, that when thou hast had experience, and hast “tasted” the lovingkindness of God, and “hast seen that the Lord is gracious” (*Ps. xxxiv. 8.*), thou shouldst abandon Him who is gracious, and take to thyself a cruel tyrant, and shouldst pretend to be serving Him, whilst in reality thou hast submitted thyself to the hard and galling yoke of covetousness. Thou hast not yet told me of thy own duty done, but only of thy Master’s gifts. For tell me, I beseech thee, whence do we judge of a soldier? Is it when he is on duty guarding the king, and is fed by him, and called the king’s own, or is it when he is minding his own affairs and interests? To pretend to be with him, and to be attentive to his interests, whilst he is advancing the cause of the enemy, we declare to be worse than if he breaks away from the king’s service, and joins the enemy. Now then thou art doing despite to God, just as an idolater does, not with thine own mouth singly, but with the ten thousands of those whom thou hast wronged. Yet you will say, “an idolater he is not.” But surely, whenever they say, “Oh! that Christian, that covetous fellow,” then not only is he himself committing outrage by his own act, but he frequently forces those also whom he has wronged to use these words; and if they use them not, this is to be set to the account of their reverence.

Do we not see that such is the fact? What else is an idolater? Or does not he too worship passions, oftentimes not mastering his passions? I mean, for example, when we say that the pagan idolater worships idols, he will say, “No, but it is Venus, or it is Mars.” And if we say, Who is this Venus? the more modest amongst them will say, It is pleasure. Or what is this Mars? It is wrath. And in the same way dost thou worship Mammon. If we say, Who is this Mammon? It is covetousness, and this thou art worshiping. “I worship it not,” thou wilt say. Why not? Because thou dost not bow thyself down? Nay, but as it is, thou art far more a worshiper in thy deeds and practices; for this is the higher kind of worship. And that you may understand this, look in the case of God; who more truly worship Him, they who merely stand up at the prayers, or they who do His will? Clearly enough, these latter. The same also is it with the worshipers of Mammon; they who do his will, they truly are his worshipers. However, they who worship the passions are oftentimes free from the passions. One may



see a worshiper of Mars oftentimes governing his wrath. But this is not true of thee; thou makest thyself a slave to thy passion.

Yes, but thou slayest no sheep? No, thou slayest men, reasonable souls, some by famine, others by blasphemies. Nothing can be more frenzied than a sacrifice like this. Who ever beheld souls sacrificed? How accursed is the altar of covetousness! When thou passest by this idol's altar here, thou shalt see it reeking with the blood of bullocks and goats; but when thou shalt pass by the altar of covetousness, thou shalt see it breathing the shocking odor of human blood. Stand here before it in this world, and thou shalt see, not the wings of birds burning, no vapor, no smoke exhaled, but the bodies of men perishing. For some throw themselves among precipices, others tie the halter, others thrust the dagger through their throat. Hast thou seen the cruel and inhuman sacrifices? Wouldest thou see yet more shocking ones than these? Then I will show thee no longer the bodies of men, but the souls of men slaughtered in the other world. Yes, for it is possible for a soul to be slain with the slaughter peculiar to the soul; for as there is a death of the body,³⁸⁵ so is there also of the soul. "The soul that sinneth," saith the Prophet, "it shall die." (Ezek. xviii. 4.) The death of the soul, however, is not like the death of the body; it is far more shocking. For this bodily death, separating the soul and the body the one from the other, releases the one from many anxieties and toils, and transmits the other into a manifest abode: then when the body has been in time dissolved and crumbled away, it is again gathered together in incorruption, and receives back its own proper soul. Such we see is this bodily death. But that of the soul is awful and terrific. For this death, when dissolution takes place, does not let it pass, as the body does, but binds it down again to an imperishable body, and consigns it to the unquenchable fire. This then is the death of the soul. And as therefore there is a death of the soul, so is there also a slaughter of the soul. What is the slaughter of the body? It is the being turned into a corpse, the being stripped of the energy derived from the soul. What is the slaughter of the soul? It is its being made a corpse also. And how is the soul made a corpse? Because as the body then becomes a corpse when the soul leaves it destitute of its own vital energy, so also does the soul then become a corpse, when the Holy Spirit leaves it destitute of His spiritual energy.

Such for the most part are the slaughters made at the altar of covetousness. They are not satisfied, they do not stop at men's blood; no, the altar of covetousness is not glutted, unless it sacrifice the very soul itself also, unless it receive the souls of both, the sacrificer and the sacrificed. For he who sacrifices must first be sacrificed, and then he sacrifices; and



385 [As in other places, the text of Field is here incomplete. (ὡσπερ γάρ ἐστι ψυχῆς θάνατος, "Ψυχὴ γὰρ ἢ ἀμαρτάνουσα," etc.) It omits the clause, ὡσπερ γάρ ἐστι σώματος θάνατος, which is so necessary to the sense and which is attested by excellent manuscript authority, and adopted by Savile.—G.A.]

the dead sacrifices him who is yet living. For when he utters blasphemies, when he reviles, when he is irritated, are not these so many incurable wounds of the soul?

Thou hast seen that the expression is no hyperbole. Wouldest thou hear again another argument, to teach you how covetousness is idolatry, and more shocking than idolatry? Idolaters worship the creatures of God (“for they worshiped,” it is said, “and served the creature rather than the Creator”) (Rom. i. 25.); but thou art worshipping a creature of thine own. For God made not covetousness but thine own insatiable appetite invented it.³⁸⁶ And look at the madness and folly. They that worship idols, honor also the idols they worship; and if any one speak of them with disrespect or ridicule, they stand up in their defense; whereas thou, as if in a sort of intoxication, art worshipping an object, which is so far from being free from accusation, that it is even full of impiety. So that thou, even more than they, excellest in wickedness. Thou canst never have it to say as an excuse, that it is no evil. If even they are in the highest degree without excuse, yet art thou in a far higher, who art forever censuring covetousness, and reviling those who devote themselves to it, and who yet doth serve and obey it.

We will examine, if you please, whence idolatry took its rise. A certain wise man (Wisd. xiv. 16.) tells us, that a certain rich man afflicted with untimely mourning for his son, and having no consolation for his sorrow, consoled his passion in this way: having made a lifeless image of the dead, and constantly gazing at it, he seemed through the image to have his departed one still; whilst certain flatterers, “whose God was their belly” (Philip. iii. 19.), treating the image with reverence in order to do him honor, carried on the custom into idolatry.³⁸⁷ So then it took its rise from weakness of soul, from a senseless custom, from extravagance. But not so covetousness: from weakness of soul indeed it is, only that it is from a worse weakness. It is not that any one has lost a son, nor that he is seeking for consolation in sorrow, nor that he is drawn on by flatterers. But how is it? I will tell you. Cain in covetousness overreached³⁸⁸ God; what ought to have been given to Him, he kept to himself; what he should have kept himself, this he offered to Him; and thus the evil began even from God. For if we are God’s, much more are the first-fruits of our possessions. Again, men’s violent passion for women arose from covetousness.³⁸⁹ “They saw the daughters of men” (Gen. vi.

386 [This seems strained; for it is not true that they worshiped covetousness, a creature of their own, as Chrysostom calls it, but they worshiped gold and silver, which *are* creatures of God.—G.A.]

387 [This is a rather doubtful and inadequate account of the beginning of idolatry.—G.A.]

388 ὉΚά& 187-ν τὸν θεὸν ἐπλεονέκτησεν (Comp. πλεονεξία).

389 [This is what the text seems to mean (πάντιν εἰς γυναῖκας ἀπὸ πλεονεξίας ἢ ὁρμῆ γέγονεν), and he is proposing to explain the origin of covetousness (which, by the way, most men need go no further than their own heart to find), and not of lust. Moreover, the following context makes lust a source of covetousness, which is true, and not covetousness the source of lust, which is not true.—G.A.]

2.), and they rushed headlong into lust. And from hence again it went on to money; for the wish to have more than one's neighbor of this world's goods, arises from no other source, than from "love waxing cold." The wish to have more than one's share arises from no other source than recklessness, misanthropy, and arrogance toward others. Look at the earth, how wide is its extent? How far greater than we can use the expanse of the sky and the heaven? It is that He might put an end to thy covetousness, that God hath thus widely extended the bounds of the creation. And art thou then still grasping and even thus? And dost thou hear that covetousness is idolatry, and not shudder even at this? Dost thou wish to inherit the earth? Then hast thou no inheritance in heaven. Art thou eager to leave an inheritance to others, that thou mayest rob thyself of it? Tell me, if any one were to offer thee power to possess all things, wouldest thou be unwilling? It is in thy power now, if thou wilt. Some, however, say, that they are grieved when they transmit the inheritance to others, and would fain have consumed it themselves, rather than see others become its masters. Nor do I acquit thee of this weakness; for this too is characteristic of a weak soul. However, at least let as much as this be done. In thy will leave Christ thine heir. It were thy duty indeed to do so in thy lifetime, for this would show a right disposition. Still, at all events, be a little generous, though it be but by necessity. For Christ indeed charged us to give to the poor with this object, to make us wise in our lifetime, to induce us to despise money, to teach us to look down upon earthly things. It is no contempt of money, as you think, to bestow it upon this man and upon that man when one dies, and is no longer master of it. Thou art then no longer giving of thine own, but of absolute necessity: thanks to death, not to thee. This is no act of affection, it is thy loss. However, let it be done even thus; at least then give up thy passion.

Moral. Consider how many acts of plunder, how many acts of covetousness, thou hast committed. Restore all fourfold. Thus plead thy cause to God. Some, however, there are who are arrived at such a pitch of madness and blindness, as not even then to comprehend their duty; but who go on acting in all cases, just as if they were taking pains to make the judgment of God yet heavier to themselves. This is the reason why our blessed Apostle writes and says, "Walk as children of light." Now the covetous man of all others lives in darkness, and spreads great darkness over all things around.

"And have no fellowship," he adds, "with the unfruitful works of darkness, but rather even reprove them; for the things which are done by them in secret, it is a shame even to speak of; but all things when they are reprov'd are made manifest by the light." Hearken, I entreat you, all, as many of you as like not to be hated for nothing, but to be loved. "What need is there to be hated?" one says. A man commits a robbery, and dost thou not reprove him, but art afraid of his hatred? though this, however, is not being hated for nothing. But dost thou justly convict him, and yet fear the hatred? Convict thy brother, incur enmity for the love's sake which thou owest to Christ, for the love's sake which thou owest to thy



brother. Arrest him as he is on his road to the pit of destruction. For to admit him to our table, to treat him with civil speeches, with salutations, and with entertainments, these are no signal proofs of friendship. No, those I have mentioned are the boons which we must bestow upon our friends, that we may rescue their souls from the wrath of God. When we see them lying prostrate in the furnace of wickedness, let us raise them up. “But,” they say, “it is of no use, he is incorrigible.” However, do thou thy duty, and then thou hast excused thyself to God. Hide not thy talent. It is for this that thou hast speech, it is for this thou hast a mouth and a tongue, that thou mayest correct thy neighbor.³⁹⁰ It is dumb and reasonless creatures only that have no care for their neighbor, and take no account of others. But dost thou while calling God, “Father,” and thy neighbor, “brother,” when thou seest him committing unnumbered wickednesses, dost thou prefer his good-will to his welfare? No, do not so, I entreat you. There is no evidence of friendship so true as never to overlook the sins of our brethren. Didst thou see them at enmity? Reconcile them. Didst thou see them guilty of covetousness? Check them. Didst thou see them wronged? Stand up in their defense. It is not on them, it is on thyself thou art conferring the chief benefit. It is for this we are friends, that we may be of use one to another. A man will listen in a different spirit to a friend, and to any other chance person. A chance person he will regard perhaps with suspicion, and so in like manner will he a teacher, but not so a friend.

“For,” he says, “the things which are done by them in secret it is a shame even to speak of: but all things when they are reproved are made manifest by the light.” What is it he means to say here? He means this. That some sins in this world are done in secret, and some also openly; but in the other it shall not be so. Now there is no one who is not conscious to himself of some sin. This is why he says, “But all the things when they are reproved are made manifest by the light.” What then? Is this again, it will be said, meant concerning idolatry? It is not; the argument is about our life and our sins. “For everything that is made manifest,” says he, “is light.”

Wherefore, I entreat you, be ye never backward to reprove, nor displeased at being reproved.³⁹¹ For as long indeed as anything is carried on in the dark, it is carried on with greater security; but when it has many to witness what is done, it is brought to light. By all means then let us do all we can to chase away the deadness which is in our brethren, to scatter the darkness, and to attract to us the “Sun of righteousness.” For if there be many

390 [Compare John Wesley’s sermon on the “Duty of Reproving our Neighbor,” *Works*, Vol. II., p. 88 (New York ed.), for a thorough and fearless discussion of this difficult duty.—G.A.]

391 [“Better is open rebuke Than love that is hidden. Faithful are the wounds of a friend, But the kisses of an enemy are profuse.”—Prov. xxvii. 5, 6. “He that rebuketh a man shall afterward find more favor Than he that flattereth with the tongue.”—Prov. xxviii. 23. Compare Chrysostom’s I. Homily on Eutropius, Vol. IX., p. 249, this series.—G.A.]

shining lights, the path of virtue will be easy to themselves, and they which are in darkness will be more easily detected, while the light is held forth and puts the darkness to flight. Whereas if it be the reverse, there is fear lest as the thick mist of darkness and of sin overpowers the light, and dispels its transparency, those shining lights themselves should be extinguished. Let us be then disposed to benefit one another, that one and all, we may offer up praise and glory to the God of lovingkindness, by the grace and lovingkindness of the only begotten Son with whom to the Father, together with the Holy Ghost, be glory, strength, honor now and forever and forever. Amen.

Homily XIX.

[Ephesians v. 15, 16, 17](#)

“Look then carefully how ye walk, not as unwise, but as wise; redeeming the time, because the days are evil. Wherefore be ye not foolish, but understand what the will of the Lord is.”

He is still cleansing away the root of bitterness, still cutting off the very groundwork of anger.³⁹² For what is he saying? “Look carefully how ye walk.” “They are sheep in the midst of wolves,” and he charges them to be also “as doves.” For “ye shall be harmless,” saith he, “as doves.” ([Matt. x. 16.](#)) Forasmuch then as they were both amongst wolves, and were besides commanded not to defend themselves, but to suffer evil, they needed this admonition.³⁹³ Not indeed but that the former was sufficient to render them stronger;³⁹⁴ but now that there is besides the addition of the two, reflect how exceedingly it is heightened. Observe then here also, how carefully he secures them, by saying, “Look how ye walk.” Whole cities were at war with them; yea, this war made its way also into houses. They were divided, father against son, and son against father, mother against daughter, and daughter against mother. What then? Whence these divisions? They heard Christ say, “He that loveth father or mother more than me, is not worthy of me.” ([Matt. x. 37.](#)) Lest therefore they should think that he was without reason introducing wars and fightings, (since there was likely to be much anger produced, if they on their part were to retaliate,) to prevent this, he says, “See carefully how ye walk.” That is to say, “Except the Gospel message,³⁹⁵ give no other handle on any score whatever, for the hatred which you will incur.” Let this be the only ground of hatred. Let no one have any other charge to make against you; but show all deference and obedience, whenever it does no harm to the message, whenever it does not stand in the way of godliness. For it is said, “Render to all their dues, tribute to whom tribute, custom to whom custom.” ([Rom. xiii. 7.](#)) For when amongst the rest of the world they shall see us forbearing, they will be put to shame.

“Not as unwise, but as wise,³⁹⁶ redeeming the time.”

It is not from any wish that you should be artful, and versatile, that he gives this advice. But what he means is this. The time is not yours. At present ye are strangers, and sojourners,

392 [The οὖν rather resumes the general directions as to how they are to walk (comp. [v. 9.](#)) after the digression in [ver. 11–14.](#)—G.A.]

393 [The text of Field omits the clause, “they ended this admonition,” leaving the sense obscure and difficult. This clause is attested by five codices, and we have inserted it with Savile.—G.A.]

394 [And with four of these codices we prefer the reading εὐσθενεστέρους, “stronger,” to Field’s reading ἀσθενεστέρους (which is “weaker”).—G.A.]

395 κήρυγμα.

396 [“This is expegetical of the preceding words, viewed negatively and positively: ‘presenting yourselves in your walk, not as unwise, but as wise.’”—Meyer.—G.A.]

and foreigners, and aliens; seek not honors, seek not glory, seek not authority, nor revenge; bear all things, and in this way, “redeem the time”;³⁹⁷ give up many things, anything they may require. Imagine now, I say, a man had a magnificent house, and persons were to make their way in, on purpose to murder him, and he were to give a large sum, and thus to rescue himself. Then we should say, he has redeemed himself. So also hast thou a large house, and a true faith in thy keeping. They will come to take all away. Give whatever they may demand, only preserve the principal thing, I mean the faith.

“Because the days,” saith he, “are evil.”

What is the evil of the day? The evil of the day ought to belong to the day. What is the evil of a body? Disease. And what again the evil of the soul? Wickedness. What is the evil of water? Bitterness. And the evil of each particular thing, is with reference to that nature of it which is affected by the evil. If then there is an evil in the day, it ought to belong to the day, to the hours, to the day-light. So also Christ saith, “Sufficient unto the day is the evil thereof.” (Matt. vi. 34.) And from this expression we shall understand the other. In what sense then does he call “the days evil”? In what sense the “time” evil? It is not the essence of the thing, not the things as so created, but it is the things transacted in them. In the same way as we are in the habit of saying, “I have passed a disagreeable and wretched day.”³⁹⁸ And yet how could it be disagreeable, except from the circumstances which took place in it? Now the events which take place in it are, good things from God, but evil things from bad men. So then of the evils which happen in the times, men are the creators, and hence it is that the times are said to be evil. And thus we also call the times evil.

Ver. 17, 18. “Wherefore,”³⁹⁹ he adds, “be ye not foolish, but understand what the will of the Lord is; and be not drunk with wine, wherein is riot.”

For indeed intemperance in this renders men passionate and violent, and hot-headed, and irritable and savage. Wine has been given us for cheerfulness, not for drunkenness. Whereas now it appears to be an unmanly and contemptible thing for a man not to get drunk. And what sort of hope then is there of salvation? What? contemptible, tell me, not to get drunk, where to get drunk ought of all things in the world to be most contemptible? For it is of all things right for even a private individual to keep himself far from drunkenness; but how much more so for a soldier, a man who lives amongst swords, and bloodshed, and



397 [Or rather, “buying up for yourselves the opportunity”: a participial clause, which gives a modal definition to the preceding ὡςσοφοί, “as wise.” “In this figurative conception the doing of that for which the point of time is fitted is thought of as the ‘purchase-price by which the καιρός becomes ours.’”—Meyer.—G.A.]

398 [Compare on Gal. i. 4. “This clause, ‘because the days are evil,’ supplies a motive for buying up the opportunity, namely, because moral corruption is now in vogue.”—Meyer.—G.A.]

399 [“This ‘wherefore’ refers to verses 15, 16. For this cause, i.e., because ye ought to walk with such exactness, become not such as do not use the mind aright.”—Ellicott.—G.A.]

slaughter: much more, I say, for the soldier, when his temper is sharpened by other causes also, by power, by authority, by being constantly in the midst of stratagems and battles. Wouldest thou know where wine is good? Hear what the Scripture saith, “Give strong drink unto him that is ready to perish, and wine unto the bitter in soul.” (Prov. xxxi. 6.) And justly, because it can mitigate asperity and gloominess, and drive away clouds from the brow. “Wine maketh glad the heart of man” (Ps. civ. 15.), says the Psalmist. How then does wine produce drunkenness? For it cannot be that one and the same thing should work opposite effects. Drunkenness then surely does not arise from wine, but from intemperance. Wine is bestowed upon us for no other purpose than for bodily health; but this purpose also is thwarted by immoderate use. But hear moreover what our blessed Apostle writes and says to Timothy, “Use a little wine for thy stomach’s sake, and thine often infirmities.”⁴⁰⁰

This is the reason why God has formed our bodies in moderate proportions, and so as to be satisfied with a little, from thence at once instructing us that He has made us adapted to another life. And that life He would fain have bestowed upon us even from the very beginning; but since we rendered ourselves unworthy of it, He deferred it; and in the time during which He deferred it, not even in that does He allow us immoderate indulgence; for a little cup of wine and a single loaf is enough to satisfy a man’s hunger. And man the lord of all the brute creation has He formed so as to require less food in proportion than they, and his body small; thereby declaring to us nothing else than this, that we are hastening onward to another life. “Be not drunk,” says he, “with wine, wherein is riot”; for it does not save⁴⁰¹ but it destroys; and that, not the body only, but the soul also.

Ver. 18, 19, 20, 21. “But be filled⁴⁰² with the Spirit; speaking one to another in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing and making melody with your heart to the Lord; giving thanks always for all things in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ to God even the Father; subjecting yourselves one to another in the fear of Christ.”

Dost thou wish, he says, to be cheerful, dost thou wish to employ the day? I give thee spiritual drink; for drunkenness even cuts off the articulate sound of our tongue; it makes us lisp and stammer, and distorts the eyes, and the whole frame together. Learn to sing psalms, and thou shalt see the delightfulness of the employment. For they who sing psalms are filled with the Holy Spirit, as they who sing satanic songs are filled with an unclean spirit.

400 1 Tim. v. 23. Cf. Vol. IX., 335.

401 [σώζει: suggested by the word ἄσωτία (“riot”) which immediately precedes, and which is derived from σώζω. Compare ἄσωτία in Thayer’s *N.T. Lexicon*.—G.A.]

402 [“The imperative *passive* finds its explanation in the possibility of resistance to the Holy Spirit. The contrast does not lie in οἶνος (wine) and πνεῦμα (spirit), otherwise these words would have stood at the beginning of their clauses, but in the two states,—that of intoxication and that of inspiration.”—Meyer.—G.A.]

What is meant by “with your hearts to the Lord”? It means, with close attention and understanding. For they who do not attend closely, merely sing, uttering the words, whilst their heart is roaming elsewhere.

“Always,” he says, “giving thanks for all things in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ unto God even the Father, subjecting yourselves one to another in the fear of Christ.”

That is, “let your requests be made known unto God, with thanksgiving” (Philip. iv. 6.); for there is nothing so pleasing to God, as for a man to be thankful. But we shall be best able to give thanks unto God, by withdrawing our souls from the things before mentioned, and by thoroughly cleansing them by the means he has told us.

