



Watch your heart during all your life

Watch your heart during all your life—examine it, listen to it, and see what prevents its union with the most blessed Lord. Let this be for you the science of all sciences, and with God’s help you will easily observe what estranges you from God, and what draws you towards Him and unites you to Him. It is the evil spirit more than anything else that stands between our hearts and God; he estranges God from us by various passions, or by the desires of the flesh, by the desires of the eyes, and by worldly pride.

Excerpt taken from the book: My Life in Christ, by: Saint John of Kronstadt

But he did these things not only to instruct us, but also to bring down the

haughtiness of the Jews. For since they, negligent about virtue in their own souls, were parading the name of Abraham, thinking they had for a plea their forefathers' virtue; he shows from the very beginning that it is not in these things men ought to glory, but in their own good deeds.

Besides this, he is establishing another point also, to show that all are under sin, even their forefathers themselves. At least their patriarch and namesake is shown to have committed no small sin, for Tamar stands against him, to accuse his whoredom. And David too had Solomon by the wife whom he corrupted. But if by the great ones the law was not fulfilled, much more by the less. And if it was not fulfilled, all have sinned, and Christ's coming has become necessary.

For this cause he made mention also of the twelve patriarchs, by this again bringing down their pride at the noble birth of their fathers. Because many of these also were born of women that were slaves; but nevertheless the difference of the parents did not make a difference in the children. For all were equally both patriarchs and heads of tribes. For this is the precedence of the Church, this the prerogative of the nobility that is among us, taking its type from the beginning. So that whether thou be bond or free, you have from thence nothing more nor less; **but the question is all about one thing only, namely, the mind, and the disposition of the soul.**

St John Chrysostom

And when he had called all the people unto him, he said unto them, Hearken unto me every one of you, and understand: There is nothing from without a man, that entering into him can defile him: but the things which come out of him, those are they that defile the man. If any man have ears to hear, let him hear. And when he was entered into the house from the people, his disciples asked him concerning the parable. And he saith unto them, Are ye so without understanding also? Do ye not perceive, that whatsoever thing from without entereth into the man, it cannot defile him; Because it entereth not into his heart, but into the belly, and goeth out into the draught, purging all meats? And he said, That which cometh out of the man, that defileth the man. For from within, out of the heart of men, proceed evil thoughts, adulteries, fornications, murders, Thefts, covetousness, wickedness, deceit, lasciviousness, an evil eye, blasphemy, pride, foolishness: All these evil things come from within, and defile the man.

Marc 7: 14-23

And GOD saw that the wickedness of man was great in the earth, and that every imagination of the thoughts of his heart was only evil continually. And it repented the LORD that he had made man on the earth, and it grieved him at his heart.

Gen 6: 5-6

The heart is deceitful above all things, and desperately wicked: who can know it? I the LORD search the heart, I try the reins, even to give every man according to his ways, and according to the fruit of his doings.

Jer 17: 9-19

Blessed are the pure in heart: for they shall see God.

Mathew 5: 8

The Epistle of Barnabas

Chapter 18. Second part of the epistle. The two ways

But let us now pass to another sort of knowledge and doctrine. There are two ways of doctrine and authority, the one of light, and the other of darkness. But there is a great difference between these two ways. For over one are stationed the light-bringing angels of God, but over the other the angels 2 Corinthians 12:7 of Satan. And He indeed (i.e., God) is Lord for ever and ever, but he (i.e., Satan) is prince of the time of iniquity.

Chapter 19. The way of light

The way of light, then, is as follows. If any one desires to travel to the appointed place, he must be zealous in his works. The knowledge, therefore, which is given to us for the purpose of walking in this way, is the following. You shall love Him that created you: you shall glorify Him that redeemed you from death. You shall be simple in heart, and rich in spirit. You shall not join yourself to those who walk in the way of death. You shall hate doing what is displeasing to God: you shall hate all hypocrisy. You shall not forsake the commandments of the Lord. You shall not exalt yourself, but shall be of a lowly mind. You shall not take glory to yourself. You shall not take evil counsel against your neighbour. You shall not allow over-boldness to enter into your soul. You shall not commit fornication: you shall not commit adultery: you shall