“But be filled,” says he, “with the Spirit.”

And is then this Spirit within us? Yes, indeed, within us. For when we have driven away lying, and bitterness, and fornication, and uncleanness, and covetousness, from our souls, when we are become kind, tender-hearted, forgiving one another, when there is no jesting, when we have rendered ourselves worthy of it, what is there to hinder the Holy Spirit from coming and lighting upon us? And not only will He come unto us, but He will fill our hearts; and when we have so great a light kindled within us, then will the way of virtue be no longer difficult to attain, but will be easy and simple.

“Giving thanks always,”⁴⁰³ he says, “for all things.”

What then? Are we to give thanks for everything that befalls us? Yes; be it even disease, be it even penury. For if a certain wise man gave this advice in the Old Testament, and said, “Whatsoever is brought upon thee take cheerfully, and be patient when thou art changed to a low estate” (Ecclus. ii. 4.); much more ought this to be the case in the New. Yes, even though thou know not the word, give thanks. For this is thanksgiving. But if thou give thanks when thou art in comfort and in affluence, in success and in prosperity, there is nothing great, nothing wonderful in that. What is required is, for a man to give thanks when he is in afflictions, in anguish, in discouragements. Utter no word in preference to this, “Lord, I thank thee.” And why do I speak of the afflictions of this world? It is our duty to give God thanks, even for hell⁴⁰⁴ itself, for the torments and punishments of the next world. For surely it is a thing beneficial to those who attend to it, when the dread of hell is laid like a bridle on our hearts. Let us therefore give thanks not only for blessings which we see, but also for those which we see not, and for those which we receive against our will. For many are the blessings He bestows upon us, without our desire, without our knowledge. And if



403 [“This ‘giving thanks always,’ etc., is a third modal definition of the ‘Be filled with the spirit,’ likewise coördinate with the two preceding ones, bringing into prominence,—after the general ‘singing of praise’ of ver. 19, which is to take place audibly, as well as in the heart,—further and in particular, the ‘thanksgiving’ which the readers have always for all things to render to God.”—Meyer.—G.A.]

404 [Meyer says the context limits πάντων to “blessings.”—G.A.]

ye believe me not, I will at once proceed to make the case clear to you. For consider, I pray, do not the impious and unbelieving Gentiles ascribe everything to the sun and to their idols? But what then? Doth He not bestow blessings even upon them? Is it not the work of His providence, that they both have life, and health, and children, and the like? And again they that are called Marcionites,⁴⁰⁵ and the Manichees, do they not even blaspheme Him? But what then? Does He not bestow blessings on them every day? Now if He bestows blessings on them that know them not, much more does he bestow them upon us. For what else is the peculiar work of God if it be not this, to do good to all mankind, alike by chastisements and by enjoyments? Let us not then give thanks only when we are in prosperity, for there is nothing great in this. And this the devil also well knows, and therefore he said, “Doth Job fear God for nought? Hast Thou not made an hedge about him and about all that he hath on every side? Touch all that he hath; no doubt, he will renounce Thee to Thy face!” ([Job i. 10, 11.](#)) However, that cursed one gained no advantage; and God forbid he should gain any advantage of us either; but whenever we are either in penury, or in sicknesses, or in disasters, then let us increase our thanksgiving; thanksgiving, I mean, not in words, nor in tongue, but in deeds and works, in mind and in heart. Let us give thanks unto Him with all our souls. For He loves us more than our parents; and wide as is the difference between evil and goodness, so great is the difference between the love of God and that of our fathers. And these are not my words, but those of Christ Himself Who loveth us. And hear what He Himself saith, “What man is there of you, who, if his son shall ask him for a loaf, will give him a stone? If ye then, being evil, know how to give good gifts unto your children, how much more shall your Father which is in Heaven give good things to them that ask Him?” ([Matt. vii. 9, 11.](#)) And again, bear what He saith also elsewhere: “Can a woman forget her sucking child that she should not have compassion on the son of her womb? Yea, they may forget, yet will not I forget thee, saith the Lord.” ([Isa. xlix. 15.](#)) For if He loveth us not, wherefore did He create us? Had He any necessity? Do we supply to Him any ministry and service? Needeth He anything that we can render? Hear what the Prophet says; “I have said unto the Lord, Thou art my Lord, I have no good beyond Thee.” ([Ps. xvi. 2.](#))

The ungrateful, however, and unfeeling say, that this were worthy of God’s goodness, that there should be an equality amongst all. Tell me, ungrateful mortal, what sort of things are they which thou deniest to be of God’s goodness, and what equality meanest thou? “Such an one,” thou wilt say, “has been a cripple from his childhood; another is mad, and is possessed; another has arrived at extreme old age, and has spent his whole life in poverty; another in the most painful diseases: are these works of Providence? One man is deaf, another dumb, another poor, whilst another, impious, yea, utterly impious, and full of ten thousand

405 [On these heretics and their doctrines, see Vol. IX. (this series) p. 65 (notes 3 and 5), and p. 205, second column.—G.A.]

vices, enjoys wealth, and keeps concubines, and parasites, and is owner of a splendid mansion, and lives an idle life.”⁴⁰⁶ And many instances of the sort they string together, and weave a long account of complaint against the providence of God.

What then are we to say to them? Now if they were Greeks, and were to tell us that the universe is governed by some one or other, we should in turn address to them the self-same words, “What then, are things without a providence? How then is it that ye reverence gods, and worship genii and heroes? For if there is a providence, some one or other superintends the whole.” But if any, whether Christians or Heathen, should be impatient at this, and be wavering, what shall we say to them? “Why, could so many good things, tell me, arise of themselves? The daily light? The beautiful order and the forethought that exist in all things? The mazy dances of the stars? The equable course of nights and days? The regular gradation of nature in vegetables, and animals, and men? Who, tell me, is it that ordereth these? If there were no superintending Being, but all things combined together of themselves, who then was it that made this vault revolve, so beautiful, so vast, I mean the sky, and set it upon the earth, nay more, upon the waters? Who is it that gives the fruitful seasons? Who implanted so great power in seeds and vegetables? For that which is accidental is necessarily disorderly; whereas that which is orderly implies design. For which, tell me, of the things around us that are accidental, is not full of great disorder, and of great tumult and confusion? Nor do I speak of things accidental only, but of those also which imply some agent, but an unskillful agent. For example, let there be timber and stone, and let there be lime withal; and let a man unskilled in building take them, and begin building, and set hard to work; will he not spoil and destroy everything? Again, take a vessel without a pilot, containing everything which a vessel ought to contain, without a shipwright; I do not say that it is unequipped and unfinished, but though well equipped, it will not be able to sail. And could the vast extent of earth standing on the waters, tell me, ever stand so firmly, and so long a time, without some power to hold it together?⁴⁰⁷ And can these views have any reason? Is it not the extreme of absurdity to conceive such a notion? And if the earth supports the heaven, behold another burden still; but if the heaven also is borne upon the waters, there arises again another question. Or rather not another question, for it is the work of providence. For things which are borne upon the water ought not to be made convex, but concave. Wherefore? Because the whole



406 [This difficulty is as old as David. Chrysostom does not here suggest David’s solution of the problem,—the spiritual compensations here and hereafter. And Paul could say even to a slave in his day, “Wast thou called being a slave? Care not for it. Nay, if thou art even able to be free, make use of thy having been called as a slave, rather than accept thy freedom.” (1 Cor. vii. 21.) And even Epictetus said something similar. A little below, Chrysostom touches this higher Theodicy: “One thing alone is evil; that is, to sin.”—G.A.]

407 [On Chrysostom’s geography and astronomy, see Homily IX., Concerning the Statues, Vol. IX. of this series, pp. 403, 404, with notes by Rev. W. R. W. Stevens, M.A. Compare Ps. xxiv. 2.—G.A.]

body of anything which is concave is immersed in the waters, as is the case with a ship; whereas of the convex the body is entirely above, and only the rim rests upon the surface; so that it requires a resisting body, hard, and able to sustain it, in order to bear the burden imposed. But does the atmosphere then support the heaven? Why, that is far softer, and more yielding even than water, and cannot sustain anything, no, not the very lightest things, much less so vast a bulk. In fine, if we chose to follow out the argument of providence, both generally and in detail, time itself would fail us. For I will now ask him who would start those questions above mentioned, are these things the result of providence, or of the want of providence? And if he shall say, that they are not from providence, then again I will ask, how then did they arise? But no, he will never be able to give any account at all. And dost thou not know that?

Much more then is it thy duty not to question, not to be over curious, in those things which concern man. And why not? Because man is nobler than all these, and these were made for his sake, not he for their sake. If then thou knowest not so much as the skill and contrivance that are visible in His providence, how shalt thou be able to know the reasons, where he himself is the subject? Tell me, I pray, why did God form him so small, so far below the height of heaven, as that he should even doubt of the things which appear above him? Why are the northern and southern climes uninhabitable? Tell me, I say, why is the night made longer in winter and shorter in summer? Why are the degrees of cold and heat such as they are? Why is the body mortal? And ten thousand questions besides I will ask thee, and if thou wilt, will never cease asking. And in one and all thou wilt surely be at a loss to answer. And thus is this of all things most providential, that the reasons of things are kept secret from us. For surely, one would have imagined man to be the cause of all things, were there not this to humble our understanding.

“But such an one,” you will say, “is poor, and poverty is an evil. And what is it to be sick, and what is it to be crippled?” Oh, man, they are nothing.⁴⁰⁸ One thing alone is evil, that is to sin; this is the only thing we ought to search to the bottom. And yet we omit to search into the causes of what are really evils, and busy ourselves about other things. Why is it that not one of us ever examines why he has sinned? To sin,—is it then in my power, or is it not in my power? And why need I go round about me for a number of reasons? I will seek for the matter within myself. Now then did I ever master my wrath? Did I ever master my anger,

408 [Compare what is said by Epictetus concerning his own lameness: “Shall I then, because of one miserable little leg, find fault with the universe? Shall I not concede that accident to the existence of general laws, and cheerfully assent to it for the sake of him who gave it?” And again, concerning his slavery: “He is a slave whose body is free, but whose soul is bound; and on the contrary, he is free whose body is bound, but whose soul is free.”—G.A.]

either through shame, or through fear of man? Then whenever I discover this done, I shall discover that to sin is in my own power. No one examines these matters, no one busies himself about them. But only according to Job, “Man in a way altogether different swims upon words.”⁴⁰⁹ For why does it concern thee, if such an one is blind, or such an one poor? God hath not commanded thee to look to this, but to what thou thyself art doing. For if on the one hand thou doubtest that there is any power superintending the world, thou art of all men the most senseless; but if thou art persuaded of this, why doubt that it is our duty to please God?

“Giving thanks always,” he says, “for all things to God.”

Go to the physician’s, and thou wilt see him, whenever a man is discovered to have a wound, using the knife and the cautery. But no, in thy case, I say not so much as this; but go to the carpenter’s. And yet thou dost not examine his reasons, although thou understandest not one of the things which are done there, and many things will appear to thee to be difficulties; as, for instance, when he hollows the wood, when he alters its outward shape. Nay, I would bring thee to a more intelligible craft still, for instance, that of the painter, and there thy head will swim. For tell me, does he not seem to be doing what he does, at random? For what do his lines mean, and the turns and bends of the lines? But when he puts on the colors, then the beauty of the art will become conspicuous. Yet still, not even then wilt thou be able to attain to any accurate understanding of it. But why do I speak of carpenters, and painters, our fellow-servants? Tell me, how does the bee frame her comb, and then shalt thou speak about God also. Master the handiwork of the ant, the spider, and the swallow, and then shalt thou speak about God also. Tell me these things. But no, thou never canst. Wilt thou not cease then, O man, thy vain enquiries? For vain indeed they are. Wilt thou not cease busying thyself in vain about many things? Nothing so wise as this ignorance, where they that profess they know nothing are wisest of all, and they that spend overmuch labor on these questions, the most foolish of all. So that to profess knowledge is not everywhere a sign of wisdom, but sometimes of folly also. For tell me, suppose there were two men, and one of them should profess to stretch out his lines, and to measure the expanse that intervenes between the earth and heaven, and the other were to laugh at him, and declare that he did not understand it, tell me, I pray, which should we laugh at, him that said he knew, or him that knew not? Evidently, the man that said that he knew. He that is ignorant, therefore, is wiser than he that professes to know.⁴¹⁰ And what again? If any one were to profess to tell us how many cups of water the sea contains, and another should profess his ignorance, is not the ignorance here again wiser than the knowledge?⁴¹¹ Surely, vastly so. And why so? Because that

409 [Job xi. 12, the Sept.: ἄνθρωπος δὲ ἄλλως νήχεται λόγοις; but the Rev. Ver., after the Hebrew, has: “Vain man is void of understanding.”—G.A.]

410 [A striking oxymoron. Compare the Greek, ὀλιγοῦν τοῦ ὑποσχομένου εἰδέναι σοφώτερος.—G.A.]

411 [Compare the Greek again: οὐ πάλιν ἢ ἄγνοια τῆς εἰδήσεώς ἐστι σοφώτερα;—G.A.]

knowledge itself is but intense ignorance. For he indeed who says that he is ignorant, knows something. And what is that? That it is incomprehensible to man.⁴¹² Yes, and this is no small portion of knowledge. Whereas he that says he knows, he of all others knows not what he says he knows, and is for this very reason utterly ridiculous.

Moral. Alas! how many things are there to teach us to bridle this unseasonable impertinence and idle curiosity; and yet we refrain not, but are curious about the lives of others; as, why one is a cripple, and why another is poor. And so by this way of reasoning we shall fall into another sort of trifling which is endless, as, why such an one is a woman? and, why all are not men? why there is such a thing as an ass? why an ox? why a dog? why a wolf? why a stone? why wood? and thus the argument will run out to an interminable length. This in truth is the reason, why God has marked out limits to our knowledge, and has laid them deep in nature. And mark, now, the excess of this busy curiosity. For though we look up to so great a height as from earth to heaven, and are not at all affected by it; yet as soon as ever we go up to the top of a lofty tower, and have a mind to stoop over a little, and look down, a sort of giddiness and dizziness immediately seizes us. Now, tell me the reason of this. No, thou couldst never find out a reason for it. Why is it that the eye possesses greater power than other senses, and is caught by more distant objects? And one might see it by comparison with the case of hearing. For no one will ever be able to shout so loudly, as to fill the air as far as the eye can reach, nor to hear at so great a distance. Why are not all the members of equal honor? Why have not all received one function and one place? Paul also searched into these questions; or rather he did not search into them, for he was wise; but where he comes by chance upon this topic, he says, "Each one of them, hath God set even as it hath pleased Him." (1 Cor. xii. 18.) He assigns the whole to His will. And so then let us only "give thanks for all things." "Wherefore," says he, "give thanks for all things." This is the part of a well-disposed, of a wise, of an intelligent servant; the opposite is that of a tattler, and an idler, and a busy-body. Do we not see amongst servants, that those among them who are worthless and good for nothing, are both tattlers, and triflers and that they pry into the concerns of their masters, which they are desirous to conceal: whereas the intelligent and well-disposed look to one thing only, how they may fulfill their service. He that says much, does nothing: as he that does much, never says a word out of season. Hence Paul said, where he wrote concerning widows, "And they learn not only to be idle, but tattlers also." (1 Tim. v. 13.) Tell me, now, which is the widest difference, between our age and that of children, or between God and men? between ourselves compared with gnats, or God compared with us? Plainly between God and us. Why then dost thou busy thyself to such an extent in all these questions? "Give thanks for all things." "But what," say you, "if a heathen should ask the question? How am I to answer him? He desires to learn from me whether there is a



412 [Compare, *Unum scio, quod nihil scio.*—G.A.]

Providence, for he himself denies that there is any being thus exercising foresight.” Turn round then, and ask him the same question thyself. He will deny therefore that there is a Providence. Yet that there is a Providence, is plain from what thou hast said; but that it is incomprehensible, is plain from those things whereof we cannot discover the reason. For if in things where men are the disposers, we oftentimes do not understand the method of the disposition, and in truth many of them appear to us inconsistent, and yet at the same time we acquiesce, how much more will this be so in the case of God? However, with God nothing either is inconsistent, or appears so to the faithful. Wherefore let us “give thanks for all things,” let us give Him glory for all things.

“Subjecting⁴¹³ yourselves one to another,” he says, “in the fear of Christ.” For if thou submit thyself for a ruler’s sake, or for money’s sake, or from respectfulness, much more from the fear of Christ. Let there be an interchange of service and submission. For then will there be no such thing as slavish service. Let not one sit down in the rank of a freeman, and the other in the rank of a slave; rather it were better that both masters and slaves be servants to one another;—far better to be a slave in this way than free in any other; as will be evident from hence. Suppose the case of a man who should have an hundred slaves, and he should in no way serve them; and suppose again a different case, of an hundred friends, all waiting upon one another. Which will lead the happier life? Which with the greater pleasure, with the more enjoyment? In the one case there is no anger, no provocation, no wrath, nor anything else of the kind whatever; in the other all is fear and apprehension. In the one case too the whole is forced, in the other is of free choice. In the one case they serve one another because they are forced to do so, in the other with mutual gratification. Thus does God will it to be; for this He washed His disciples’ feet. Nay more, if thou hast a mind to examine the matter nicely, there is indeed on the part of masters a return of service. For what if pride suffer not that return of service to appear? Yet if the slave on the one hand render his bodily service, and thou maintain that body, and supply it with food and clothing and shoes, this is an exchange of service: because unless thou render thy service as well, neither will he render his, but will be free, and no law will compel him to do it if he is not supported. If this then is the case with servants, where is the absurdity, if it should also become the case with free men. “Subjecting yourselves in the fear,” saith he, “of Christ.”⁴¹⁴ How great then the

413 [“The words ‘subjecting yourselves one to another’ still belong to [ver. 20](#) as a *fourth* modal definition of ‘Be filled with the Spirit,’ and are parallel to ‘giving thanks for all things to God,’ thus adding to this relation toward God the ‘mutual’ relation towards ‘one another.’”—Meyer.—G.A.]

414 [Not the fear of “God,” as Chrysostom, the *textus receptus* and the Authorized Eng. Version have, but the fear of “Christ” (as Rev. Ver., Westcott and Hort, and all trustworthy authorities). That is, Christ is to be “feared” as the “Judge” (Meyer). Cornelius a Lapide (in Ellicott) says: “Because we reverence Christ and ‘fear’ to offend him”: *quia scilicet Christum reveremur eumque timemus offendere.*—G.A.]

obligation, when we shall also have a reward. But he does not choose to submit himself to thee? However do thou submit thyself; not simply yield, but submit thyself. Entertain this feeling towards all, as if all were thy masters. For thus shalt thou soon have all as thy slaves, enslaved to thee with the most abject slavery. For thou wilt then more surely make them thine, when without receiving anything of theirs, thou of thyself renderest them of thine own. This is “subjecting yourselves one to another in the fear of Christ,” in order that we may subdue all the passions, be servants of God, and preserve the love we owe to one another. And then shall we be able also to be counted worthy of the lovingkindness which cometh of God, through the grace and mercies of His only-begotten Son, with whom to the Father, together with the Holy Ghost, be glory, might, honor, now and forever and ever. Amen.

Homily XX.

[Ephesians v. 22–24](#)

“Wives, be in subjection unto your own husbands, as unto the Lord. For the husband is the head of the wife, as Christ also is the head of the Church: being Himself the Saviour of the body. But as the Church is subject to Christ, so let the wives also be to their husbands in everything.

A certain wise man, setting down a number of things in the rank of blessings, set down this also in the rank of a blessing, “A wife agreeing with her husband.” ([Ecclus. xxv. 1.](#)) And elsewhere again he sets it down among blessings, that a woman should dwell in harmony with her husband. ([Ecclus. xl. 23.](#)) And indeed from the beginning, God appears to have made special provision for this union; and discoursing of the twain as one, He said thus, “Male and female created He them” ([Gen. i. 27.](#)); and again, “There is neither male nor female.” ([Gal. iii. 28.](#)) For there is no relationship between man and man so close as that between man and wife, if they be joined together as they should be. And therefore a certain blessed man too, when he would express surpassing love, and was mourning for one that was dear to him, and of one soul with him, did not mention father, nor mother, nor child, nor brother, nor friend, but what? “Thy love to me was wonderful,” saith he, “passing the love of women.” ([2 Sam. i. 26.](#)) For indeed, in very deed, this love is more despotic than any despotism: for others indeed may be strong, but this passion is not only strong, but unfading. For there is a certain love deeply seated in our nature, which imperceptibly to ourselves knits together these bodies of ours. Thus even from the very beginning woman sprang from man, and afterwards from man and woman sprang both man and woman.⁴¹⁵ Perceivest thou the close bond and connection? And how that God suffered not a different kind of nature to enter in from without? And mark, how many providential arrangements He made. He permitted the man to marry his own sister; or rather not his sister, but his daughter; nay, nor yet his daughter, but something more than his daughter, even his own flesh.⁴¹⁶ And thus the whole He framed from one beginning, gathering all together, like stones in a building, into one. For neither on the one hand did He form her from without, and this was that the man might not feel towards her as towards an alien; nor again did He confine marriage to her,⁴¹⁷ that she might not, by contracting herself,⁴¹⁸ and making all center in herself, be cut off from the rest. Thus as in the case of plants, they are of all others the best,

415 [Compare what Paul says in [1 Cor. xi. 8 and 12.](#)—G.A.]

416 [He refers to Adam’s marrying Eve.—G.A.]

417 [That is, he did not confine marriage to woman with woman.—G.A.]

418 [There is another reading which applies these words to the man, as follows: συστέλλων ἑαυτὸν καὶ συνάγων, “that he might not, by contracting himself and making all center in himself, be cut off from the rest,” instead of συστέλλουσα, etc.—G.A.]

which have but a single stem, and spread out into a number of branches; (since were all confined to the root alone, all would be to no purpose, whereas again had it a number of roots, the tree would be no longer worthy of admiration;) so, I say, is the case here also. From one, namely Adam, He made the whole race to spring, preventing them by the strongest necessity from being ever torn asunder, or separated; and afterwards, making it more restricted, He no longer allowed sisters and daughters to be wives, lest we should on the other hand contract our love to one point, and thus in another manner be cut off from one another. Hence Christ said, “He which made them from the beginning, made them male and female.” (Matt. xix. 4.)

For great evils are hence produced, and great benefits, both to families and to states. For there is nothing which so welds our life together as the love of man and wife. For this many will lay aside even their arms,⁴¹⁹ for this they will give up life itself. And Paul would never without a reason and without an object have spent so much pains on this subject, as when he says here, “Wives, be in subjection unto your own husbands, as unto the Lord.” And why so? Because when they are in harmony, the children are well brought up, and the domestics are in good order, and neighbors, and friends, and relations enjoy the fragrance. But if it be otherwise, all is turned upside down, and thrown into confusion. And just as when the generals of an army are at peace one with another, all things are in due subordination, whereas on the other hand, if they are at variance, everything is turned upside down; so, I say, is it also here. Wherefore, saith he, “Wives, be in subjection unto your own husbands, as unto the Lord.”

Yet how strange! for how then is it, that it is said elsewhere, “If one bid not farewell both to wife and to husband, he cannot follow me”? (Luke xiv. 26.) For if it is their duty to be in subjection “as unto the Lord,” how saith He that they must depart from them for the Lord’s sake? Yet their duty indeed it is, their bounden duty. But the word “as” is not necessarily and universally expressive of exact equality. He either means this, “‘as’ knowing that ye are servants to the Lord”; (which, by the way, is what he says elsewhere, that, even though they do it not for the husband’s sake, yet must they primarily for the Lord’s sake;) or else he means, “when thou obeyest thy husband, do so as serving the Lord.”⁴²⁰ For if he who resisteth these external authorities, those of governments, I mean, “withstandeth the ordinance of God” (Rom. xiii. 2.), much more does she who submits not herself to her husband. Such was God’s will from the beginning.

419 ὅπλα.

420 [“ὡς expresses the mode of view in which the wives are to regard their obedience towards their husbands, namely, ‘as rendered to the Lord.’”—Meyer. In Luke xiv. 26 the absolute is put for the relative, as elsewhere often, and this explains our author’s difficulty.—G.A.]

Let us take as our fundamental position then that the husband occupies the place of the “head,” and the wife the place of the “body.”

Ver. 23, 24. Then, he proceeds with arguments and says that “the husband is the head of the wife, as Christ also is the head of the Church, being Himself the Saviour of the body. But⁴²¹ as the Church is subject to Christ, so let the wives be to their husbands in everything.”

Then after saying, “The husband is the head of the wife, as Christ also is of the Church,” he further adds, “and He is the Saviour of the body.” For indeed the head is the saving health of the body. He had already laid down beforehand for man and wife, the ground and provision of their love, assigning to each their proper place, to the one that of authority and forethought, to the other that of submission. As then “the Church,” that is, both husbands and wives, “is subject unto Christ, so also ye wives submit yourselves to your husbands, as unto God.”

Ver. 25. “Husbands, love your wives, even as Christ also loved the Church.”

Thou hast heard how great the submission; thou hast extolled and marvelled at Paul, how, like an admirable and spiritual man, he welds together our whole life. Thou didst well. But now hear what he also requires at thy hands; for again he employs the same example.

“Husbands,” saith he, “love your wives, even as Christ also loved the Church.”

Thou hast seen the measure of obedience, hear also the measure of love.⁴²² Wouldest thou have thy wife obedient unto thee, as the Church is to Christ? Take then thyself the same provident care for her, as Christ takes for the Church. Yea, even if it shall be needful for thee to give thy life for her, yea, and to be cut into pieces ten thousand times, yea, and to endure and undergo any suffering whatever,—refuse it not. Though thou shouldest undergo all this, yet wilt thou not, no, not even then, have done anything like Christ. For thou indeed art doing it for one to whom thou art already knit; but He for one who turned her back on Him and hated Him. In the same way then as He laid at His feet her who turned her back on Him, who hated, and spurned, and disdained Him, not by menaces, nor by violence, nor by terror, nor by anything else of the kind, but by his unwearied affection; so also do thou behave thyself toward thy wife. Yea, though thou see her looking down upon thee, and disdain, and scorning thee, yet by thy great thoughtfulness for her, by affection, by kindness, thou wilt be able to lay her at thy feet. For there is nothing more powerful to sway than these bonds, and especially for husband and wife. A servant, indeed, one will be able, perhaps, to bind down by fear; nay not even him, for he will soon start away and be

421 [This “but” is by no means easy of explanation, but [probably is to be understood thus: He is the saviour of the body that man certainly is not, “but, nevertheless,” as the Church is subject to Christ, so let wives be to their husbands, etc.—Ellicott, Meyer, Bengel, Calvin, and Alford.—G.A.]

422 [“If you put all the arguments of orators together, you will not persuade husband and wife to mutual affection as Paul does in this place.”—Bugenhagen, quoted by Meyer.—G.A.]

gone. But the partner of one's life, the mother of one's children, the foundation of one's every joy, one ought never to chain down by fear and menaces, but with love and good temper. For what sort of union is that, where the wife trembles at her husband? And what sort of pleasure will the husband himself enjoy, if he dwells with his wife as with a slave, and not as with a free-woman? Yea, though thou shouldst suffer anything on her account, do not upbraid her; for neither did Christ do this.

Ver. 26. "And gave Himself up," he says, "for it, that He might sanctify and cleanse it."

So then she was unclean! So then she had blemishes, so then she was unsightly, so then she was worthless! Whatsoever kind of wife thou shalt take, yet shalt thou never take such a bride as the Church, when Christ took her, nor one so far removed from thee as the Church was from Christ. And yet for all that, He did not abhor her, nor loathe her for her surpassing deformity. Wouldest thou hear her deformity described? Hear what Paul saith, "For ye were once darkness." (**Eph. v. 8.**) Didst thou see the blackness of her hue? What blacker than darkness? But look again at her boldness, "living," saith he, "in malice and envy." (**Tit. iii. 3.**) Look again at her impurity; "disobedient, foolish." But what am I saying? She was both foolish, and of an evil tongue; and yet notwithstanding, though so many were her blemishes, yet did He give Himself up for her in her deformity, as for one in the bloom of youth, as for one dearly beloved, as for one of wonderful beauty. And it was in admiration of this that Paul said, "For scarcely for a righteous man will one die (**Rom. v. 7.**); and again, "in that while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us." (**Rom. v. 8.**) And though such as this, He took her, He arrayed her in beauty, and washed her, and refused not even this, to give Himself for her.

Ver. 26, 27. "That He might sanctify it having cleansed it," he proceeds, "by the washing of water with the word; that He might present the Church to Himself a glorious Church, not having spot, or wrinkle, or any such thing, but that it should be holy and without blemish."

"By the washing or laver" He washeth her uncleanness. "By the word," saith he. What word? "In the Name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost."⁴²³ (**Matt. xxviii. 19.**) And not simply hath He adorned her, but hath made her "glorious, not having spot, or wrinkle, or any such thing." Let us then also seek after this beauty ourselves, and we shall be able to create it. Seek not thou at thy wife's hand, things which she is not able to possess. Seest thou that the Church had all things at her Lord's hands? By Him was made glorious, by Him was made pure, by Him made without blemish? Turn not thy back on thy wife because of her deformity. Hear the Scripture that saith, "The bee is little among such as fly,

423 ["The word' (ῥῆμα) does not mean here the 'baptismal formula,' as Chrysostom holds, but 'the gospel,' and here stands without the article, because, denoting 'the word' κατ' ἐξοχήν, it could be treated as a proper noun, as νόμος, &c. All special interpretations, except that of 'gospel,' are purely invented."—Meyer.—G.A.]

but her fruit is the chief of sweet things.”⁴²⁴ (Ecclus. xi. 3.) She is of God’s fashioning. Thou reproachest not her, but Him that made her; what can the woman do? Praise her not for her beauty. Praise and hatred and love based on personal beauty belong to unchastened souls. Seek thou for beauty of soul. Imitate the Bridegroom of the Church. Outward beauty is full of conceit and great license, and throws men into jealousy, and the thing often makes thee suspect monstrous things. But has it any pleasure? For the first or second month, perhaps, or at most for the year: but then no longer; the admiration by familiarity wastes away. Meanwhile the evils which arose from the beauty still abide, the pride, the folly, the contemptuousness. Whereas in one who is not such, there is nothing of this kind. But the love having begun on just grounds, still continues ardent, since its object is beauty of soul, and not of body. What better, tell me, than heaven? What better than the stars? Tell me of what body you will, yet is there none so fair. Tell me of what eyes you will, yet are there none so sparkling. When these were created, the very Angels gazed with wonder, and we gaze with wonder now; yet not in the same degree as at first. Such is familiarity; things do not strike us in the same degree. How much more in the case of a wife! And if moreover disease come too, all is at once fled. Let us seek in a wife affectionateness, modest-mindedness, gentleness; these are the characteristics of beauty. But loveliness of person let us not seek, nor upbraid her upon these points, over which she has no power, nay, rather, let us not upbraid at all, (it were rudeness,) nor let us be impatient, nor sullen. Do ye not see how many, after living with beautiful wives, have ended their lives pitiably, and how many, who have lived with those of no great beauty, have run on to extreme old age with great enjoyment. Let us wipe off the “spot” that is within, let us smooth the “wrinkles” that are within, let us do away the “blemishes” that are on the soul. Such is the beauty God requires. Let us make her fair in God’s sight, not in our own. Let us not look for wealth, nor for that high-birth which is outward, but for that true nobility which is in the soul. Let no one endure to get rich by a wife; for such riches are base and disgraceful; no, by no means let any one seek to get rich from this source. “For they that desire to be rich, fall into a temptation and a snare, and many foolish and hurtful lusts, and into destruction and perdition.” (1 Tim. vi. 9.) Seek not therefore in thy wife abundance of wealth, and thou shalt find everything else go well. Who, tell me, would overlook the most important things, to attend to those which are less so? And yet, alas! this is in every case our feeling. Yes, if we have a son, we concern ourselves not how he may be made virtuous, but how we may get him a rich wife; not how he may be well-mannered, but well-monied:⁴²⁵ if we follow a business, we enquire not how it may be

424 [Note that Chrysostom here quotes the Old Testament Apocrypha as Scripture: ἀκούε τῆς γραφῆς λεγούσης. Dr. Schaff says: “He accepts the Syrian Canon of the Peshito, which includes the Old Test. with the Apocrypha,” &c. *Prolegomena*, p. 19.—G.A.]

425 οὐχ ὅπως εὐτροπος ἀλλ’ ὅπως εὐπορος.

clear of sin, but how it may bring us in most profit. And everything has become money; and thus is everything corrupted and ruined, because that passion possesses us.

Ver. 28. “Even so ought husbands to love their own wives,” saith he, “as their own bodies.”

What, again, means this? To how much greater a similitude, and stronger example has he come; and not only so, but also to one how much nearer and clearer, and to a fresh obligation. For that other one was of no very constraining force, for He was Christ, and was God, and gave Himself. He now manages his argument on a different ground, saying, “so ought men”; because the thing is not a favor, but a debt. Then, “as their own bodies.” And why?

Ver. 29. “For no man ever hated his own flesh, but nourisheth and cherisheth it.”

That is, tends it with exceeding care. And how is she his flesh? Hearken; “This now is bone of my bones,” saith Adam, “and flesh of my flesh.” (**Gen. ii. 23.**) For she is made of matter taken from us. And not only so, but also, “they shall be,” saith God, “one flesh.” (**Gen. ii. 24.**)

“Even as Christ also the Church.” Here he returns to the former example.

Ver. 30. “Because we are members of His body, of His flesh and of His bones.”⁴²⁶

Ver. 31. “For this cause shall a man leave his father and mother, and shall cleave to his wife, and the twain shall become one flesh.”⁴²⁷

Behold again a third ground of obligation; for he shows that a man leaving them that begat him, and from whom he was born, is knit to his wife; and that then the one flesh is, father, and mother, and the child, from the substance of the two commingled. For indeed by the commingling of their seeds is the child produced, so that the three are one flesh. Thus then are we in relation to Christ; we become one flesh by participation, and we much more than the child. And why and how so? Because so it has been from the beginning.

Tell me not that such and such things are so. Seest thou not that we have in our own flesh itself many defects? For one man, for instance, is lame, another has his feet distorted, another his hands withered, another some other member weak; and yet nevertheless he does not grieve at it, nor cut it off, but oftentimes prefers it even to the other. Naturally enough; for it is part of himself. As great love as each entertains towards himself, so great he would have us entertain towards a wife. Not because we partake of the same nature; no, this ground

426 [The words, “of his flesh and of his bones,” are omitted by $\text{\textcircled{X}}$ A B, by Memphitic version, by Lach. Tish. Treg. (text) W. & H., and by the Rev. Ver. without any marginal notice whatever.—G.A.]

427 [Meyer: “For this reason,’ namely, because we are members of Christ’s body. Paul then applies what is spoken in Gen. of the union of husband and wife, by a typical interpretation, to the second coming (future, $\kappa\alpha\tau\alpha\lambda\epsilon\acute{\iota}\psi\epsilon\iota$) of Christ, and his union with the Church, which shall take place at the Parousia.” Ellicott says that Chrysostom’s view is more probable, namely, that it refers to Christ’s coming in the flesh. (See a little below, on ver. 32.)—G.A.]

of duty towards a wife is far greater than that; it is that there are not two bodies but one; he the head, she the body. And how saith he elsewhere “and the Head of Christ is God”? (1 Cor. xi. 3.) This I too say, that as we are one body, so also are Christ and the Father One. And thus then is the Father also found to be our Head. He sets down two examples, that of the natural body and that of Christ’s body. And hence he further adds,

Ver. 32. “This is great mystery: but I speak in regard of Christ and of the Church.”⁴²⁸

Why does he call it a great mystery? That it was something great and wonderful, the blessed Moses, or rather God, intimated. For the present, however, saith he, I speak regarding Christ, that having left the Father, He came down, and came to the Bride, and became one Spirit. “For he that is joined unto the Lord is one Spirit.” (1 Cor. vi. 17.) And well saith he, “it is a great mystery.” And then as though he were saying, “But still nevertheless the allegory does not destroy affection,” he adds,

Ver. 33. “Nevertheless⁴²⁹ do ye also severally love each one his own wife even as himself; and let the wife see that she fear her husband.”

For indeed, in very deed, a mystery it is, yea, a great mystery, that a man should leave him that gave him being, him that begat him, and that brought him up, and her that travailed with him and had sorrow, those that have bestowed upon him so many and great benefits, those with whom he has been in familiar intercourse, and be joined to one who was never even seen by him and who has nothing in common with him, and should honor her before all others. A mystery it is indeed. And yet are parents not distressed when these events take place, but rather, when they do not take place; and are delighted when their wealth is spent and lavished upon it.—A great mystery indeed! and one that contains some hidden wisdom. Such Moses prophetically showed it to be from the very first; such now also Paul proclaims it, where he saith, “concerning Christ and the Church.”

However not for the husband’s sake alone it is thus said, but for the wife’s sake also, that “he cherish her as his own flesh, as Christ also the Church,” and, “that the wife fear her husband.” He is no longer setting down the duties of love only, but what? “That she fear her husband.” The wife is a second authority; let not her then demand equality, for she is under the head; nor let him despise her as being in subjection, for she is the body; and if the head despise the body, it will itself also perish. But let him bring in love on his part as a counterpoise to obedience on her part. For example, let the hands and the feet, and all the rest of

428 [This seems a distinct statement on the part of the Apostle, that the preceding words refer not to actual marriage of man and woman, but to the nuptial union of Christ and the Church. So Meyer. But Dr. Riddle, in the Popular Commentary, says this “mystical interpretation is unsafe.”—G.A.]

429 [Nevertheless, i.e., not to press the mystical bearings of the subject any further.—Ellicott. So substantially Meyer and Riddle.—G.A.]

the members be given up for service to the head, but let the head provide for the body, seeing it contains every sense in itself. Nothing can be better than this union.

And yet how can there ever be love, one may say, where there is fear? It will exist there, I say, preëminently. For she that fears and reverences, loves also; and she that loves, fears and reverences him as being the head, and loves him as being a member, since the head itself is a member of the body at large. Hence he places the one in subjection, and the other in authority, that there may be peace; for where there is equal authority there can never be peace; neither where a house is a democracy, nor where all are rulers; but the ruling power must of necessity be one. And this is universally the case with matters referring to the body, inasmuch as when men are spiritual, there will be peace. There were “five thousand souls,” and not one of them said, “that aught of the things which he possessed was his own” ([Acts iv. 32.](#)), but they were subject one to another; an indication this of wisdom, and of the fear of God. The principle of love, however, he explains; that of fear he does not. And mark, how on that of love he enlarges, stating the arguments relating to Christ and those relating to one’s own flesh, the words, “For this cause shall a man leave his father and mother.” ([Ver. 31.](#)) Whereas upon those drawn from fear he forbears to enlarge. And why so? Because he would rather that this principle prevail, this, namely, of love; for where this exists, everything else follows of course, but where the other exists, not necessarily. For the man who loves his wife, even though she be not a very obedient one, still will bear with everything. So difficult and impracticable is unanimity, where persons are not bound together by that love which is founded in supreme authority; at all events, fear will not necessarily effect this. Accordingly, he dwells the more upon this, which is the strong tie. And the wife though seeming to be the loser in that she was charged to fear, is the gainer, because the principal duty, love, is charged upon the husband. “But what,” one may say, “if a wife reverence me not?” Never mind, thou art to love, fulfill thine own duty. For though that which is due from others may not follow, we ought of course to do our duty. This is an example of what I mean. He says, “submitting yourselves one to another in the fear of Christ.” And what then if another submit not himself? Still obey thou the law of God. Just so, I say, is it also here. Let the wife at least, though she be not loved, still reverence notwithstanding, that nothing may lie at her door; and let the husband, though his wife reverence him not, still show her love notwithstanding, that he himself be not wanting in any point. For each has received his own.

This then is marriage when it takes place according to Christ, spiritual marriage, and spiritual birth, not of blood, nor of travail, nor of the will of the flesh. Such was the birth of Christ, not of blood, nor of travail. Such also was that of Isaac. Hear how the Scripture saith, “And it ceased to be with Sarah after the manner of women.” ([Gen. xviii. 11.](#)) Yea, a marriage it is, not of passion, nor of the flesh, but wholly spiritual, the soul being united to God by a union unspeakable, and which He alone knoweth. Therefore he saith, “He that is joined unto the Lord is one spirit.” ([1 Cor. vi. 17.](#)) Mark how earnestly he endeavors to unite both

flesh with flesh, and spirit with spirit. And where are the heretics?⁴³⁰ Never surely, if marriage were a thing to be condemned, would he have called Christ and the Church a bride and bridegroom; never would he have brought forward by way of exhortation the words, “A man shall leave his father and his mother”; and again have added, that it was “spoken in regard of Christ and of the Church.” For of her it is that the Psalmist also saith, “Hearken, O daughter, and consider, and incline thine ear; forget also thine own people, and thy father’s house. So shall the king desire thy beauty.” (Ps. [xlv. 10, 11.](#)) Therefore also Christ saith, “I came out from the Father, and am come.” (John [xvi. 28.](#)) But when I say, that He left the Father, imagine not such a thing as happens among men, a change of place; for just in the same way as the word “go forth” is used, not because He literally came forth, but because of His incarnation, so also is the expression, “He left the Father.”

Now why did he not say of the wife also, She shall be joined unto her husband? Why, I say, is this? Because he was discoursing concerning love, and was discoursing to the husband. For to her indeed he discourses concerning reverence, and says, “the husband is the head of the wife” ([ver. 23.](#)), and again, “Christ is the Head of the Church.” Whereas to him he discourses concerning love, and commits to him this province of love, and declares to him that which pertains to love, thus binding him and cementing him to her. For the man that leaves his father for the sake of his wife, and then again, leaves this very wife herself and abandons her, what forbearance can he deserve?

Seest thou not how great a share of honor God would have her enjoy, in that he hath taken thee away from thy father, and hath linked thee to her? What then, a man may say, if our duty is done, and yet she does not follow the example? “Yet if the unbelieving departeth, let him depart; the brother or the sister is not under bondage in such cases.” (1 Cor. [vii. 15.](#))

However, when thou hearest of “fear,” demand that fear which becomes a free woman, not as though thou wert exacting it of a slave. For she is thine own body; and if thou do this, thou reproachest thyself in dishonoring thine own body. And of what nature is this “fear”? It is the not contradicting, the not rebelling, the not being fond of the preëminence. It is enough that fear be kept within these bounds. But if thou love, as thou art commanded, thou wilt make it yet greater. Or rather it will not be any longer by fear that thou wilt be doing this, but love itself will have its effect. The sex is somehow weaker, and needs much support, much condescension.

430 The Gnostics, Encratites (Schaff, *Church Hist.* II, p. 495), and other sects forbade marriage; vid. 1 Tim. [iv. 3.](#) Here the Marcionites seem to be intended, whom St. Chrysostom often mentions; vid. *supr. Hom.* xix. [See Schaff’s *Church Hist.*, Vol. II., p. 457.—G.A.]

But what will they say, who are knit together in second marriages?⁴³¹ I speak not at all in condemnation of them, God forbid; for the Apostle himself permits them, though indeed by way of condescension.

Supply her with everything. Do everything and endure trouble for her sake. Necessity is laid upon thee.

Here he does not think it right to introduce his counsel, as he in many cases does, with examples from them that are without. That of Christ, so great and forcible, were alone enough; and more especially as regards the argument of subjection. “A man shall leave,” he saith, “his father and mother.” Behold, this then is from without. But he does not say, and “shall dwell with,” but “shall cleave unto,” thus showing the closeness of the union, and the fervent love. Nay, he is not content with this, but further by what he adds, he explains the subjection in such a way as that the twain appear no longer twain. He does not say, “one spirit,” he does not say, “one soul” (for that is manifest, and is possible to any one), but so as to be “one flesh.” She is a second authority, possessing indeed an authority, and a considerable equality of dignity; but at the same time the husband has somewhat of superiority. In this consists most chiefly the well-being of the house. For he took that former argument, the example of Christ, to show that we ought not only to love, but also to govern; “that she may be,” saith he, “holy and without blemish.” But the word “flesh” has reference to love—and the word “shall cleave” has in like manner reference to love. For if thou shalt make her “holy and without blemish,” everything else will follow. Seek the things which are of God, and those which are of man will follow readily enough. Govern thy wife, and thus will the whole house be in harmony. Hear what Paul saith. “And if they would learn anything, let them ask their own husbands at home.” (1 Cor. xiv. 35.) If we thus regulate our own houses, we shall be also fit for the management of the Church. For indeed a house is a little Church. Thus it is possible for us by becoming good husbands and wives, to surpass all others.