not be a corrupter of youth. You shall not let the word of God issue from your lips with any kind of impurity. You shall not accept persons when you reprove any one for transgression. You shall be meek: you shall be peaceable. You shall tremble at the words which you hear. You shall not be mindful of evil against your brother. You shall not be of doubtful mind James 1:8 as to whether a thing shall be or not. You shall not take the name of the Lord in vain. You shall love your neighbour more than your own soul. You shall not slay the child by procuring abortion; nor, again, shall you destroy it after it is born. You shall not withdraw your hand from your son, or from your daughter, but from their infancy you shall teach them the fear of the Lord. You shall not covet what is your neighbour's, nor shall you be avaricious. You shall not be joined in soul with the haughty, but you shall be reckoned with the righteous and lowly. Receive as good things the trials which come upon you. You shall not be of double mind or of double tongue, for a double tongue is a snare of death. You shall be subject to the Lord, and to [other] masters as the image of God, with modesty and fear. You shall not issue orders with bitterness to your maidservant or your man-servant, who trust in the same [God], lest you should not reverence that God who is above both; for He came to call men not according to their outward appearance, Ephesians 6:9 but according as the Spirit had prepared them. Romans 8:29-30 You shall communicate in all things with your neighbour; you shall not call things your own; for if you are partakers in common of things which are incorruptible, how much more [should you be] of those things which are corruptible! You shall not be hasty with your tongue, for the mouth is a snare of death. As far as possible, you shall be pure in your soul. Do not be ready to stretch forth your hands to take, while you contract them to give. You shall love, as the apple of your eye, every one that speaks to you the word of the Lord. You shall remember the day of judgment, night and day. You shall seek out every day the faces of the saints, either by word examining them, and going to exhort them, and meditating how to save a soul by the word, or by your hands you shall labour for the redemption of your sins. You shall not hesitate to give, nor murmur when you give. Give to every one that asks you, and you shall know who is the good Recompenser of the reward. You shall preserve what you have received [in charge], neither adding to it nor taking from it. To the last you shall hate the wicked [one]. You shall judge righteously. You shall not make a schism, but you shall pacify those that contend by bringing them together. You shall confess your sins. You shall not go to prayer with an evil conscience. This is the way of light.

Chapter 20. The way of darkness

But the way of darkness is crooked, and full of cursing; for it is the way of eternal death with punishment, in which way are the things that destroy the

soul, viz., idolatry, over-confidence, the arrogance of power, hypocrisy, double-heartedness, adultery, murder, rapine, haughtiness, transgression, deceit, malice, self-sufficiency, poisoning, magic, avarice, want of the fear of God. [In this way, too,] are those who persecute the good, those who hate truth, those who love falsehood, those who know not the reward of righteousness, those who cleave not to that which is good, those who attend not with just judgment to the widow and orphan, those who watch not to the fear of God, [but incline] to wickedness, from whom meekness and patience are far off; persons who love vanity, follow after a reward, pity not the needy, labour not in aid of him who is overcome with toil; who are prone to evil-speaking, who know not Him that made them, who are murderers of children, destroyers of the workmanship of God; who turn away him that is in want, who oppress the afflicted, who are advocates of the rich, who are unjust judges of the poor, and who are in every respect transgressors.

Chapter 21. Conclusion

It is well, therefore, that he who has learned the judgments of the Lord, as many as have been written, should walk in them. For he who keeps these shall be glorified in the kingdom of God; but he who chooses other things shall be destroyed with his works. On this account there will be a resurrection, on this account a retribution. I beseech you who are superiors, if you will receive any counsel of my good-will, have among yourselves those to whom you may show kindness: do not forsake them. For the day is at hand on which all things shall perish with the evil [one]. The Lord is near, and His reward. Again, and yet again, I beseech you: be good lawgivers to one another; continue faithful counsellors of one another; take away from among you all hypocrisy. And may God, who rules over all the world, give to you wisdom, intelligence, understanding, knowledge of His judgments, with patience. And be taught of God, inquiring diligently what the Lord asks from you; and do it that you maybe safe in the day of judgment. And if you have any remembrance of what is good, be mindful of me, meditating on these things, in order that both my desire and watchfulness may result in some good. I beseech you, entreating this as a favour. While yet you are in this fair vessel, do not fail in any one of those things, but unceasingly seek after them, and fulfil every commandment; for these things are worthy. Wherefore I have been the more earnest to write to you, as my ability served, that I might cheer you. Farewell, you children of love and peace. The Lord of glory and of all grace be with your spirit. Amen.