Consider Abraham, and Sarah, and Isaac, and the three hundred and eighteen born in his house. (Gen. xiv. 14.) How the whole house was harmoniously knit together, how the whole was full of piety and fulfilled the Apostolic injunction. She also “reverenced her husband”; for hear her own words, “It hath not yet happened unto me even until now, and my lord is old also.” (Gen. xviii. 12.)⁴³² And he again so loved her, that in all things he obeyed her commands. And the young child was virtuous, and the servants born in the house, they too were so excellent that they refused not even to hazard their lives with their master; they

431 [On second marriages in the early Church, see Schaff's *History of the Christian Church*, Vol. II., p. 366.—G.A.]

432 [This, according to the Septuagint, which has οὐπω μὲν μοι γέγονεν ἕως τοῦ νῦν. & 233· δὲ κύριός μου πρεσβύτερος. The Rev. Ver., following the Hebrew, has, “After I am waxed old, shall I have pleasure, my lord being old also?”—G.A.]

delayed not, nor asked the reason. Nay, one of them, the chief, was so admirable, that he was even entrusted with the marriage of the only-begotten child, and with a journey into a foreign country. (*Gen. xxiv. 1–67.*) For just as with a general, when his soldiery also is well organized, the enemy has no quarter to attack; so, I say, is it also here: when husband and wife and children and servants are all interested in the same things, great is the harmony of the house. Since where this is not the case, the whole is oftentimes overthrown and broken up by one bad servant; and that single one will often mar and utterly destroy the whole.

Moral. Let us then be very thoughtful both for our wives, and children, and servants; knowing that we shall thus be establishing for ourselves an easy government, and shall have our accounts with them gentle and lenient, and say, “Behold I, and the children which God hath given me.” (*Isa. viii. 18.*) If the husband command respect, and the head be honorable, then will the rest of the body sustain no violence. Now what is the wife’s fitting behavior, and what the husband’s, he states accurately, charging her to reverence him as the head, and him to love her as a wife; but how, it may be said, can these things be? That they ought indeed so to be, he has proved. But how they can be so, I will tell you. They will be so, if we will despise money, if we will look but to one thing only, excellence of soul, if we will keep the fear of God before our eyes. For what he says in his discourse to servants, “whatsoever any man doeth, whether it be good or evil, the same shall he receive of the Lord” (*Eph. vi. 8.*); this is also the case here. Love her therefore not for her sake so much as for Christ’s sake. This, at least, he as much as intimates, in saying, “as unto the Lord.” So then do everything, as in obedience to the Lord, and as doing everything for His sake. This were enough to induce and to persuade us, and not to suffer that there should be any teasing and dissension. Let none be believed when slandering the husband to his wife; no, nor let the husband believe anything at random against the wife, nor let the wife be without reason inquisitive about his goings out and his comings in. No, nor on any account let the husband ever render himself worthy of any suspicion whatever. For what, tell me, what if thou shalt devote thyself all the day to thy friends, and give the evening to thy wife, and not even thus be able to content her, and place her out of reach of suspicion? Though thy wife complain, yet be not annoyed—it is her love, not her folly—they are the complaints of fervent attachment, and burning affection, and fear. Yes, she is afraid lest any one have stolen her marriage bed, lest any one have injured her in that which is the summit of her blessings, lest any one have taken away from her him who is her head, lest any one have broken through her marriage chamber.

There is also another ground of petty jealousy. Let neither claim too much service of the servants, neither the husband from the maid-servant, nor the wife from the man-servant. For these things also are enough to beget suspicion. For consider, I say, that righteous household I spoke of. Sarah herself bade the patriarch take Hagar. She herself directed it,



no one compelled her, nor did the husband⁴³³ attempt it; no, although he had dragged on so long a period childless, yet he chose never to become a father, rather than to grieve his wife. And yet even after all this, what said Sarah? “The Lord judge between me and thee.” (*Gen. xvi. 5.*) Now, I say, had he been any one else would he not have been moved to anger? Would he not also have stretched forth his hand, saying as it were, “What meanest thou? I had no desire to have anything to do with the woman; it was all thine own doing; and dost thou turn again and accuse me?”—But no, he says nothing of the sort;—but what? “Behold, thy maid is in thy hand; do to her that which is good in thine eyes.” (*Gen. xvi. 6.*) He delivered up the partner of his bed, that he might not grieve Sarah. And yet surely is there nothing greater than this for producing affection. For if partaking of the same table produces unanimity even in robbers towards their foes, (and the Psalmist⁴³⁴ saith, “Who didst eat sweet food at the same table with me”); much more will the becoming one flesh—for such is the being the partner of the bed—be effectual to draw us together. Yet did none of these things avail to overcome him; but he delivered Hagar up to his wife, to show that nothing had been done by his own fault. Nay, and what is more, he sent her forth when with child. Who would not have pitied one that had conceived a child by himself? Yet was the just man unmoved, for he set before everything else the love he owed his wife.

Let us then imitate him ourselves. Let no one reproach his neighbor with his poverty; let no one be in love with money; and then all difficulties will be at an end.

Neither let a wife say to her husband, “Unmanly coward that thou art, full of sluggishness and dullness, and fast asleep! here is such a one, a low man, and of low parentage, who runs his risks, and makes his voyages, and has made a good fortune; and his wife wears her jewels, and goes out with her pair of milk-white mules;⁴³⁵ she rides about everywhere, she has troops of slaves, and a swarm of eunuchs, but thou hast cowered down and livest to no purpose.” Let not a wife say these things, nor anything like them. For she is the body, not to dictate to the head, but to submit herself and obey. “But how,” some one will say, “is she to endure poverty? Where is she to look for consolation?” Let her select and put beside her those who are poorer still. Let her again consider how many noble and high-born maidens have not only received nothing of their husbands, but have even given dowries to them, and have spent their all upon them. Let her reflect on the perils which arise from such riches, and she will cling to this quiet life. In short, if she is affectionately disposed towards her

433 [The punctuation of Field: οὐδὲ ἐπῆλθεν· ὁ ἀνὴρ, &c., is clearly not so good as that of the Oxford translator: οὐδὲ ἐπῆλθεν ὁ ἀνὴρ, &c.—G.A.]

434 [The Septuagint reads, ὁ δὲ ἐπὶ τὸ αὐτὸ ἐγλύκανας ἐδέσματα, and this Chrysostom, not knowing Hebrew, follows. The Rev. Ver. has “We took sweet counsel together.”—G.A.]

435 So Demosthenes says of Midias, καὶ εἰς μυστήρια τὴν γυναῖκα ἄγει, κἄν ἄλλοσέ ποι βούληται, ἐπὶ τοῦ λευκοῦ ζεύγους τοῦ ἐκ Σικυῶνος. Dem. *in Mid.* p. 565.

husband, she will utter nothing of the sort. No, she will rather choose to have him near her, though gaining nothing, than gaining ten thousand talents of gold, accompanied with that care and anxiety which always arise to wives from those distant voyages.

Neither, however, let the husband, when he hears these things, on the score of his having the supreme authority, betake himself to revilings and to blows; but let him exhort, let him admonish her, as being less perfect, let him persuade her with arguments. Let him never once lift his hand,—far be this from a noble spirit,—no, nor give expression to insults, or taunts, or revilings; but let him regulate and direct her as being wanting in wisdom. Yet how shall this be done? If she be instructed in the true riches, in the heavenly philosophy, she will make no complaints like these. Let him teach her then, that poverty is no evil. Let him teach her, not by what he says only, but also by what he does. Let him teach her to despise glory; and then his wife will speak of nothing, and will desire nothing of the kind. Let him, as if he had an image given into his hands to mould, let him, from that very evening on which he first receives her into the bridal chamber, teach her temperance, gentleness, and how to live, casting down the love of money at once from the outset, and from the very threshold. Let him discipline her in wisdom, and advise her never to have bits of gold hanging at her ears, and down her cheeks, and laid round about her neck, nor laid up about the chamber, nor golden and costly garments stored up. But let her chamber be handsome, still let not what is handsome degenerate into finery. No, leave these things to the people of the stage. Adorn thine house thyself with all possible neatness, so as rather to breathe an air of soberness than much perfume. For hence will arise two or three good results. First then, the bride will not be grieved, when the apartments are opened, and the tissues, and the golden ornaments, and silver vessels, are sent back to their several owners. Next, the bridegroom will have no anxiety about the loss, nor for the security of the accumulated treasures. Thirdly again, in addition to this, which is the crown of all these benefits, by these very points he will be showing his own judgment, that indeed he has no pleasure in any of these things, and that he will moreover put an end to everything else in keeping with them, and will never so much as allow the existence either of dances, or of immodest songs. I am aware that I shall appear perhaps ridiculous to many persons, in giving such admonitions. Still nevertheless, if ye will but listen to me, as time goes on, and the benefit of the practice accrues to you, then ye will understand the advantage of it. And the laughter will pass off, and ye will laugh at the present fashion, and will see that the present practice is really that of silly children and of drunken men. Whereas what I recommend is the part of soberness, and wisdom, and of the sublimest way of life. What then do I say is our duty? Take away from marriage all those shameful, those Satanic, those immodest songs, those companies of



profligate young people, and this will avail to chasten the spirit of thy bride.⁴³⁶ For she will at once thus reason with herself; “Wonderful! What a philosopher this man is! he regards the present life as nothing, he has brought me here into his house, to be a mother, to bring up his children, to manage his household affairs.” “Yes, but these things are distasteful to a bride?” Just for the first or second day;—but not afterwards; nay, she will even reap from them the greatest delight, and relieve herself of all suspicion. For a man who can endure neither flute-players, nor dancers, nor broken songs,⁴³⁷ and that too at the very time of his wedding, that man will scarcely endure ever to do or say anything shameful. And then after this, when thou hast stripped the marriage of all these things, then take her, and form and mould her carefully, encouraging her bashfulness to a considerable length of time, and not destroying it suddenly. For even if the damsel be very bold, yet for a time she will keep silence out of reverence for her husband, and feeling herself a novice in the circumstances. Thou then break not off this reserve too hastily, as unchaste husbands do, but encourage it for a long time. For this will be a great advantage to thee. Meanwhile she will not complain, she will not find fault with any laws thou mayest frame for her. During that time therefore, during which shame, like a sort of bridle laid upon the soul, suffers her not to make any murmur, nor to complain of what is done, lay down all thy laws. For as soon as ever she acquires boldness, she will overturn and confound everything without any sense of fear. When is there then another time so advantageous for moulding a wife, as that during which she reverences her husband, and is still timid, and still shy? Then lay down all thy laws for her, and willing or unwilling, she will certainly obey them. But how shalt thou help spoiling her modesty? By showing her that thou thyself art no less modest than she is, addressing to her but few words, and those too with great gravity and collectedness. Then entrust her with the discourses of wisdom, for her soul will receive them. And establish her in that loveliest habit, I mean modesty. If you wish me, I will also tell you by way of specimen, what sort of language should be addressed to her. For if Paul shrank not from saying, “Defraud ye not one the other” (1 Cor. vii. 5.), and spoke the language of a bridesmaid, or rather not of a bridesmaid, but of a spiritual soul, much more will not we shrink from speaking. What then is the language we ought to address to her? With great delicacy then we may say to her, “I have taken thee, my child, to be partner of my life, and have brought thee in to share with me in the closest and most honorable ties, in my children, and the superintendence of my house. And what advice then shall I now recommend thee?” But rather, first talk with her

436 [In Hom. XII. on 1 Cor. iv. 10, Chrysostom says, “But when marriages are solemnized, dancing and cymbals and flutes and shameful words and songs and drunkenness and revelings and the Devil’s great heap of trash are introduced.” And much more to the same effect and in great detail.—G.A.]

437 ἀσμάτων κεκλασμένων.

of your love for her; for there is nothing that so contributes to persuade a hearer to admit sincerely the things that are said, as to be assured that they are said with hearty affection. How then art thou to show that affection? By saying, “when it was in my power to take many to wife, both with better fortunes, and of noble family, I did not so choose, but I was enamoured of thee, and thy beautiful life, thy modesty, thy gentleness, and soberness of mind.” Then immediately from these beginnings open the way to your discourse on true wisdom, and with some circumlocution make a protest against riches. For if you direct your argument at once against riches, you will bear too heavily upon her; but if you do it by taking an occasion, you will succeed entirely. For you will appear to be doing it in the way of an apology, not as a morose sort of person, and ungracious, and over-nice about trifles. But when you take occasion from what relates to herself, she will be even pleased. You will say then, (for I must now take up the discourse again,) that “whereas I might have married a rich woman, and with good fortune, I could not endure it. And why so? Not capriciously, and without reason; but I was taught well and truly, that money is no real possession, but a most despicable thing, a thing which moreover belongs as well to thieves, and to harlots, and to grave-robbers. So I gave up these things, and went on till I fell in with the excellence of thy soul, which I value above all gold. For a young damsel who is discreet and ingenuous, and whose heart is set on piety, is worth the whole world. For these reasons then, I courted thee, and I love thee, and prefer thee to my own soul. For the present life is nothing. And I pray, and beseech, and do all I can, that we may be counted worthy so to live this present life, as that we may be able also there in the world to come to be united to one another in perfect security. For our time here is brief and fleeting. But if we shall be counted worthy by having pleased God to so exchange this life for that one, then shall we ever be both with Christ and with each other, with more abundant pleasure. I value thy affection above all things, and nothing is so bitter or so painful to me, as ever to be at variance with thee. Yes, though it should be my lot to lose my all, and to become poorer than Irus,⁴³⁸ and undergo the extremest hazards, and suffer any pain whatsoever, all will be tolerable and endurable, so long as thy feelings are true towards me. And then will my children be most dear to me, whilst thou art affectionately disposed towards me. But thou must do these duties too.” Then mingle also with your discourse the Apostle’s words, that “thus God would have our affections blended together; for listen to the Scripture, which saith, ‘For this cause shall a man leave his father and mother, and cleave to his wife.’ Let us have no pretext for narrow-minded jealousy.⁴³⁹ Perish riches, and retinue of slaves, and all your outward pomps. To me this is more valuable



438 [The well-known beggar of Ithaca, the home of Ulysses. He was the messenger of the suitors of Penelope. See *Odys.* Bk. xviii. 1–125. Later, his name was used as an appellation, “an Irus, a beggar.” *Liban.* i. 568.—Liddell and Scott.—G.A.]

439 μικροψυχία.

than all.” What weight of gold, what amount of treasures, are so dear to a wife as these words? Never fear that because she is beloved she will ever rave against thee, but confess that thou lovest her. For courtezans indeed, who now attach themselves to one and now to another, would naturally enough feel contempt towards their lovers, should they hear such expressions as these; but a free-born wife or a noble damsel would never be so affected with such words; no, she will be so much the more subdued. Show her too, that you set a high value on her company, and that you are more desirous to be at home for her sake, than in the market-place. And esteem her before all your friends, and above the children that are born of her, and let these very children be beloved by thee for her sake. If she does any good act, praise and admire it; if any foolish one, and such as girls may chance to do, advise her and remind her. Condemn out and out all riches and extravagance, and gently point out the ornament that there is in neatness and in modesty; and be continually teaching her the things that are profitable.

Let your prayers be common.⁴⁴⁰ Let each go to Church; and let the husband ask his wife at home, and she again ask her husband, the account of the things which were said and read there. If any poverty should overtake you, cite the case of those holy men, Paul and Peter, who were more honored than any kings or rich men; and yet how they spent their lives, in hunger and in thirst. Teach her that there is nothing in life that is to be feared, save only offending against God. If any marry thus, with these views, he will be but little inferior to monks; the married but little below the unmarried.

If thou hast a mind to give dinners, and to make entertainments, let there be nothing immodest, nothing disorderly. If thou shouldst find any poor saint able to bless your house, able only just by setting his foot in it to bring in the whole blessing of God, invite him. And shalt I say moreover another thing? Let no one of you make it his endeavor to marry a rich woman, but much rather a poor one. When she comes in, she will not bring so great a source of pleasure from her riches, as she will annoyance from her taunts, from her demanding more than she brought, from her insolence, her extravagance, her vexatious language. For she will say perhaps, “I have not yet spent anything of thine, I am still wearing my own apparel, bought with what my parents settled upon me.” What sayest thou, O woman? Still wearing thine own! And what can be more miserable than this language? Why, thou hast no longer a body of thine own, and hast thou money of thine own? After marriage ye are no longer twain, but are become one flesh, and are then your possessions twain, and not one? Oh! this love of money! Ye both are become one man, one living creature; and dost thou still say “mine own”? Cursed and abominable word that it is, it was brought in by the devil. Things far nearer and dearer to us than these hath God made all common to us, and



440 [For a picture of family life drawn by Clement of Alexandria, and another drawn by Tertullian, see Schaff, *Church History*, Vol. II., p. 364.—G.A.]

are these then not common? We cannot say, “my own light, my own sun, my own water”: all our greater blessings are common, and are riches not common? Perish the riches ten thousand times over! Or rather not the riches, but those tempers of mind which know not how to make use of riches, but esteem them above all things.

Teach her these lessons also with the rest, but with much graciousness. For since the recommendation of virtue has in itself much that is stern, and especially to a young and tender damsel, whenever discourses on true wisdom are to be made, contrive that your manner be full of grace and kindness. And above all banish this notion from her soul, of “mine and thine.” If she say the word “mine,” say unto her, “What things dost thou call thine? For in truth I know not; I for my part have nothing of mine own. How then speakest thou of ‘mine,’ when all things are thine?” Freely grant her the word. Dost thou not perceive that such is our practice with children? When, whilst we are holding anything, a child snatches it, and wishes again to get hold of some other thing, we allow it, and say, “Yes, and this is thine, and that is thine.” The same also let us do with a wife; for her temper is more or less like a child’s; and if she says “mine,” say, “why, everything is thine, and I am thine.” Nor is the expression one of flattery, but of exceeding wisdom. Thus wilt thou be able to abate her wrath, and put an end to her disappointment. For it is flattery when a man does an unworthy act with an evil object: whereas this is the highest philosophy. Say then, “Even I am thine, my child; this advice Paul gives me where he says, ‘The husband hath not power over his own body, but the wife.’ (1 Cor. vii. 4.) If I have no power over my body, but thou hast, much more hast thou over my possessions.” By saying these things thou wilt have quieted her, thou wilt have quenched the fire, thou wilt have shamed the devil, thou wilt have made her more thy slave than one bought with money, with this language thou wilt have bound her fast. Thus then, by thine own language, teach her never to speak of “mine and thine.” And again, never call her simply by her name, but with terms of endearment, with honor, with much love. Honor her, and she will not need honor from others; she will not want the glory that comes from others, if she enjoys that which comes from thee. Prefer her before all, on every account, both for her beauty and her discernment, and praise her. Thou wilt thus persuade her to give heed to none that are without, but to scorn all the world except thyself. Teach her the fear of God, and all good things will flow from this as from a fountain, and the house will be full of ten thousand blessings. If we seek the things that are incorruptible, these corruptible things will follow. “For,” saith He, “seek first His kingdom, and all these things shall be added unto you.” (Matt. vi. 33.) What sort of persons, think you, must the children of such parents be? What the servants of such masters? What all others who come near them? Will not they too eventually be loaded with blessings out of number? For generally the servants also have their characters formed after their master’s, and are fashioned after their humors, love the same objects, which they have been taught to love, speak the same language, and engage with them in the same pursuits. If thus we

regulate ourselves, and attentively study the Scriptures, in most things we shall derive instruction from them. And thus shall be able to please God, and to pass through the whole of the present life virtuously, and to attain those blessings which are promised to those that love Him, of which God grant that we may all be counted worthy, through the grace and lovingkindness of our Lord Jesus Christ, with Whom, together with the Holy Ghost, be unto the Father, glory, power, and honor, now, and ever, through all ages. Amen.

Homily XXI.

[Ephesians vi. 1-3](#)

“Children, obey your parents in the Lord, for this is right. Honor thy father and mother (which is the first commandment with promise), that it may be well with thee, and thou mayest live long on the earth.”

As a man in forming a body, places the head first, after that the neck, then the feet, so does the blessed Paul proceed in his discourse. He has spoken of the husband, he has spoken of the wife, who is second in authority, he now goes on by gradual advances to the third rank—which is that of children. For the husband has authority over the wife, and the husband and the wife over the children. Now then mark what he is saying.

“Children,⁴⁴¹ obey your parents in the Lord; for this is the first commandment with promise.”

Here he has not a word of discourse concerning Christ, not a word on high subjects, for he is as yet addressing his discourse to tender understandings. And it is for this reason, moreover, that he makes his exhortation short, inasmuch as children cannot follow up a long argument. For this reason also he does not discourse at all about a kingdom, (because it does not belong to the tender age of childhood to understand these subjects,) but what a child’s soul most especially longs to hear, that he says, namely, that it shall “live long.” For if any one shall enquire why it is that he omitted to discourse concerning a kingdom, but set before them the commandment laid down in the law, he does this because he speaks to them as infantile, and because he is well aware that if the husband and the wife are thus disposed according to the law which he has laid down, there will be but little trouble in securing the submission of the children. For whenever any matter has a good and sound and orderly principle and foundation, everything will thenceforward go on with method and regularity, with much facility: the more difficult thing is to settle the foundation, to lay down a firm basis. “Children,” saith he, “obey your parents in the Lord,” that is, according to the Lord. This, he means to say, is what God⁴⁴² commands you. But what then if they shall command foolish things? Generally a father, however foolish he may be himself, does not command foolish things. However, even in that case, the Apostle has guarded the matter, by saying, “in the Lord”; that is, wherever you will not be offending against God. So that if the father be a gentile or a heretic, we ought no longer to obey, because the command is not then, “in the Lord.” But how is it that he says, “Which is the first commandment”? For the

441 [“The address to children in a letter to the Church presupposes that the Apostle regards them as belonging to the Church, present at public worship, understanding the word read to and applicable to them.”—Braune in Lange.—G.A.]

442 [“ἐν κυρίῳ 251. Not God, as Chrysostom, and not κατὰ κύριον, as Chrysostom, but denoting the sphere to which the action is to be limited.”—Ellicott.—G.A.]

first is, “Thou shalt not commit adultery;—Thou shalt not kill.” He does not speak of it then as first in rank,⁴⁴³ but in respect of the promise. For upon those others there is no reward annexed, as being enacted with reference to evil things, and to departure from evil things. Whereas in these others, where there is the practice of good, there is further a promise held out. And observe how admirable a foundation he has laid for the path of virtue, that is, honor and reverence towards parents. When he would lead us away from wicked practices, and is just about to enter upon virtuous ones, this is the first thing he enjoins, honor towards parents; inasmuch as they before all others are, after God, the authors of our being, so that it is reasonable they should be the first to reap the fruits of our right actions; and then all the rest of mankind. For if a man have not this honor for parents he will never be gentle toward those unconnected with him.

However, having given the necessary injunctions to children, he passes to the fathers, and says,

Ver. 4. “And ye fathers, provoke not your children to wrath; but nurture them up in the chastening and admonition of the Lord.”

He does not say, “love them,” because to this nature draws them even against their own will, and it were superfluous to lay down a law on such subjects. But what does he say? “Provoke not your children to wrath,” as many do by disinheriting them, and disowning them, and treating them overbearingly, not as free, but as slaves. This is why he says, “Provoke not your children to wrath.” Then, which is the chief thing of all, he shows how they will be led to obedience, referring the whole source of it to the head and chief authority. And in the same way as he has shown the husband to be the cause of the wife’s obedience, (which is the reason also why he addresses the greater part of his arguments to him, advising him to attach her to himself by the power of love,) so, I say, here also, he refers the efficiency to him, by saying, “But bring them up in the chastening and admonition of the Lord.” Thou seest that where there are spiritual ties, the natural ties will follow. Do you wish your son to be obedient? From the very first “Bring him up in the chastening and admonition of the Lord.” Never deem it an unnecessary thing that he should be a diligent hearer of the divine Scriptures. For there the first thing he hears will be this, “Honor thy father and thy mother”; so that this makes for thee. Never say, this is the business of monks. Am I making a monk of him? No. There is no need he should become a monk.⁴⁴⁴ Why be so afraid of a thing so replete with so much advantage? Make him a Christian. For it is of all things necessary for



443 τὰξει. [“Paul says πρώτη, having before his mind not only the Decalogue, but also ‘the entire series of divine precepts,’ which begins with the Decalogue.”—Meyer.—G.A.]

444 Fathers were very suspicious in St. Chrysostom’s day of the influence of Christianity tending to make their children monks. In consequence of this prejudice against the monastic life, he wrote his *Adv. Oppugn. Mon. Vit.*

laymen⁴⁴⁵ to be acquainted with the lessons derived from this source; but especially for children. For theirs is an age full of folly; and to this folly are superadded the bad examples derived from the heathen tales, where they are made acquainted with those heroes so admired amongst them, slaves of their passions, and cowards with regard to death; as, for example, Achilles, when he relents, when he dies for his concubine, when another gets drunk, and many other things of the sort. He requires therefore the remedies against these things. How is it not absurd to send children out to trades, and to school, and to do all you can for these objects, and yet, not to “bring them up in the chastening and admonition of the Lord”? And for this reason truly we are the first to reap the fruits, because we bring up our children to be insolent and profligate, disobedient, and mere vulgar fellows. Let us not then do this; no, let us listen to this blessed Apostle’s admonition. “Let us bring them up in the chastening and admonition of the Lord.” Let us give them a pattern. Let us make them from the earliest age apply themselves to the reading of the Scriptures. Alas, that so constantly as I repeat this, I am looked upon as trifling! Still, I shall not cease to do my duty. Why, tell me, do ye not imitate them of old? Ye women, especially, emulate those admirable women. Has a child been born to any one? Imitate Hannah’s example (1 Sam. i. 24.); look at what she did. She brought him up at once to the temple. Who amongst you would not rather that his son should become a Samuel than that he should be king of the whole world ten thousand times over? “And how,” you will say, “is it possible he should become such a one?” Why is it not possible? It is because thou dost not choose it thyself, nor committest him to the care of those who are able to make him such a one. “And who,” it will be said, “is such a one as this?” God. Since she put him into the hands of God. For not even Eli himself was one of those in any great degree qualified to form him; (how could he be, he who was not able to form even his own children?) No, it was the faith of the mother and her earnest zeal that wrought the whole. He was her first child, and her only one, and she knew not whether she should ever have others besides. Yet she did not say, “I will wait till the child is grown up, that he may have a taste of the things of this life, I will allow him to have his pastime in them a little in his childish years.” No, all these thoughts the woman repudiated, she was absorbed in one object, how from the very beginning she might dedicate the spiritual image⁴⁴⁶ to God. Well may we men be put to the blush at the wisdom of this woman. She offered him up to God, and there she left him. And therefore was her married state more glorious, in that she had made spiritual objects her first care, in that she dedicated the first-fruits to God. Therefore was her womb fruitful, and she obtained other children besides.⁴⁴⁷ And therefore

445 τοῖς κοσμικοῖς.

446 ἄγαλμα.

447 [On the authority of three mss., Savile and other editors concurring, we have departed here from the text of Field, which reverses the order of this and the following sentence, and leaves the sense less clear. v. 1 Sam. ii. 21.—G.A.]

she saw him honorable even in the world. For if men when they are honored, render honor in return, will not God much more, He who does this, even without being honored? How long are we to be mere lumps of flesh? How long are we to be stooping to the earth? Let everything be secondary with us to the provident care we should take of our children, and to our “bringing them up in the chastening and admonition of the Lord.” If from the very first he is taught to be a lover of true wisdom, then wealth greater than all wealth has he acquired and a more imposing name. You will effect nothing so great by teaching him an art, and giving him that outward learning by which he will gain riches, as if you teach him the art of despising riches. If you desire to make him rich, do this. For the rich man is not he who desires great riches, and is encircled with great riches; but the man who has need of nothing.⁴⁴⁸ Discipline your son in this, teach him this. This is the greatest riches. Seek not how to give him reputation and high character in outward learning, but consider deeply how you shall teach him to despise the glory that belongs to this present life. By this means would he become more distinguished and more truly glorious. This it is possible for the poor man and the rich man alike to accomplish. These are lessons which a man does not learn from a master, nor by art, but by means of the divine oracles. Seek not how he shall enjoy a long life here, but how he shall enjoy a boundless and endless life hereafter. Give him the great things, not the little things. Hear what Paul saith, “Bring them up in the chastening and admonition of the Lord”; study not to make him an orator, but train him up to be a philosopher. In the want of the one there will be no harm whatever; in the absence of the other, all the rhetoric in the world will be of no advantage. Tempers are wanted, not talking; character, not cleverness; deeds, not words. These gain a man the kingdom. These confer what are benefits indeed. Whet not his tongue, but cleanse his soul. I do not say this to prevent your teaching him these things, but to prevent your attending to them exclusively. Do not imagine that the monk alone stands in need of these lessons from Scripture. Of all others, the children just about to enter into the world specially need them. For just in the same way as the man who is always at anchor in harbor, is not the man who requires his ship to be fitted out and who needs a pilot and a crew, but he who is always out at sea; so is it with the man of the world and the monk. The one is entered as it were into a waveless harbor, and lives an untroubled life, and far removed from every storm; whilst the other is ever on the ocean, and lives out at sea in the very midst of the ocean, battling with billows without number.

And though he may not need it himself, still he ought to be so prepared as to stop the mouths of others.⁴⁴⁹ Thus the more distinguished he is in the present life, so much the more

448 [This reminds one of the saying of Socrates: To want nothing belongs to the gods, and to want as little as possible is to make the nearest approach to them.—G.A.]

449 [The following part of the paragraph explains this sentence.—G.A.]

he stands in need of this education. If he passes his life in courts, there are many Heathens, and philosophers, and persons puffed up with the glory of this life. It is like a place full of dropsical people. Such in some sort is the court. All are, as it were, puffed up, and in a state of inflammation. And they who are not so are studying to become so. Now then reflect how vast a benefit it is, that your son on entering there, should enter like an excellent physician, furnished with instruments which may allay every one's peculiar inflammation, and should go up to every one, and converse with him, and restore the diseased body to health, applying the remedies derived from the Scriptures, and pouring forth discourses of the true philosophy. For with whom is the recluse to converse? with his wall and his ceiling? yea, or again with the wilderness and the woods? or with the birds and the trees? He therefore has not so great need of this sort of discipline. Still, however, he makes it his business to perfect this work, not so much with a view of disciplining others as himself. There is then every need of much discipline of this sort to those that are to mix in the present world, because such an one has a stronger temptation to sin than the other. And if you have a mind to understand it, he will further be a more useful person even in the world itself. For all will have a reverence for him from these words, when they see him in the fire without being burnt, and not desirous of power. But power he will then obtain, when he least desires it, and will be a still higher object of respect to the king; for it is not possible that such a character should be hid. Amongst a number of healthy persons, indeed, a healthy man will not be noticed; but when there is one healthy man amongst a number of sick, the report will quickly spread and reach the king's ears, and he will make him ruler over many nations. Knowing then these things, "bring up your children in the chastening and admonition of the Lord."

"But suppose a man is poor." Still he will be in no wise more insignificant than the man who lives in kings' courts, because he is not in kings' courts; no, he will be held in admiration, and will soon gain that authority which is yielded voluntarily, and not by any compulsion. For if a set of Greeks, men worthless as they are, and dogs,⁴⁵⁰ by taking up that worthless philosophy of theirs, (for such the Grecian philosophy is,) or rather not itself but only its mere name, and wearing the threadbare cloak, and letting their hair grow, impress many; how much more will he who is a true philosopher? If a false appearance, if a mere shadow of philosophy at first sight so catches us, what if we should love the true and pure philosophy? Will not all court it, and entrust both houses, and wives, and children, with full confidence to such men? But there is not, no, there is not such a philosopher existing now. And therefore, it is not possible to find an example of the sort. Amongst recluses, indeed, there are such, but amongst people in the world no longer. And that amongst recluses there are such, it would be possible to adduce a number of instances. However, I will mention one out of many. Ye know, doubtless, and have heard of, and some, perhaps, have also seen, the man

450 τριβολιμαῖοί τινες καὶ κύνες.

whom I am now about to mention. I mean, the admirable Julian. This man was a rustic, in humble life, and of humble parentage, and totally uninstructed in all outward accomplishments, but full of unadorned wisdom.⁴⁵¹ When he came into the cities, (and this was but rarely,) never did such a concourse take place, not when orators, or sophists, or any one else rode in. But what am I saying? Is not his very name more glorious than that of any king's, and celebrated even to this day? And if these things were in this world, in the world in which the Lord promised us no one good thing, in which He hath told us we are strangers, let us consider how great will be the blessings laid up for us in the heavens. If, where they were sojourners they enjoyed so great honor, how great glory shall they enjoy where their own city is! If, where He promised tribulation, they meet with such attentive care, then where He promises true honors, how great shall be their rest!

And now would ye have me exhibit examples of secular men? At present, indeed, we have none; still there are perhaps even secular men who are excellent, though not arrived at the highest philosophy. I shall therefore quote you examples from the saints of the ancient times. How many, who had wives to keep and children to bring up, were inferior in no respect, no, in no respect to those who have been mentioned? Now, however, it is no longer so, "by reason of the present distress" (1 Cor. vii. 26.), as this blessed Apostle saith. Now then whom would ye have me mention? Noah, or Abraham? The son of the one or of the other? Or again, Joseph? Or would ye have me go to the Prophets? Moses I mean, or Isaiah? However, if you will, let us carry our discourse to Abraham, whom all are continually bringing forward to us above all others. Had he not a wife? Had he not children? Yes, for I too use the same language to you, as you do to me. He had a wife, but it was not because he had a wife that he was so remarkable. He had riches, but it was not because he had riches that he pleased God. He begat children, but it was not because he begat children that he was pronounced blessed. He had three hundred and eighteen servants born in his house, but it was not on this account that he was accounted wonderful. But would you know why it was? It was for his hospitality, for his contempt of riches, for his chastened conduct. For what, tell me, is the duty of a philosopher? Is it not to despise both riches and glory? Is it not to be above both envy and every other passion? Come now then, let us bring him forward and strip him, and show you what a philosopher he was. First of all, he esteemed his fatherland as nothing. God said, "Get thee out of thy country, and from thy kindred" (Gen. xii. 1.), and immediately he went forth. He was not bound to his house, (or surely he would never have gone forth,) nor to his love of familiar friends, nor to anything else whatever. But what? glory and money he despised above all others. For when he had put an end to war by turning the enemy to flight, and was requested to take the spoil, he rejected it. (Gen. xiv. 21–23.)

451 St. Julian was a native of Cilicia, perhaps of Tarsus, and was martyred at Ægæ in the Dioclesian persecution. One of St. Chrysostom's orations is in his praise.

Again, the son of this great man was revered, not because of his riches, but for his hospitality: not because of his children, but for his obedience: not because of his wife, but for the barrenness inflicted on his wife. ([Gen. xxv. 21.](#))

They looked upon the present life as nothing, they followed not after gain, they despised all things. Tell me, which sort of plants are the best? Are not those which have their strength from themselves and are injured neither by rains, nor by hailstorms, nor by gusts of wind, nor by any other vicissitude of the sort, but stand naked in defiance of them all, and needing neither wall nor fence to protect them? Such is the true philosopher, such is that wealth of which we spoke. He has nothing, and has all things: he has all things, and has nothing. For a fence is not within, but only without; a wall is not a thing of nature, but only built round from without. And what again, I ask, what sort of body is a strong one? Is it not that which is in health, and which is overcome neither by hunger nor repletion, nor by cold, nor by heat; or is it that which in view of all these things, needs both caterers, and weavers, and hunters, and physicians, to give it health? He is the rich man, the true philosopher, who needeth none of these things. For this cause it was that this blessed Apostle said, "Bring them up in the chastening and admonition of the Lord." Surround them not with outward defenses. For such is wealth, such is glory; for when these fall, and they do fall, the plant stands naked and defenseless, not only having derived no profit from them during the time past, but even injury. For those very shelters that prevented its being injured to the attacks of the winds, will now have prepared it for perishing all at once. And so wealth is injurious rather, because it renders us undisciplined for the vicissitudes of life. Let us therefore train up our children to be such, that they shall be able to bear up against every trial, and not be surprised at what may come upon them; "let us bring them up in the chastening and admonition of the Lord." And great will be the reward which will be thus laid up in store for us. For if men for making statues and painting portraits of kings enjoy so great honor, shall not we who adorn the image of the King of kings, (for man is the image of God,) receive ten thousand blessings, if we effect a true likeness? For the likeness is in this, in the virtue of the soul, when we train our children to be good, to be meek, to be forgiving, (because all these are attributes of God,) to be beneficent, to be humane; when we train them to regard the present world as nothing. Let this then be our task, to mold and to direct both ourselves and them according to what is right. Otherwise with what sort of boldness shall we stand before the judgment-seat of Christ? If a man who has unruly children is unworthy to be a Bishop ([Tit. i. 6.](#)), much more is he unworthy of the kingdom of Heaven. What sayest thou? If we have an unruly wife, or unruly children, shall we have to render account? Yes, we shall, if we do not with exactness bring in that which is due from ourselves; for our own individual virtue is not enough in order to salvation. If the man who laid aside the one talent gained nothing, but was punished even in such a manner, it is plain that one's own individual virtue is not enough in order to salvation, but there is need of that of another also. Let us therefore



entertain great solicitude for our wives, and take great care of our children, and of our servants, and of ourselves. And in our government both of ourselves and of them, let us beseech God that He aid us in the work. If He shall see us interested in this work, and solicitous about it, He will aid us; but if He shall see us paying no regard to it, He will not give us His hand. For He does not vouchsafe us His assistance when we sleep, but when we labor also ourselves. For a helper, (as the name implies,) is not a helper of one that is inactive, but of one who works also himself. But the good God is able of Himself to bring the work to perfection, that we may be all counted worthy to attain to the blessings promised us, through the grace and compassions of His only begotten Son, with Whom together with the Holy Ghost be unto the Father, glory, might, and honor, now and ever, and throughout all ages. Amen.

Homily XXII.

[Ephesians vi. 5–8](#)

“Servants, be obedient unto them that, according to the flesh, are your masters, with fear and trembling, in singleness of your heart, as unto Christ; not in the way of eye-service, as men-pleasers: but as servants of Christ, doing the will of God from the heart; with goodwill doing service, as unto the Lord, and not unto men: knowing that whatsoever good thing each one doeth, the same shall he receive again from the Lord, whether he be bond or free.”

Thus then it is not husband only, nor wife, nor children, but virtuous servants also that contribute to the organization and protection of a house. Therefore the blessed Paul has not overlooked this department even. He comes to it, however, in the last place, because it is last in dignity and rank. Still he addresses much discourse also to them, no longer in the same tone as to children, but in a far more advanced way, inasmuch as he does not hold out to these the promise in this world, but in that which is to come. “Knowing,” saith he, “that whatsoever good or evil⁴⁵² thing each one doeth, the same shall he receive of the Lord,” and thus at once instructs them to love wisdom. For though they be inferior to the children in dignity, still in mind they are superior to them.

“Servants,” saith he, “be obedient to them that, according to the flesh, are your masters.”

Thus at once he raises up, at once soothes the wounded soul. Be not grieved, he seems to say, that you are inferior to the wife and the children. Slavery is nothing but a name. The mastership is “according to the flesh,” brief and temporary;⁴⁵³ for whatever is of the flesh, is transitory.

“With fear,” he adds, “and trembling.”⁴⁵⁴

Thou seest that he does not require the same fear from slaves as from wives: for in that case he simply said, “and let the wife see that she fear her husband”; whereas in this case he heightens the expression, “with fear,” he saith, “and trembling, in singleness of your heart, as unto Christ.” This is what he constantly says. What meanest thou, blessed Paul? He is a brother, or rather he has become a brother, he enjoys the same privileges, he belongs to the same body. Yea, more, he is the brother, not of his own master only, but also of the Son of God, he is partaker of all the same privileges; yet sayest thou, “obey your masters according to the flesh, with fear and trembling”? Yes, for this very reason, he would say, I say it. For

452 [The words, “or evil,” ἢ κακόν, are not in the text of this passage at all, though Chrysostom has them. Chrysostom and the Patristic writers in general often quote the New Testament without exactness. They quote often from memory, and are seldom critical. Cf. Schaff, *Companion to Greek Testament*, p. 164.—G.A.]

453 [“Wrong. It means those who are ‘your human masters,’ in distinction from Christ, the ‘divine’ master.”—Meyer.—G.A.]

454 [“With fear and trembling, i.e. with that zeal which is ever keenly apprehensive of not doing enough.”—Meyer.—G.A.]

if I charge free men to submit themselves one to another in the fear of God,—as he said above, “submitting yourselves one to another in the fear of Christ”;—if I charge moreover the wife to fear and reverence her husband, although she is his equal; much more must I so speak to the servant. It is no sign of low birth, rather it is the truest nobility, to understand how to lower ourselves, to be modest and unassuming, and to give way to our neighbor. And the free have served the free with much fear and trembling.

“In singleness of heart,” he says.

And it is well said, since it is possible to serve with fear and trembling, and yet not of good will, but in just any way that may be possible. Many servants in many instances secretly cheat their masters. And this cheating accordingly he does away, by saying, “in singleness of your heart as unto Christ, not in the way of eye-service as men-pleasers, but as servants of Christ, doing the will of God from the heart; with good-will doing service, as unto the Lord, and not unto men.” Seest thou how many words he requires, in order to implant this good principle, “with goodwill,” I mean, and “from the heart”? That other service, “with fear and trembling” I mean, we see many rendering to their masters, and the master’s threat goes far to secure that. But show, saith he, that thou servest as “the servant of Christ,” not of man. Make the right action your own, not one of compulsion. Just as in the words which follow, he persuades and instructs the man who is ill-treated by another to make the right action his own, and the work of his own free choice. Because inasmuch as the man that smites the cheek, is not supposed to come to that act in consequence of any intention in the person struck, but only of his own individual malice, what saith He? “Turn to him the other also” ([Matt. v. 39.](#)); to show him that in submitting to the first thou wert not unwilling. For he that is lavish in suffering wrong, makes that his own which is not his own act, by suffering himself to be smitten on the other cheek also, and not merely by enduring the first blow. For this latter will have perhaps the appearance even of cowardice; but that of a high philosophy.—Thus thou wilt show that it was for the sake of wisdom that thou didst bear the first blow also. And so in the present case, show here too, that thou bearest this slavery also willingly. The man-pleaser then is no servant of Christ. The servant of Christ is not a man-pleaser. ([Gal. i. 10.](#)) For who that is the servant of God, makes it his object to please men? And who that pleases men, can be a servant of God?

“From the heart,”⁴⁵⁵ saith he, “with good-will doing service.” For since it is possible to do service even with singleness of heart and not wrongfully, and yet not with all one’s might, but only so far as fulfilling one’s bounden duty, therefore he says, do it with alacrity, not of necessity, upon principle, not upon constraint. If thus thou do service, thou art no slave; if

455 [“From the heart” (ἐκ ψυχῆς) is joined by Chrysostom with what follows. (So Westcott and Hort.) But as μετ’ εὐνοίας expresses the well-meaning disposition, it already includes the sense of ἐκ ψυχῆς. So that ἐκ ψυχῆς belongs to what precedes. So Meyer, Ellicott, and Rev. Ver.—G.A.]

thou do it upon principle, if with good-will, if from the heart, and if for Christ's sake. For this is the servitude that even Paul, the free man, serves, and exclaims, "For we preach not ourselves, but Christ Jesus, as Lord, and ourselves as your servants for Jesus' sake." (2 Cor. iv. 5.) Look how he divests thy slavery of its meanness. For just in the same way as the man who has been robbed, if he gives still more to him who has taken, is not ranked among those robbed, but rather amongst liberal givers; not amongst those who suffer evil, but amongst those who do good; and rather clothes the other with disgrace by his liberality, than is clothed with disgrace by being robbed,—so, I say, in this case, by his generosity he will appear at once more high-minded, and by showing that he does not feel the wrong,⁴⁵⁶ will put the other to shame.

Let us then do service to our masters for Christ's sake, "knowing," he continues, "that whatsoever good thing each one doeth, the same shall he receive of the Lord, whether he be bond or free." For inasmuch as it was probable that many masters, as being unbelievers, would have no sense of shame, and would make no return to their slaves for their obedience, observe how he has given them encouragement, so that they may have no misgiving about the remuneration, but may have full confidence respecting the recompense. For as they who receive a benefit, when they make no return, make God a debtor to their benefactors; so, I say, do masters also, if, when well-treated by thee, they fail to requite thee, requite thee the more, by rendering God thy debtor.

Ver. 9. "And ye masters," he continues, "do the same things unto them."

The same things. What are these? "With good-will do service." However he does not actually say, "do service," though by saying, "the same things," he plainly shows this to be his meaning. For the master himself is a servant. "Not as men-pleasers," he means, "and with fear and trembling": that is, toward God, fearing lest He one day accuse you for your negligence toward your slaves.

"And forbear threatening;" be not irritating, he means, nor oppressive.

"Knowing that both their Master and⁴⁵⁷ yours is in Heaven."⁴⁵⁸

Ah! How mighty a Master does he hint at here! How startling the suggestion! It is this. "With what measure thou metest, it shall be measured unto thee again" (Matt. vii. 2.); lest thou hear the sentence, "Thou wicked servant. I forgave thee all that debt." (Matt. xviii. 32.)

"And there is no respect of persons," he saith, "with Him."

456 ἀρπαγῆς.

457 [The second καὶ (καὶ αὐτῶν καὶ ὑμῶν) is omitted in Chrysostom's text of this passage, and in the *textus receptus*, so that it does not appear in the Authorized English Version. The Revised Version has it, however, and correctly so.—G.A.]

458 [Meyer quotes Seneca, *Thyest.* 607:— Quicquid a vobis minor extimescit Major hoc vobis dominus minatur. Omne sub regno graviore regnum est.—G.A.]

Think not, he would say, that what is done towards a servant, He will therefore forgive, because done to a servant. Heathen laws indeed as being the laws of men, recognize a difference between these kinds of offenses. But the law of the common Lord and Master of all, as doing good to all alike, and dispensing the same rights to all, knows no such difference.

But should any one ask, whence is slavery, and why it has found entrance into human life, (and many I know are both glad to ask such questions, and desirous to be informed of them,) I will tell you. Slavery is the fruit of covetousness, of degradation, of savagery; since Noah, we know, had no servant, nor had Abel, nor Seth, no, nor they who came after them. The thing was the fruit of sin, of rebellion against parents. Let children hearken to this, that whenever they are undutiful to their parents, they deserve to be servants. Such a child strips himself of his nobility of birth; for he who rebels against his father is no longer a son; and if he who rebels against his father is not a son, how shall he be a son who rebels against our true Father? He has departed from his nobility of birth, he has done outrage to nature. Then come also wars, and battles, and take their prisoners.⁴⁵⁹ Well, but Abraham, you will say, had servants. Yes, but he used them not as servants.

Observe how everything depends upon the head; the wife, by telling him “to love her”; the children, by telling him “to bring them up in the chastening and admonition of the Lord”; the servants, by the words, “knowing that both their Master and yours is in Heaven.” So, saith he, ye also in like manner, as being yourselves servants, shall be kind and indulgent. “Finally, be strong in the Lord and in the strength of His might.”

But if, before considering this next, ye have a mind to hearken, I shall make the same remarks concerning servants, as I have also made before concerning children. Teach them to be religious, and everything else will follow of necessity. But now, when any one is going to the theater, or going off to the bath, he drags all his servants after him; but when he goes to church, not for a moment; nor does he compel them to attend and hear. Now how shall thy servant listen, when thou his master art attending to other things? Hast thou purchased, hast thou bought thy slave? Before all things enjoin him what God would have him do, to be gentle towards his fellow-servants, and to make much account of virtue.

Every one’s house is a city; and every man is a prince in his own house. That the house of the rich is of this character, is plain enough, where there are both lands, and stewards, and rulers over rulers. But I say that the house of the poor also is a city. Because here too there are offices of authority; for instance, the husband has authority over the wife, the wife over the servants, the servants again over their own wives; again the wives and the husbands over the children. Does he not seem to you to be, as it were, a sort of king, having so many authorities under his own authority? and that it were meet that he should be more skilled

459 [He seems to refer slavery to three causes: 1. covetousness; 2. rebellion against parents; 3. war, where prisoners are taken and made slaves.—G.A.]

both in domestic and general government than all the rest? For he who knows how to manage these in their several relations, will know how to select the fittest men for offices, yes, and will choose excellent ones. And thus the wife will be a second king in the house, lacking only the diadem; and he who knows how to choose this king, will excellently regulate all the rest.

Ver. 10. “Finally,” saith he, “be strong in the Lord.”

Whenever the discourse is about to conclude, he always employs this turn. Said I not well from the first, that every man’s house is a camp in itself? For look, having disposed of the several offices, he proceeds to arm them, and to lead them out to war.⁴⁶⁰ If no one usurps the other’s office, but every one remains at his post, all will be well ordered.

“Be strong,” saith he, “in the Lord, and in the strength of His might.”

That is, in the hope which we have in Him, by means of His aid. For as he had enjoined many duties, which were necessary to be done, fear not, he seems to say, cast your hope upon the Lord, and He will make all easy.

Ver. 11. “Put on the whole armor of God, that ye may be able to stand against the wiles of the devil.”

He saith not, against the fightings, nor against the hostilities, but against the “wiles.” For this enemy is at war with us, not simply, nor openly, but by “wiles.” What is meant by wiles? To use “wiles,” is to deceive and to take by artifice or contrivance; a thing which takes place both in the case of the arts, and by words, and actions, and stratagems, in the case of those who seduce us. I mean something like this. The Devil never proposes to us sins in their proper colors; he does not speak of idolatry, but he sets it off in another dress, using “wiles,”⁴⁶¹ that is, making his discourse plausible, employing disguises. Now therefore the Apostle is by this means both rousing the soldiers, and making them vigilant, by persuading and instructing them, that our conflict is with one skilled in the arts of war, and with one who wars not simply, nor directly, but with much wiliness. And first then he arouses the disciples from the consideration of the Devil’s skill; but in the second place, from his nature, and the number of his forces. It is not from any desire to dispirit the soldiers that stand under him, but to arouse, and to awaken them, that he mentions these stratagems, and prepares them to be vigilant; for had he merely detailed their power, and there stopped his discourse, he must have dispirited them. But now, whereas both before and after this, he shows that it is possible to overcome such an enemy, he rather raises their courage; for the more clearly the strength of our adversaries is stated on our part to our own people, so much the more earnest will it render our soldiers.

460 [This is very beautiful, but hardly correct exegesis. “The word ‘finally’ introduces a general, final exhortation, winding up the whole parenetic portion of the epistle (iv. i–vi. 9).”—Meyer.—G.A.]

461 μεθοδεύων.

Ver. 12. “For our wrestling is not,” saith he, “against flesh and blood,⁴⁶² but against the principalities, against the powers, against the world-rulers of this darkness, against the spiritual hosts of wickedness, in the heavenly places.”

Having stimulated them by the character of the conflict, he next goes on to arouse them also by the prizes set before them. For what is his argument? Having said that the enemies are fierce, he adds further, that they despoil us of vast blessings. What are these? The conflict lies “in the heavenlies”;⁴⁶³ the struggle is not about riches, not about glory, but about our being enslaved. And thus is the enmity irreconcilable. The strife and the conflict are fiercer when for vast interests at stake; for the expression “in the heavenlies”⁴⁶⁴ is equivalent to, “for the heavenly things.” It is not that they may gain anything by the conquest, but that they may despoil us. As if one were to say, “In what does the contract lie?” In gold. The word “in,” means, “in behalf of”; the word “in,” also means, “on account⁴⁶⁵ of.”⁴⁶⁶ Observe how the power of the enemy startles us; how it makes us all circumspection, to know that the hazard is on behalf of vast interests, and the victory for the sake of great rewards. For he is doing his best to cast us out of Heaven.

He speaks of certain “principalities, and powers, and world-rulers of this darkness.” What darkness? Is it that of night? No, but of wickedness. “For ye were,” saith he, “once darkness” (Eph. v. 8.); so naming that wickedness which is in this present life; for beyond it, it will have no place, not in Heaven, nor in the world to come.

“World-rulers”⁴⁶⁷ he calls them, not as having the mastery over the world, but the Scripture is wont to call wicked practices “the world,” as, for example, where Christ saith, “They are not of this world, even as I am not of the world.” (John xvii. 16.) What then, were they not of the world? Were they not clothed with flesh? Were they not of those who are in the world? And again; “The world hateth Me, but you it cannot hate.” (John vii. 7.) Where again He calls wicked practices by this name. Thus the Apostle here by the world means wicked men, and the evil spirits have more especial power over them. “Against the spiritual hosts of wickedness,” saith he, “in the heavenly places.” “Principalities, and powers,” he

462 [“Flesh and blood, i.e. ‘feeble men,’ just as in Gal. i. 16, and Matt. xvi. 17. The word πάλη, which means nothing else than a ‘wrestling,’ is specially chosen by the Apostle (who elsewhere uses ἀγών or μάχη), in order to bring out the more strongly in connection with πρὸς αἷμα καὶ σάρκα the contrast between this less perilous form of contest and that which follows.”—Meyer.—G.A.]

463 ἐν τοῖς ἐπουρανίοις.

464 ἐν τοῖς ἐπουρανίοις.

465 [“The word ἐν does *not* mean ‘for’ or ‘on account of,’ and the phrase is here *local* (i. 3).”—Meyer.—G.A.]

466 τὸ ἐν ὑπὲρ ἐστι, καὶ τὸ ἐν, διὰ ἐστιν.

467 κοσμοκράτορας.

speaks of; just as in the heavenly places there are “thrones and dominions, principalities and powers.” (Col. i. 16.)

Ver. 13. “Wherefore,” saith he, “take up the whole armor of God, that ye may be able to withstand in the evil day, and, having done all, to stand.”

By “evil day” he means the present life,⁴⁶⁸ and calls it too “this present evil world” (Gal. i. 4.), from the evils which are done in it. It is as much as to say, Always be armed. And again, “having done all,” saith he; that is, both passions, and vile lusts, and all things else that trouble us. He speaks not merely of doing the deed, but of completing it,⁴⁶⁹ so as not only to slay, but to stand also after we have slain. For many who have gained this victory, have fallen again. “Having done,” saith he, “all”; not having done one, but not the other. For even after the victory, we must stand. An enemy may be struck, but things that are struck revive again if we do not stand. But if after having fallen they rise up again, so long as we stand, they are fallen. So long as we waver not, the adversary rises not again.

“Let us put on the whole armor of God.” Seest thou how he banishes all fear? For if it be possible “to do all, and to stand,” his describing in detail the power of the enemy does not create cowardice and fear, but it shakes off indolence. “That ye may be able,” he saith, “to withstand in the evil day.” And he further gives them encouragement too from the time; the time, he seems to say, is short;⁴⁷⁰ so that ye must needs stand; faint not when the slaughter is achieved.

Moral. If then it is a warfare, if such are the forces arrayed against us, if “the principalities” are incorporeal, if they are “rulers of the world,” if they are “the spiritual hosts of wickedness,” how, tell me, canst thou live in self-indulgence? How canst thou be dissolute? How if we are unarmed, shall we be able to overcome? These words let every one repeat to himself every day, whenever he is under the influence of anger, or of lust, whenever he is aiming, and all to no profit, after this languid life. Let him hearken to the blessed Paul, saying to him, “Our wrestling is not against flesh and blood, but against the principalities, against the powers.” A harder warfare this than that which is matter of sense, a fiercer conflict. Think how long time this enemy is wrestling, for what it is that he is fighting, and be more guarded than ever. “Nay,” a man will say, “but as he is the devil, he ought to have been removed out of the way, and then all had been saved.”⁴⁷¹ These are the pretenses to which some of your

468 [“The use of ἡμέρα, rather than αἶμα 242·vi (Gal. i. 4.) is opposed to the interpretation of Chrysostom. Still more untenable is the view of Meyer, that Paul is here specifying the day when the last great Satanic outbreak was to take place. Paul has at heart what he knew was much more present and more constantly impending, namely, the day of violent temptation.”—Ellicott.—G.A.]

469 Not ἐργασάμενοι, but κατεργασάμενοι.

470 i.e. “but a ‘day.’”

471 [This entire sentence and the preceding one, though attested by three mss. and read by Savile, are wanting in the text of Field, who has, in their stead, Νῦν οὖν ἦλθε, φησὶν, ἐμοὶ παλαῖσαι, “Now then,” says some one, “he

indolent ones in self-defense give utterance. When thou oughtest to be thankful, O man, that, if thou hast a mind, thou hast the victory over such a foe, thou art on the contrary even discontented, and givest utterance to the words of some sluggish and sleepy soldier. Thou knowest the points of attack,⁴⁷² if thou chooseth. Reconnoiter on all sides, fortify thyself. Not against the devil alone is the conflict, but also against his powers. How then, you may say, are we to wrestle with the darkness? By becoming light. How with the “spiritual hosts of wickedness”? By becoming good. For wickedness is contrary to good, and light drives away darkness. But if we ourselves too be darkness, we shall inevitably be taken captive. How then shall we overcome them? If, what they are by nature, that we become by choice, free from flesh and blood, thus shall we vanquish them. For once it was probable that the disciples would have many persecutors, “imagine not,” he would say, “that it is they who war with you. They that really war with you, are the spirits that work in them. Against them is our conflict.” Two things he provides for by these considerations; he renders them in themselves more courageous and he lets loose their wrath against those who war against them. And wherefore is our conflict against these? Since we have also an invincible ally, the grace of the Spirit. We have been taught an art, such as shall enable us to wrestle not against men, but against spirits. Nay, if we have a mind, neither shall we wrestle at all; for it is because we choose it, that there is a struggle, since so great is the power of Him that dwelleth in us, as that He said, “Behold, I have given you authority to tread upon serpents and scorpions, and over all the power of the enemy.” (Luke x. 19.) All power hath He given us, both of wrestling and of not wrestling. It is because we are slothful, that we have to wrestle with them; for that Paul wrestled not, hear what he saith himself, “Who shall separate us from the love of Christ? shall tribulation, or anguish, or persecution, or famine, or nakedness, or peril, or sword?” (Rom. viii. 35.) And again hear his words, “God shall bruise Satan under your feet shortly.” (Rom. xvi. 20.) For he had him under his subjection; whence also he said, “I charge thee in the name of Jesus Christ to come out of her.” (Acts xvi. 18.) And this is not the language of one wrestling; for he that wrestles has not yet conquered, and he that has conquered no longer wrestles; he has subdued, has taken his captive. And so Peter again wrestled not with the devil, but he did that which was better than wrestling. In the case of the faithful, the obedient, the catechumens, they prevailed over him to vast advantage and over his powers. Hence too was it that the blessed Paul said, “For we are not ignorant of his devices” (2 Cor. ii. 11.), which was the way moreover in which he especially overcame him; and again hear his words, “And no marvel—if his ministers also fashion themselves as ministers of righteousness.” (2 Cor. xi. 14, 15.) So well knew he every part of the conflict,

has come to wrestle with me,” which seems to leave the sense incomplete, and does not suit the following sentence. See note on page 82.—G.A.]

472 λαβάς.

and nothing escaped him. Again, “For the mystery of lawlessness,” saith he, “doth already work.” (2 Thess. ii. 7.)

But against us is the struggle; for hearken again to him, saying, “I am persuaded, that neither angels, nor principalities, nor things present, nor things to come, nor powers, nor any other creature, shall be able to separate us from the love of Christ.” (Rom. viii. 38.) He saith not simply, “from Christ,” but, “from the love of Christ.”⁴⁷³ For many there are who are united forsooth to Christ, and who yet love Him not. Not only, saith he, shalt thou not persuade me to deny Him, but, not even to love Him less. And if the powers above had not strength to do this, who else should move him? Not, however, that he saith this, as though they were actually attempting it, but upon the supposition; wherefore also he said, “I am persuaded.” So then he did not wrestle, yet nevertheless he fears his artifices; for hear what he saith, “I fear lest by any means, as the serpent beguiled Eve in his craftiness, your minds should be corrupted from the simplicity that is toward Christ.” (2 Cor. xi. 3.) True, you will say, but he uses this word touching himself also, where he saith, “For I fear⁴⁷⁴ lest, by any means, after that I have preached to others, I myself should be rejected.” How then art thou “persuaded that no one shall separate thee”? Perceivest thou that the expression is that of lowliness and of humility? For he already dwelt in Heaven. And hence also it was that he said, “For I know nothing against myself” (1 Cor. iv. 4.); and again, “I have finished the course.” (2 Tim. iv. 7.) So that it was not with regard to these matters that the devil placed obstacles in his way, but with reference to the interests of the disciples. And why forsooth? Because in these points he was not himself sole master, but also their own will. There the devil prevailed in some cases; nay, neither there was it over him that he prevailed, but over the indolence of persons who took no heed. If indeed, whether from slothfulness, or anything else of the sort, he had failed to fulfill his own duty, then had the devil prevailed over him; but if he himself on his part did all he could, and they obeyed not it was not over him he prevailed, but over their disobedience; and the disease prevailed not over the physician, but over the unruliness of the patient; for, when the physician takes every precaution, and the patient undoes all, the patient is defeated, not the physician. Thus then in no instance did he prevail over Paul. But in our own case, it is matter for contentment that we should be so much as able to wrestle. For the Romans indeed this is not what he asks, but what? “He shall bruise Satan under your feet shortly.” (Rom. xvi. 20.) And for these Ephesians he invokes, “Him that is able to do exceeding abundantly above all that we ask or think.” (Eph. iii. 20.) He that wrestles is still held fast, but it is enough for him that he has not fallen. When we depart hence, then, and not till then, will the glorious victory be achieved. For instance, take the case of some evil lust. The extraordinary thing would be, not even to entertain it, but to



473 [This text in Rom. has, “from the love of God which is in Christ Jesus our Lord.”—G.A.]

474 [The words, “I fear,” φοβοῦμαι γὰρ, are not in the text of 1 Cor. ix. 27. See note 1 on page 157.—G.A.]

stifle it. If, however, this be not possible, then though we may have to wrestle with it, and retain it to the last, yet if we depart still wrestling, we are conquerors. For the case is not the same here as it is with wrestlers; for there if thou throw not thy antagonist, thou hast not conquered; but here if thou be not thrown, thou hast conquered; if thou art not thrown, thou hast thrown him; and with reason, because there both strive for the victory, and when the one is thrown, the other is crowned; here, however, it is not thus, but the devil is striving for our defeat; when then I strip him of that upon which he is bent, I am conqueror. For it is not to overthrow us, but to make us share his overthrow that he is eager. Already then am I conqueror, for he is already cast down, and in a state of ruin; and his victory consists not in being himself crowned, but in effecting my ruin; so that though I overthrow him not, yet if I be not overthrown, I have conquered. What then is a glorious victory? It is, over and above, to trample him underfoot, as Paul did, by regarding the things of this present world as nothing. Let us too imitate him, and strive to become above them, and nowhere to give him a hold upon us. Wealth, possessions, vain-glory, give him a hold. And oftentimes indeed this has roused him, and oftentimes exasperated him. But what need is there of wrestling? What need of engaging with him? He who is engaged in the act of wrestling has the issue in uncertainty, whether he may not be himself defeated and captured. Whereas he that tramples him under foot, has the victory certain.

Oh then, let us trample under foot the power of the devil; let us trample under foot our sins, I mean everything that pertains to this life, wrath, lust, vain-glory, every passion; that when we depart to that world, we may not be convicted of betraying that power which God hath given us; for thus shall we attain also the blessings that are to come. But if in this we are unfaithful, who will entrust us with those things which are greater? If we were not able to trample down one who had fallen, who had been disgraced, who had been despised, who was lying beneath our feet, how shall the Father give us a Father's rewards? If we subdue not one so placed in subjection to us, what confidence shall we have to enter into our Father's house? For, tell me, suppose thou hadst a son, and, that he, disregarding the well-disposed part of thy household, should associate with them that have distressed thee, with them that have been expelled his father's house, with them that spend their time at the gaming table, and that he should go on so doing to the very last; will he not be disinherited? It is plain enough he will. And so too shall we; if, disregarding the Angels who have well pleased our Father and whom He hath set over us, we have our conversation with the devil, inevitably we shall be disinherited, which God forbid; but let us engage in the war we have to wage with him.

If any one hath an enemy, if any one hath been wronged by him, if any one is exasperated, let him collect together all that wrath, all that fierceness, and pour it out upon the head of the devil. Here wrath is a good thing, here anger is profitable, here revenge is praiseworthy, for just as amongst the heathen, revenge is a vice, so truly here is revenge a virtue. So then

if thou hast any failings, rid thyself of them here. And if thou art not able thyself to put them away, do it, though with thy members also.⁴⁷⁵ Hath any one struck thee? Bear malice against the devil, and never relinquish thy hatred towards him. Or again, hath no one struck thee? Yet bear him malice still, because he insulted, because he offended thy Lord and Master, because he injures and wars against thy brethren. With him be ever at enmity, ever implacable, ever merciless. Thus shall he be humbled, thus despicable, thus shall he be an easy prey. If we are fierce towards him, he shall never be fierce towards us. If we are compliant, then he will be fierce; it is not with him as it is with our brethren. He is the foe and enemy, both of life and salvation, both ours and his own. If he loves not himself, how shall he be able to love us? Let us then put ourselves in array and wound him, having for our mighty confederate the Lord Jesus Christ, who can both render us impregnable to his snares, and worthy of the good things to come; which God grant that we may all attain, through the grace and lovingkindness of our Lord Jesus Christ, with whom, together with the Holy Ghost, be unto the Father, glory, might, and honor, now and ever, and throughout all ages. Amen.

475 [We have here followed the text of Savile (supported by three mss.), as follows: εἰ δὲ μὴ δύνασαι αὐτὸς ἀποθέσθαι, κἀν μετὰ τῶν μελῶν τῶν σῶν, in preference to the text of Field, which has εἰ μὴ δύνασαι αὐτὰ ἀποθέσθαι, ἢ μετὰ τῶν μελῶν τῶν σῶν.—G.A.]

Homily XXIII.

[Ephesians vi. 14](#)

“Stand therefore, having girded your loins with truth.”

Having drawn up this army, and roused their zeal,—for both these things were requisite, both that they should be drawn up in array and subject to each other, and that their spirit should be aroused,—and having inspired them with courage, for this was requisite also, he next proceeds also to arm them. For arms had been of no use, had they not been first posted each in his own place, and had not the spirit of the soldier’s soul been roused; for we must first arm him within, and then without.

Now if this is the case with soldiers, much more is it with spiritual soldiers. Or rather in their case, there is no such thing as arming them without, but everything is within. He hath roused their ardor, and set it on fire, he hath added confidence. He hath set them in due array. Observe how he also puts on the armor. “Stand therefore,”⁴⁷⁶ saith he. The very first feature in tactics is, to know how to stand well, and many things will depend upon that. Hence he discourses much concerning standing, saying also elsewhere, “Watch ye, stand fast.” (1 Cor. xvi. 13.) And again, “So stand fast in the Lord.” (Philip. iv. 1.) And again, “Let him that thinketh he standeth, take heed lest he fall.” (1 Cor. x. 12.) And again, “That ye may be able, having done all, to stand.” (Eph. vi. 13.) Doubtless then he does not mean merely any way of standing, but a correct way, and as many as have had experience in wars know how great a point it is to know how to stand. For if in the case of boxers and wrestlers, the trainer recommends this before anything else, namely, to stand firm, much more will it be the first thing in warfare, and military matters.

The man who, in a true sense, stands, is upright; he stands not in a lazy attitude, not leaning upon anything. Exact uprightness discovers itself by the way of standing, so that they who are perfectly upright, they stand. But they who do not stand, cannot be upright, but are unstrung and disjointed. The luxurious man does not stand upright, but is bent; so is the lewd man, and the lover of money. He who knows how to stand will from his very standing, as from a sort of foundation, find every part of the conflict easy to him.

“Stand therefore,” saith he, “having girded your loins with truth.”⁴⁷⁷

He is not speaking of a literal, physical girdle, for all the language in this passage he employs in a spiritual sense.⁴⁷⁸ And observe how methodically he proceeds. First he girds



476 [“Stand,’ here, is not, like the preceding *στηναι* (in [verse 13](#)), the standing of the victor, but the ‘standing forth of the man ready for the combat.”—Meyer.—G.A.]

477 Compare [Isa. xi. 5](#).

478 *νοητῶς*.

up his soldier.⁴⁷⁹ What then is the meaning of this? The man that is loose in his life, and is dissolved in his lusts, and that has his thoughts trailing on the ground, him he braces up by means of this girdle, not suffering him to be impeded by the garments entangling his legs, but leaving him to run with his feet well at liberty. “Stand therefore, having girded your loins,” saith he. By the “loins” here he means this; just what the keel is in ships, the same are the loins with us, the basis or groundwork of the whole body: for they are, as it were, a foundation, and upon them as the schools of the physicians tell you, the whole frame is built. So then in “girding up the loins” he compacts the foundation of our soul; for he is not of course speaking of these loins of our body, but is discoursing spiritually: and as the loins are the foundation alike of the parts both above and below, so is it also in the case of these spiritual loins. Oftentimes, we know, when persons are fatigued, they put their hands there as if upon a sort of foundation, and in that manner support themselves; and for this reason it is that the girdle is used in war, that it may bind and hold together this foundation, as it were, in our frame; for this reason too it is that when we run we gird ourselves. It is this which guards our strength. Let this then, saith he, be done also with respect to the soul, and then in doing anything whatsoever we shall be strong; and it is a thing most especially becoming to soldiers.

True, you may say, but these our natural loins we gird with a leathern band; but we, spiritual soldiers, with what? I answer, with that which is the head and crown of all our thoughts, I mean, “with truth.” “Having girded your loins,” saith he, “with truth.”⁴⁸⁰ What then is the meaning of “with truth”? Let us love nothing like falsehood, all our duties let us pursue “with truth,” let us not lie one to another. Whether it be an opinion, let us seek the truth, or whether it be a line of life, let us seek the true one. If we fortify ourselves with this, if we “gird ourselves with truth,” then shall no one overcome us. He who seeks the doctrine of truth, shall never fall down to the earth; for that the things which are not true are of the earth, is evident from this, that all they that are without are enslaved to the passions, following their own reasonings; and therefore if we are sober, we shall need no instruction in the tales of the Greeks. Seest thou how weak and frivolous they are? incapable of entertaining about God one severe thought or anything above human reasoning? Why? Because they are not “girded about with truth”; because their loins, the receptacle of the seed of life, and the main strength of their reasonings, are ungirt; nothing then can be weaker than these. And the

479 [“As for the actual warrior, the whole *aptus habitus* (prepared state) for the combat would be wanting in the absence of the girdle; so also for the spiritual warrior, if he is not furnished with truth.”—Meyer.—G.A.]

480 [“It is clear that truth does not mean ‘objectively the gospel,’ for that is designated later, [ver. 17](#), by ῥῆμα θεοῦ (‘the word of God’), but ‘subjectively,’ truth as an inward property, i.e. the ‘harmony of knowledge with the objective truth given in the gospel.’”—Meyer.—G.A.]

Manicheans⁴⁸¹ again, seest thou, how all the things they have the boldness to utter, are from their own reasonings? “It was impossible,” say they, “for God to create the world without matter.” Whence is this so evident? These things they say, groveling, and from the earth, and from what happens amongst ourselves; because man, they say, cannot create otherwise. Marcion again, look what he says. “God, if He took upon Him flesh, could not remain pure.” Whence is this evident? “Because,” says he, “neither can men.” But men are able to do this. Valentinus again, with his reasonings all trailing along the ground, speaks the things of the earth; and in like manner Paul of Samosata. And Arius, what does he say? “It was impossible for God when He begat, to beget without passion.”⁴⁸² Whence, Arius, hast thou the boldness to allege this; merely from the things which take place amongst ourselves? Seest thou how the reasonings of all these trail along on the ground? All are, as it were, let loose and unconfined, and savoring of the earth? And so much then for doctrines. With regard to life and conduct, again, whoremongers, lovers of money, and of glory, and of everything else, trail on the ground. They have not their loins themselves standing firm, so that when they are weary they may rest upon them; but when they are weary, they do not put their hands upon them and stand upright, but flag. He, however, who “is girt about with the truth,” first, never is weary; and secondly, if he should be weary, he will rest himself upon the truth itself. What? Will poverty, tell me, render him weary? No, in nowise; for he will repose on the true riches, and by this poverty will understand what is true poverty. Or again, will slavery make him weary? No, in nowise, for he will know what is the true slavery. Or shall disease? No, nor even that. “Let your loins,” saith Christ, “be girded about, and your lamps burning” (Luke xii. 35.), with that light which shall never be put out. This is what the Israelites also, when they were departing out of Egypt (Ex. xii. 11.), were charged to do. For why did they eat the passover with their loins girded? Art thou desirous to hear the ground of it? According to the historical fact, or according to its mystical sense,⁴⁸³ shall I state it? But I will state



481 The Manichees considered matter to be uncreate; vid. Note on St. Augustine’s *Confessions*, i. b. The Marcionites considered matter intrinsically evil; vid. Theod. *Hær.* i. 24. Valentinus denied that our Lord was born of the substance of Mary; vid. St. Cyril, *Lect.* iv. 9. Paul of Samosata and Arius both denied His Godhead.

482 ἀπαθῶς.

483 The word ἀναγωγῆ, when used of Scripture exposition, has various senses, but always implies an interpretation not literal, grammatical, or historical. Sometimes it stands for a “moral” interpretation, i.e. one conveying a moral lesson; e.g. Chrys. *in Psalm* cxix. (120) init.; Basil. *in Esai.* v. § 152. Sometimes for an interpretation with reference simply to heavenly persons and things; vid. Mosheim, *de Reb. ante Const.* p. 644; Dionys. *Hierarch Cæl.* i. 2. Origen enumerates three senses of Scripture, literal, moral, and mystical, the last being either allegorical or anagogical; Clement four, literal, moral, mystical, and prophetic; but the more common division has been into literal, tropological, allegorical, and anagogical. [Cassian, a pupil of Chrysostom, defines ἀναγωγῆ: *Anagoge vero de spiritalibus mysteriis ad sublimiora quaedam et sacratiores coelorum secreta conscendens*, “leading

them both, and do ye retain it in mind, for I am not doing it without an object, merely that I may tell you the solution, but also that my words may become in you reality. They had, we read, their loins girded, and their staff in their hands, and their shoes on their feet, and thus they ate the Passover. Awful and terrible mysteries, and of vast depth; and if so terrible in the type, how much more in the reality? They come forth out of Egypt, they eat the Passover. Attend. "Our Passover hath been sacrificed, even Christ," it is said. Wherefore did they have their loins girded? Their guise is that of wayfarers; for their having shoes, and staves in their hands, and their eating standing, declares nothing else than this. Will ye hear the history first, or the mystery?⁴⁸⁴ Better the history first. What then is the design of the history? The Jews were continually forgetting God's benefits to them. Accordingly then, God tied the sense of these, His benefits, not only to the time, but also to the very habit of them that were to eat. For this is why they were to eat girded and sandalled, that when they were asked the reason, they might say, "we were ready for our journey, we were just about to go forth out of Egypt to the land of promise and we were ready for our exodus." This then is the historical type. But the reality is this; we too eat a Passover, even Christ; "for," saith he, "our Passover hath been sacrificed, even Christ." (1 Cor. v. 7.) What then? We too ought to eat it, both sandalled and girded. And why? That we too may be ready for our Exodus, for our departure hence.

Moral. Let not any one of them that eat this Passover look towards Egypt, but towards Heaven, towards "Jerusalem that is above." (Gal. iv. 26.) On this account thou eatest with thy loins girded, on this account thou eatest with shoes on thy feet, that thou mayest know, that from the moment thou first beginnest to eat the Passover, thou oughtest to set out, and to be upon thy journey. And this implies two things, both that we must depart out of Egypt, and that, whilst we stay, we must stay henceforth as in a strange country; "for our citizenship," saith he, "is in Heaven" (Philip. iii. 20.); and that all our life long we should ever be prepared, so that when we are called we may not put it off, but say, "My heart is fixed." (Ps. cviii. 1.) "Yes, but this Paul indeed could say, who knew nothing against himself; but I, who require a long time for repentance, I cannot say it." Yet that to be girded is the part of a waking soul, hearken to what God says to that righteous man, "Gird up now thy loins like a man, for I will demand of thee, and declare thou unto Me." (Job xxxviii. 3.) This He says also to all the prophets, and this He says again to Moses, to be girded. And He Himself also appears to Ezekiel (Ezek. ix. 11, Sept.) girded. Nay more, and the Angels, too, appear to us girded (Rev. xv. 6.), as being soldiers. From our being girded about, it comes that we also stand bravely as from our standing our being girded comes.

up from spiritual mysteries to higher and more sacred secrets of heaven." See also Sophocles' *Greek Lex. sub* "voce."—G.A.]

484 ἀναγωγήν.

For we also are going to depart, and many are the difficulties that intervene. When we have crossed this plain, straightway the devil is upon us, doing everything, contriving every artifice, to the end that those who have been saved out of Egypt, those who have passed the Red Sea, those who are delivered at once from the evil demons, and from unnumbered plagues, may be taken and destroyed by him. But, if we be vigilant, we too have a pillar of fire, the grace of the Spirit. The same both enlightens and overshadows us. We have manna; yea rather not manna, but far more than manna. Spiritual drink we have, not water, that springs forth from the Rock. So have we too our encampment ([Rev. xx. 9.](#)), and we dwell in the desert even now; for a desert indeed without virtue, is the earth even now, even more desolate than that wilderness. Why was that desert so terrible? Was it not because it had scorpions in it, and adders? ([Deut. viii. 15.](#)) “A land,” it is said, “which none passed through.” ([Jer. ii. 6.](#)) Yet is not that wilderness, no, it is not so barren of fruits, as is this human nature. At this instant, how many scorpions, how many asps are in this wilderness, how many serpents, how many “offsprings of vipers” ([Matt. iii. 7.](#)) are these through whom we at this instant pass! Yet let us not be afraid; for the leader of this our Exodus is not Moses, but Jesus.

How then is it that we shall not suffer the same things? Let us not commit the same acts, and then shall we not suffer the same punishment. They murmured, they were ungrateful; let us therefore not cherish these passions. How was it that they fell all of them? “They despised the pleasant land.” ([Ps. cvi. 24.](#)) “How ‘despised’ it? Surely they prized it highly.” By becoming indolent and cowardly, and not choosing to undergo any labors to obtain it. Let not us then “despise” Heaven! This is what is meant by “despising.” Again, among us also has fruit been brought, fruit from Heaven, not the cluster of grapes borne upon the staff ([Num. xiii. 23.](#)), but the “earnest of the Spirit” ([2 Cor. i. 22.](#)), “the citizenship which is in Heaven” ([Philip. iii. 20.](#)), which Paul and the whole company of the Apostles, those marvelous husbandmen, have taught us. It is not Caleb the son of Jephunneh, nor Jesus the son of Nun, that hath brought these fruits; but Jesus the Son of “the Father of mercies” ([2 Cor. i. 3.](#)), the Son of the Very God, hath brought every virtue, hath brought down from Heaven all the fruits that are from thence, the songs of heaven hath He brought. For the words which the Cherubim above say, these hath He charged us to say also, “Holy, Holy, Holy.”⁴⁸⁵ He hath brought to us the virtue of the Angels. “The Angels marry not, neither are given in marriage” ([Matt. xxii. 30.](#)); this fair plant hath He planted here also. They love not money, nor anything like it; and this too hath He sown amongst us. They never die; and this hath He freely given us also, for death is no longer death, but sleep. For hearken to what He saith, “Our friend Lazarus is fallen asleep.” ([John xi. 11.](#))

485 [For the use of these words in the church service, see Bingham, *Antiquities*, xv. 3, 10, and Hom. III. on Ephesians.—G.A.]

Seest thou then the fruits of “Jerusalem that is above”? (Gal. iv. 26.) And what is indeed more stupendous than all is this, that our warfare is not decided, but all these things are given us before the attainment of the promise! For they indeed toiled even after they had entered into the land of promise;—rather, they toiled not, for had they chosen to obey God, they might have taken all the cities, without either arms or array. Jericho, we know, they overturned, more after the fashion of dancers than of warriors. We however have no warfare after we have entered into the land of promise, that is, into Heaven, but only so long as we are in the wilderness, that is, in the present life. “For he that is entered into his rest hath himself also rested from his works as God did from His.” (Heb. iv. 10.) “Let us not then be weary in well-doing, for in due season we shall reap, if we faint not.” (Gal. vi. 9.) Seest thou how that just as He led them, so also He leads us? In their case, touching the manna and the wilderness, it is said, “He that gathered much had nothing over, and he that gathered little had no lack.” (Ex. xvi. 18.) And we have this charge given us, “not to lay up treasure upon the earth.” (Matt. vi. 19.) But if we do lay up treasure, it is no longer the earthly worm that corrupts it, as was the case with the manna, but that which dwelleth eternally with fire.⁴⁸⁶ Let us then “subdue all things,” that we furnish not food to this worm. For “he,” it is said, “who gathered much had nothing over.” For this too happens with ourselves also every day. We all of us have but the same capacity of hunger to satisfy. And that which is more than this, is but an addition of cares. For what He intended in after-times to deliver, saying, “Sufficient unto the day is the evil thereof” (Matt. vi. 34), this had He thus been teaching even from the very beginning,⁴⁸⁷ and not even thus did they receive it. But as to us, let us not be insatiable, let us not be discontented, let us not be seeking out for splendid houses; for we are on our pilgrimage, not at home; so that if there be any that knows that the present life is a sort of journey, and expedition, and, as one might say, it is what they call an entrenched camp,⁴⁸⁸ he will not be seeking for splendid buildings. For who, tell me, be he ever so rich, would choose to build a splendid house in an encampment? No one; he would be a laughing stock, he would be building for his enemies, and would the more effectually invite them on; and so then, if we be in our senses, neither shall we. The present life is nothing else than a march and an encampment.

486 [The text in this passage is very corrupt. Three mss. have οὐκέτι σκόληξ ὁ αἰσθητὸς λυμαίνεται... ἀλλὰ ὁ τῆς δικαιοσύνης. But as Field says, ὁ σκόληξ τῆς δικαιοσύνης (“the worm of righteousness”) seems “*absurdissimum*.” Three other mss. give the reading which we have adopted: “No longer the earthly worm,” &c., “but that which dwelleth eternally with fire,” ἀλλ’ ὁ τῷ πυρὶ συνδιαϊωνίζων ἡμᾶς λυμαίνεται. Field, in his text, follows a single ms., and emends even that.—G.A.]

487 ἄνωθεν.

488 φωσσάτον, *fossatum*.

Wherefore, I beseech you, let us do all we can, so as to lay up no treasure here; for if the thief should come, we must in a moment arise and depart. “Watch,” saith He, “for ye know not at what hour the thief cometh” ([Matt. xxiv. 42, 43.](#)), thus naming death. O then, before he cometh, let us send away everything before us to our native country; but here let us be “well girded,” that we may be enabled to overcome our enemies, whom God grant that we may overcome, through the grace and lovingkindness of our Lord Jesus Christ, with Whom together with the Holy Ghost, be unto the Father glory, strength, honor forever and ever. Amen.

Homily XXIV.

[Ephesians vi. 14–17](#)

“Stand therefore, having girded your loins with truth, and having on the breastplate of righteousness; and having shod your feet with the preparation of the gospel of peace; withal taking up the shield of faith, wherewith ye shall be able to quench all the fiery darts of the evil one. And take the helmet of salvation, and the sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God.”

“Having girded your loins,” saith he, “with truth.” What can be the meaning of this? I have stated in the preceding discourse, that he ought to be lightly accoutered, in order that there should be no impediment whatever to his running.

“And having on,” he continues, “the breastplate of righteousness.” As the breastplate is impenetrable, so also is righteousness, and by righteousness here he means a life of universal virtue.⁴⁸⁹ Such a life no one shall ever be able to overthrow; it is true, many wound him, but no one cuts through him, no, not the devil himself. It is as though one were to say, “having righteous deeds fixed in the breast”; of these it is that Christ saith, “Blessed are they that hunger and thirst after righteousness; for they shall be filled.” ([Matt. v. 6.](#)) Thus is he firm and strong like a breastplate. Such a man will never be put out of temper.

“And having shod your feet with the preparation of the gospel of peace.” It is more uncertain in what sense this was said. What then is its meaning? They are noble greaves, doubtless, with which he invests us. Either then he means this, that we should be prepared for the gospel, and should make use of our feet for this, and should prepare and make ready its way before it;⁴⁹⁰ or if not this, at least that we ourselves should be prepared for our departure. “The preparation,” then, “of the gospel of peace,” is nothing else than a most virtuous life; according to what the Prophet saith. “Thou wilt prepare their heart, thou wilt cause thine ear to hear.” ([Ps. x. 17.](#)) “Of the gospel,” he says, “of peace,” and with reason; for inasmuch as he had made mention of warfare and fighting, he shows us that this conflict with the evil spirits we must needs have: for the gospel is “the gospel of peace”; this war which we have against them, puts an end to another war, that, namely, which is between us

489 [“‘Righteousness’ here is Christian moral rectitude ([Rom. vi. 13.](#)), inasmuch as, justified by faith, we are dead to sin and live in newness of life ([Rom. vi. 4.](#)). As previously the ‘intellectual’ rectitude of the Christian was denoted by ἀλήθεια, so here his ‘moral’ rectitude by δικαιοσύνη.”—Meyer.—G.A.]

490 [“This means ‘readiness,’ the ready mind; not, however, for the proclamation of the gospel, as Chrysostom and others,—since in fact Paul is addressing fellow-Christians, and not fellow-teachers,—but the readiness for the conflict in question which the gospel bestows. And it is the gospel of peace, for the gospel proclaims peace ([Rom. v. 1;](#) [Philip. i. 20.](#)), and thereby produces consecration of courageous ‘readiness’ for the conflict ([Rom. viii. 31, 38, 39.](#)).”—Meyer.—G.A.]

and God; if we are at war with the devil, we are at peace with God. Fear not therefore, beloved; it is a “gospel,” that is, a word of good news; already is the victory won.

“Withal taking up the shield of faith.”

By “faith” in this place, he means, not knowledge, (for that he never would have ranged last,) but that gift by which miracles are wrought.⁴⁹¹ And with reason does he term this “faith” a shield; for as the shield is put before the whole body, as if it were a sort of rampart, just so is this faith; for all things yield to it.

“Wherewith ye shall be able,” saith he, “to quench all the fiery darts of the evil one.”

For this shield nothing shall be able to resist; for hearken to what Christ saith to His disciples, “If ye have faith as a grain of mustard seed, ye shall say unto this mountain, Remove hence to yonder place, and it shall remove.” (Matt. xvii. 20.) But how are we to have this faith? When we have rightly performed all those duties.

“By the darts of the evil one,” he means, both temptations, and vile desires; and “fiery,” he says, for such is the character of these desires. Yet if faith can command the evil spirits, much more can it also the passions of the soul.

“And take the helmet,” he continues, “of salvation,” that is, of your salvation. For he is casing them in armor.

“And the sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God.” He either means the Spirit, or else, “the spiritual sword”: for by this⁴⁹² all things are severed, by this all things are cleft asunder, by this we cut off even the serpent’s head.

Ver. 18, 19, 20. “With all prayer and supplication,” saith he, “praying at all seasons in the Spirit, and watching thereunto in all perseverance and supplication for all the saints; and on my behalf that utterance may be given unto me, in opening my mouth to make known with boldness the mystery of the gospel, for which I am an ambassador in chains, that in it I may speak boldly, as I ought to speak.”

As the word of God has power to do all things, so also has he who has the spiritual gift. “For the word of God,” saith he, “is living, and active and sharper than any two-edged sword.” (Heb. iv. 12.) Now mark the wisdom of this blessed Apostle. He hath armed them with all security. What then is necessary after that? To call upon the King, that He may stretch forth His hand. “With all prayer, and supplication, praying at all seasons in the Spirit”; for it is possible “to pray” not “in the Spirit,” when one “uses vain repetitions” (Matt. vi. 7.); “and watching thereunto,” he adds, that is, keeping sober; for such ought the armed



491 [This interpretation does not suit the context. “Faith is here saving faith, bringing assurance of forgiveness and future blessedness.”—Meyer.—G.A.]

492 [It simply means the sword which “is furnished by the Holy Spirit,” and this sword, as the apostle himself declares, is the word of God, the gospel, which the Holy Spirit brings vividly to the consciousness of the Christian.—Meyer and Ellicott.—G.A.]

warrior, he that stands at the King's side, to be; wakeful and temperate:—"in all perseverance and supplication for all the saints; and on my behalf that utterance may be given unto me in opening my mouth." What sayest thou, blessed Paul? Hast thou, then, need of thy disciples? And well does he say, "in opening my mouth." He did not then study what he used to say, but according to what Christ said, "When they deliver you up, be not anxious how or what ye shall speak: for it shall be given you in that hour what ye shall speak" ([Matt. x. 19.](#)): so truly did he do everything by faith, everything by grace. "With boldness," he proceeds, "to make known the mystery of the Gospel"; that is, that I may answer for myself in its defense, as I ought. And art thou bound in thy chain, and still needest the aid of others? Yea, saith he, for so was Peter also bound in his chain, and yet nevertheless "was prayer made earnestly for him." ([Acts xii. 5.](#)) "For which I am an ambassador in chains, that in it I may speak boldly, as I ought to speak"; that is, that I may answer with confidence, with courage, with great prudence.

Ver. 21. "But that ye also⁴⁹³ may know my affairs, how I do, Tychicus, the beloved brother and faithful minister in the Lord, shall make known to you all things."

As soon as he had mentioned his chains, he leaves something for Tychicus also to relate to them of his own accord. For whatever topics there were of doctrine and of exhortation, all these he explained by his letter: but what were matters of bare recital, these he entrusted to the bearer of the letter. "That ye may know my affairs," that is, may be informed of them. This manifests both the love which he entertained towards them, and their love towards him.

Ver. 22. "Whom I have sent unto you," saith he, "for this very purpose, that ye may know our state, and that he may comfort your hearts."

This language he employs, not without a purpose, but in consequence of what he had been saying previously; "having girded your loins, having on the breastplate," &c., which are a token of a constant and unceasing advance; for hear what the Prophet saith, "Let it be unto him as the raiment wherewith he covereth himself, and for the girdle wherewith he is girded continually" ([Ps. cix. 19.](#)); and the Prophet Isaiah again saith, that God hath "put on righteousness as a breastplate" ([Isa. lix. 17.](#)); by these expressions instructing us that these are things which we must have, not for a short time only, but continually, inasmuch as there is continual need of warfare. "For it is said the righteous are bold as a lion." ([Prov. xxviii. 1.](#)) For he that is armed with such a breastplate, it cannot be that he should fear the array that is against him, but he will leap into the midst of the enemy. And again Isaiah saith, "How beautiful are the feet of him that bringeth good tidings." ([Isa. lii. 7.](#)) Who would not

493 ["Ye also," as well as the Colossians ([Col. iv. 8, 9.](#)). Meyer's Introd. sec. 2. The καί, on supposition of priority of Colossians, admits of an easy and natural explanation.—Ellicott.—G.A.]

run, who would not serve in such a cause; to publish the good tidings of peace, peace between God and man, peace, where men have toiled not, but where God hath wrought all?

But what is the “preparation of the Gospel”?⁴⁹⁴ Let us hearken to what John saith, “Make ye ready the way of the Lord, make His paths straight.” (Matt. iii. 3.) But again there is need also of another “preparation” after baptism, so that we may do nothing unworthy of “peace.” And then, since the feet are usually a token of the way of life, hence he is constantly exhorting in this language, “Look, therefore, carefully how ye walk.” (Eph. v. 15.) On this account, he would say, let us exhibit a practice and example worthy of the Gospel; that is, make our life and conduct pure. The good tidings of peace have been proclaimed to you, give to these good tidings a ready way; since if ye again become enemies, there is no more “preparation of peace.” Be ready, be not backward to embrace this peace. As ye were ready and disposed for peace and faith, so also continue. The shield is that which first receives the assaults of the adversary, and preserves the armor uninjured. So long then as faith be right and the life be right, the armor remains uninjured.

He discourses, however, much concerning faith, but most especially in writing to the Hebrews, as he does also concerning hope. Believe, saith he, in the good things to come, and none of this armor shall be injured. In dangers, in toils, by holding out thy hope and thy faith to protect thee, thou wilt preserve thy armor uninjured. “He that cometh to God must believe that He is, and that He is a rewarder of them that seek after Him.” (Heb. xi. 6.) Faith is a shield; but wherever there are quibbles, and reasonings, and scrutinizings, then is it no longer a shield, but it impedes us. Let this our faith be such as shall cover and screen the whole frame. Let it not then be scanty, so as to leave the feet or any other part exposed, but let the shield be commensurate with the whole body.

“Fiery⁴⁹⁵ darts.” For many doubtful reasonings there are, which set the soul, as it were, on fire, many difficulties, many perplexities, but all of them faith sets entirely at rest; many things does the devil dart in, to inflame our soul and bring us into uncertainty; as, for example, when some persons say, “Is there then a resurrection?” “Is there a judgment?” “Is there a retribution?” “But is there faith?” the apostle would say, “thou shalt with it quench the darts of the devil. Has any base lust assaulted thee? Hold before thee thy faith in the good things to come, and it will not even show itself, yea, it will perish.” “All the darts”; not some quenched, and others not. Harken to what Paul saith, “For I reckon that the sufferings of this present time are not worthy to be compared with the glory that shall be revealed to us-ward.” (Rom. viii. 18.) Seest thou how many darts the righteous quenched in those days?

494 [After having treated this part of the chapter, our author now returns to it, and supplements what he has already said.—G.A.]

495 [“The aim of this predicate is to present in strong colors the hostile and destructive character of the Satanic assaults; but more special explanations of its import are inappropriate.”—Meyer.—G.A.]

Seemeth it not to thee to be “fiery darts,” when the patriarch burned with inward fire, as he was offering up his son? Yea, and other righteous men also have quenched “all his darts.” Whether then they be reasonings that assault us, let us hold out this; or whether they be base desires, let us use this; or whether again labors and distresses, upon this let us repose. Of all the other armor, this is the safeguard; if we have not this, they will be quickly pierced through. “Withal,” saith he, “taking up the shield of faith.” What is the meaning of “withal”? It means both “in truth,” and “in righteousness,” and “in the preparation of the gospel”; that is to say, all these have need of the aid of faith.

And therefore he adds further, “and take the helmet of salvation”; that is to say, finally by this shall ye be able to be in security. To receive the helmet of salvation is to escape the peril. For as the helmet covers the head perfectly in every part, and suffers it not to sustain any injury, but preserves it, so also does faith supply alike the place of a shield, and of a helmet⁴⁹⁶ to preserve us. For if we quench his darts, quickly shall we receive also those saving thoughts that suffer not our governing principle⁴⁹⁷ to sustain any harm; for if these, the thoughts that are adverse to our salvation, are quenched, those which are not so, but which contribute to our salvation, and inspire us with good hopes, will be generated within us, and will rest upon our governing principle, as a helmet does upon the head.

And not only this, but we shall take also “the sword of the Spirit,” and thus not only ward off his missiles, but smite the devil himself. For a soul that does not despair of herself, and is proof against those fiery darts, will stand with all intrepidity to face the enemy, and will cleave open his breastplate with this very sword with which Paul also burst through it, and “brought into captivity his devices” (2 Cor. x. 5.); he will cut off and behead the serpent.

“Which is the word of God.”

By the “word of God” in this place, he means on the one hand the ordinance of God, or the word of command; or on the other that it is in the Name of Christ. For if we keep his commandments, by these we shall kill and slay the dragon himself, “the crooked serpent.” (Isa. xxvii. 1.) And as he said, “Ye shall be able to quench the fiery darts of the evil one”; that he might not puff them up, he shows them, that above all things they stand in need of God; for what does he say?

“With all prayer and supplication,” he says, these things shall be done, and ye shall accomplish all by praying. But when thou drawest near, never ask for thyself only: thus shalt thou have God favorable to thee.

496 [Faith is not the helmet. Chrysostom’s exegesis of the parts of the armor is not clear. Salvation is the helmet; for τοῦ σωτηρίου is a genitive of apposition. Receive the helmet, which is salvation. “This salvation,” says Ellicott, “is not any ideal possession, as Meyer holds. Salvation in Christ forms the subject of faith; in faith it is apprehended, and becomes in a certain sense a present possession.”—G.A.]

497 τὸ ἡγεμονικόν.

“With all prayer and supplication, praying at all seasons in the Spirit, and watching thereunto in all perseverance for all the saints.” Limit it not, I say, to certain times of the day, for hear what he is saying; approach at all times; “pray,” saith he, “without ceasing.” (1 [Thess. v. 17.](#)) Hast thou never heard of that widow, how by her importunity she prevailed? (Luke xviii. 1–7.) Hast thou never heard of that friend, who at midnight shamed his friend into yielding by his perseverance? (Luke xi. 5–8.) Hast thou not heard of the Syrophœnician woman (Mark vii. 25–30.), how by the constancy of her entreaty she called forth the Lord’s compassion? These all of them gained their object by their importunity.

“Praying at all seasons,” saith he, “in the Spirit.”

That is to say, let us seek for the things which are according to God, nothing of this world, nothing pertaining to this life.

Therefore, is there need not only that we “pray without ceasing,” but also, that we should do so “watching;—and watching,” saith he, “thereunto.” Whether he is here speaking of vigils;⁴⁹⁸ or of the wakefulness of the soul, I admit both meanings. Seest thou how that Canaanitish woman watched unto prayer? and though the Lord gave her no answer, nay, even shook her off, and called her a dog, she said, “Yea, Lord: for even the dogs eat of the crumbs which fall from their masters’ table” (Matt. xv. 27.), and desisted not until she obtained her request. How, too, did that widow cry, and persist so long, until she was able to shame into yielding that ruler, that neither feared God, nor regarded man (Luke xviii. 1–7.)? And how, again, did the friend persist, remaining before the door in the dead of night, till he shamed the other into yielding by his importunity, and made him arise. (Luke xi. 5–8.) This is to be watchful.

Wouldest thou understand what watchfulness in prayer is? Go to Hannah, hearken to her very words, “Adonai Eloi Sabaoth.” (1 Sam. i. 11.) Nay, rather, hear what preceded those words; “they all rose up,” says the history, “from the table” (1 Sam. i. 9.), and she, forthwith, did not betake herself to sleep, nor to repose. Whence she appears to me even when she was sitting at the table to have partaken lightly, and not to have been made heavy with viands. Otherwise never could she have shed so many tears; for if we, when we are fasting and foodless, hardly pray thus, or rather never pray thus, much more would not she ever have prayed thus after a meal, unless even at the meal she had been as they that eat not. Let us be ashamed, us that are men, at the example of this woman; let us be ashamed, that are suing and gasping for a kingdom, at her, praying and weeping for a little child. “And she stood,” it says, “before the Lord” (1 Sam. i. 10.); and what are her words? “Adonai, Lord, Eloi Sabaoth!” and this is, being interpreted, “O Lord, the God of Hosts.” Her tears went before her tongue; by these she hoped to prevail with God to bend to her request. Where tears are,

498 παννυχίδας. St. Chrysostom often speaks of vigils, which were Church Services extending past midnight into the morning; vid. Hom. in *Esai.* i. 1, iv. 1, etc.; vid. Bingham, *Antiqu.* xiii. 9, § 4.

there is always affliction also: where affliction is, there is great wisdom and heedfulness. “If thou wilt indeed,” she continues, “look on the affliction of thine handmaid, and wilt give unto thine handmaid a man child, then will I give him unto the Lord all the days of his life.” (1 Sam. i. 11.) She said not, “for one year,” or, “for two,” as we do;—nor said she, “if thou wilt give me a child, I will give thee money”; but, “I give back to Thee the very gift itself entire, my first-born, the son of my prayer.” Truly here was a daughter of Abraham. He gave when it was demanded of him. She offers even before it is demanded.

But observe even after this her deep reverence. “Only her lips moved, but her voice,” it saith, “was not heard.” (1 Sam. i. 13.) And thus does he who would gain his request draw nigh unto God; not consulting his ease, nor gaping, nor lounging, nor scratching his head, nor with utter listlessness. What, was not God able to grant, even without any prayer at all? What, did He not know the woman’s desire even before she asked? And yet had He granted it before she asked, then the woman’s earnestness would not have been shown, her virtue would not have been made manifest, she would not have gained so great a reward. So that the delay is not the result of envy or of witchcraft, but of providential kindness. When therefore ye hear the Scripture saying, that “the Lord had shut up her womb” (ver. 5, 6.), and that, “her rival provoked her sore”; consider that it is His intention to prove the woman’s seriousness.⁴⁹⁹ For, mark, she had a husband devoted to her, for he said (ver. 8.), “Am I not better to thee than ten sons?” “And her rival,” it saith, “provoked her sore,” that is, reproached her, insulted over her. And yet did she never once retaliate, nor utter imprecation against her, nor say, “Avenge me, for my rival reviles me.” The other had children, but this woman had her husband’s love to make amends. With this at least he even consoled her, saying, “Am not I better to thee than ten sons?”

But let us look, again, at the deep wisdom of this woman. “And Eli,” it says, “thought she had been drunken.” (Ver. 13.) Yet observe what she says to him also, “Nay, count not thine handmaid for a daughter of Belial, for out of the abundance of my complaint and my provocation have I spoken hitherto.” (Ver. 16.) Here is truly the proof of a contrite heart, when we are not angry with those that revile us, when we are not indignant against them, when we reply but in self-defense. Nothing renders the heart so wise as affliction; nothing is there so sweet as “godly mourning.” (2 Cor. vii. 10.) “Out of the abundance,” saith she, “of my complaint and my provocation have I spoken hitherto.” Her let us imitate, one and all. Harken, ye that are barren, hearken, ye that desire children, hearken, both husbands and wives; yes, for husbands, too, used oftentimes to contribute their part; for hear what the Scripture saith, “And Isaac intreated the Lord for Rebekah his wife, because she was barren.” (Gen. xxv. 21.) For prayer is able to accomplish great things.

499 φιλοσοφίαν.

“With all prayer and supplication,” saith he, “for all the saints, and for me,” placing himself last. What doest thou, O blessed Paul, in thus placing thyself last? Yea, saith he, “that utterance may be given unto me, in opening my mouth, to make known with boldness the mystery of the gospel, for which I am an ambassador in chains.” And where art thou an ambassador? “To mankind,” saith he. Oh! amazing lovingkindness of God! He sent from Heaven in His own Name ambassadors for peace, and lo, men took them, and bound them, and revered not so much as the law of nations, that an ambassador never suffers any hurt. “But, however, I am an ambassador in bonds. The chain lies like a bridle upon me, restraining my boldness, but your prayer shall open my mouth” in order that I may speak all things I was sent to speak.

“But that ye also may know my affairs, how I do, Tychicus, the beloved brother, and faithful minister in the Lord, shall make known to you all things.” If “faithful,” he will tell no falsehood, he will in everything speak the truth:—“whom I have sent unto you for this very purpose, that ye might know our state, and that he may comfort your hearts.” Amazing, transcendent affection! “that it may not be in the power,” he means, “of them that would, to affright you.” For it is probable that they were in tribulation; for the expression, “may comfort your hearts,” intimates as much; that is, “may not suffer you to sink under it.”

Ver. 23. “Peace be to the brethren and love with faith from God the Father, and the Lord Jesus Christ.”

He invokes upon them, “peace and love with faith.” He saith well: for he would not that they should have regard to love by itself, and mingle themselves with those of a different faith. Either he means this, or that above described, namely, that they should have faith also, so as to have a cheerful confidence of the good things to come. The “peace” which is towards God, and the “love.” And if there be peace, there will also be love; if love, there will be peace also. “With faith,” because without faith, love amounts to nothing; or rather love could not exist at all without it.

Ver. 24. “Grace be with all them that love our Lord Jesus Christ in uncorruptness.”

Why does he separate the two here, placing “peace” by itself, and “grace” by itself?

“In uncorruptness,” he concludes.

What is this, “in uncorruptness”? It either means, “in purity”; or else, “for the sake of those things which are incorruptible,” as, for example, not in riches, nor in glory, but in those treasures which are incorruptible. The “in” means, “through.” “Through uncorruptness,” that is, “through virtue.”⁵⁰⁰ Because all sin is corruption. And in the same way as we say a virgin is corrupted, so also do we speak of the soul. Hence Paul says, “Lest by any means your minds should be corrupted.” (2 Cor. xi. 3.) And again elsewhere, he says, “In

500 [“ἐν here expresses the manner, and the expression means those ‘who love our Lord in imperishableness,’ i.e. ‘so that their love does not pass away.’ Comp. Tit. iii. 15.”—Meyer.—G.A.]

doctrine, showing uncorruptness.”⁵⁰¹ For what, tell me, is corruption of the body? Is it not the dissolution of the whole frame, and of its union? This then is what takes place also in the soul when sin enters. The beauty of the soul is temperance, and righteousness; the health of the soul is courage, and prudence; for the base man is hideous in our eyes, so is the covetous, so is the man who gives himself up to evil practices, and so the coward and unmanly man is sick, and the foolish man is out of health. Now that sins work corruption, is evident from this, that they render men base, and weak, and cause them to be sick and diseased. Nay, and when we say that a virgin is corrupted, we say so, strictly speaking, on this account also, not only because the body is defiled, but because of the transgression. For the mere act is natural; and if in that consisted the “corruption,” then were marriage corruption. Hence is it not the act that is corruption, but the sin, for it dishonors and puts her to shame. And again, what would be corruption in the case of a house? Its dissolution. And so, universally, corruption is a change which takes place for the worse, a change into another state, to the utter extinction of the former one. For hear what the Scripture saith, “All flesh had corrupted his way” ([Gen. vi. 12.](#)); and again, “In intolerable corruption”⁵⁰² ([Ex. xviii. 18.](#)); and again, “Men corrupted in mind.” ([2 Tim. iii. 8.](#)) Our body is corruptible, but our soul is incorruptible. Oh then, let us not make that corruptible also. This, the corruption of the body, was the work of former sin;⁵⁰³ but sin which is after the Laver, has the power also to render the soul corruptible, and to make it an easy prey to “the worm that dieth not.” For never had that worm touched it, had it not found the soul corruptible. The worm touches not adamant, and even if he touches it, he can do it no harm. Oh then, corrupt not the soul; for that which is corrupted is full of foul stench; for hearken to the Prophet who saith, “My wounds stink and are corrupt because of my foolishness.” ([Ps. xxxviii. 5.](#))

However, “this corruption” of the body “shall put on incorruption” ([1 Cor. xv. 53.](#)), but the other of the soul, never; for where incorruption is, there is no⁵⁰⁴ corruption. Thus is it a corruption which is incorruptible, which hath no end, a deathless death; which would have been, had the body remained deathless. Now if we shall depart into the next world having not corruption, we have that corruption incorruptible and endless; for to be ever burning, and not burnt up, ever wasted by the worm, is corruption incorruptible; like as



501 [[Tit. ii. 7.](#), where ἀφθορία is used, which, according to Meyer, *does* mean uncorruptedness, while ἀφθαρσία in our passage means imperishableness.—G.A.]

502 [φθορᾶ καταφθάρῃσῃ ἀνυπομονήτῳ for Hebrew ~~XXXXXXXXXX~~, Rev. Ver., “Thou wilt surely wear away.”—G.A.]

503 [Comp. [Rom. v. 12.](#): “As through one man sin entered into the world, and death by sin; and so death passed unto all men.”—G.A.]

504 [Field’s text has ἔνθα γὰρ ἀφθαρσία, φθορά ἐστίν, which seems a contradiction, whereas Savile’s text, with four mss., has οὐκ ἔστιν.—G.A.]

was the case with the blessed Job. He was corrupted, and died not, and that through a lengthened period, and “wasted continually, scraping the clods of dust from his sore.”⁵⁰⁵ Some such torment as this shall it undergo, when the worms surround and devour it, not for two years nor for three, nor for ten, nor for ten thousand, but for years without end; for “their worm,” saith He, “dieth not.”

Moral. Let us take the alarm then, I entreat you, let us dread the words, that we meet not with the realities. Covetousness is corruption, corruption more dangerous than any other, and leading on to idolatry. Let us shun the corruption, let us choose the incorruption. Hast thou in covetousness overreached and defrauded some one? The fruits of thy covetousness perish, but the covetousness remains; a corruption which is the foundation of incorruptible corruption. The enjoyment indeed passes away, but the sin remains imperishable. A fearful evil is it for us not to strip ourselves of everything in this present world; a great calamity to depart into the next with loads of sins about us. “For in Sheol,” it is said “who shall give Thee thanks?” (Ps. vi. 5.) There is the place of judgment; then is there no longer season for repentance. How many things did the rich man bewail then? (Luke xvi. 23.) And yet it availed him nothing. How many things did they say who had neglected to feed Christ? (Matt. xxv. 41.) Yet were they led away notwithstanding into the everlasting fire. How many things had they then to say: “that had wrought iniquity”; “Lord, did we not prophesy by Thy Name, and by Thy Name cast out devils?” And yet notwithstanding, they were not owned. All these things therefore will take place then; but it will be of no avail, if they be not done now. Let us fear then, lest ever we should have to say then, “Lord, when saw we Thee an hungered, and fed Thee not?” (Matt. xxv. 44.) Let us feed Him now, not one day, nor two, nor three days. “For let not mercy and truth,” saith the Wise Man, “forsake thee.” (Prov. iii. 3.) He saith not “do it once, nor twice.” The Virgins, we know, had oil, but not enough to last out. (Matt. xxv. 3, 8.) And thus we need much oil, and thus should we be “like a green olive tree in the house of God.” (Ps. liii. 8.) Let us reflect then how many burdens of sins each of us has about him, and let us make our acts of mercy counterbalance them; nay rather, far exceed them, that not only the sins may be quenched, but that the acts of righteousness may be also accounted unto us for righteousness. For if the good deeds be not so many in number as to put aside the crimes laid against us, and out of the remainder to be counted unto us for righteousness,⁵⁰⁶ then shall no one rescue us from that punishment, from which God

505 [Job vii. 5, Sept.: φύρεται δέ μου τὸ σῶμα ἐν σαπρία σκολήκων, τήκω δὲ βῶλακας γῆς ἀπὸ ἰχῶρος ξύων: “My flesh is mingled with the filth of worms, and I pine away, scraping clods (or crusts) of earth from my sore” (discharge, matter, pus). The Rev. Ver. has: “My flesh is clothed with worms and clods of dust.” So nearly Zöckler in Lange: “My flesh is clothed with worms and crusts of earth.”—G.A.]

506 [Such passages as this in the Fathers are used by Romanists and Tractarians for establishing their views, and it is no wonder the Tractarians were zealous in giving the Fathers to the English in English. But, as Jacob says (*Eccl. Polity of N.T.*, pp. 28 and 29), “Our appeal is from the Nicene Fathers to the Apostles of Christ; from

grant that we may be all delivered, through the grace and lovingkindness of our Lord Jesus Christ, with whom to the Father, &c.

patristic literature to the New Testament; for it is not being *near* to the truth that makes men good and wise," but having the truth itself.—G.A.]