Love

St John Chrysostom

Homily 33 on First Corinthians

1 Corinthians 13:4-5

Love suffers long, and is kind; love envies not; love vaunts not itself, is not puffed up.

Thus, whereas he had showed, that both faith and knowledge and prophecy and tongues and gifts and healing and a perfect life and martyrdom, if love be absent, are no great advantage; of necessity he next makes an outline of its matchless beauty, adorning its image with the parts of virtue as with a sort of colors, and putting together all its members with exactness. But do not thou hastily pass by, beloved, the things spoken, but examine each one of them with much care, that you may know both the treasure which is in the thing and the art of the painter. Consider, for example, from what point he at once began, and what he set first, as the cause of all its excellence. And what is this? Long-suffering. This is the root of all self-denial. Wherefore also a certain wise man said, A man that is long-suffering is of great understanding; but he that is hasty of spirit is mightily foolish.

And comparing it too with a strong city, he said that it is more secure than that. For it is both an invincible weapon and a sort of impregnable tower, easily beating off all annoyances. And as a spark falling into the deep does it no injury, but is itself easily quenched: so upon a long-suffering soul whatever unexpected thing falls, this indeed speedily vanishes, but the soul it disturbs not: for of a truth there is nothing so impenetrable as long-suffering. You may talk of armies, money, horses, walls, arms, or any thing else whatsoever; you will name nothing like long-suffering. For he that is encompassed with those, oftentimes, being overcome by anger, is upset like a worthless child, and fills all with confusion and tempest: but this man, settled as it were in a harbor, enjoys a profound calm. Though thou surround him with loss, you have not moved the rock; though thou bring insult upon him, you have not shaken the tower: and though thou bruise him with stripes, you have not wounded the adamant.

Yea, and therefore is he called long-suffering, because he has a kind of long and great soul. For that which is long is also called great. But this excellence is born of love, both to them who possess and to them who enjoy it contributing no small advantage. For tell me not of those abandoned wretches, who, doing evil

and suffering none, become worse: since here, not from his long-suffering, but from those who abuse it, this result arises. Tell me not therefore of these, but of those gentler persons, who gain great benefit therefrom. For when, having done ill, they suffer none, admiring the meekness of the sufferer, they reap thereby a very great lesson of self command.

But Paul does not stop here, but adds also the other high achievements of love, saying, is kind. For since there are some who practise their long-suffering with a view not to their own self-denial, but to the punishment of those who have provoked them, to make them burst with wrath; he says that neither has charity this defect. Wherefore also he added, is kind. For not at all with a view to light up the fire, in those who are inflamed by anger, do they deal more gently with them, but in order to appease and extinguish it: and not only by enduring nobly, but also by soothing and comforting, do they cure the sore and heal the wound of passion.

Envy not. For it is possible for one to be both long-suffering and envious, and thereby that excellency is spoiled. But love avoids this also.

Vaunts not itself; i.e., is not rash. For it renders him who loves both considerate, and grave, and steadfast. In truth, one mark of those who love unlawfully is a defect in this point. Whereas he to whom this love is known, is of all men the most entirely freed from these evils. For when there is no anger within, both rashness and insolence are clean taken away. Love, like some excellent husbandman, taking her seat inwardly in the soul and not suffering any of these thorns to spring up.

Is not puffed up. For so we see many who think highly of themselves on the score of these very excellencies; for example, on not being envious, nor grudging, nor mean-spirited, nor rash: these evils being incidental not to wealth and poverty only, but even to things naturally good. But love perfectly purges out all. And consider: he that is long-suffering is not of course also kind. But if he be not kind, the thing becomes a vice, and he is in danger of falling into malice. Therefore she supplies a medicine, I mean kindness, and preserves the virtue pure. Again, the kind person often becomes over-complaisant; but this also she corrects. For love, says he, vaunts not itself, is not puffed up: the kind and long-suffering is often ostentatious; but she takes away this vice also.

And see how she adorns her not only from what she has, but also from what she has not. For he says that she both brings in virtue, and extirpates vice, nay rather she suffers it not to spring up at all. Thus he said not, She envies, indeed, but overcomes envy; nor, is arrogant, but chastises that passion; but, envies not, vaunts not itself, is not puffed up; which truly is most to be admired, that even without toil she accomplishes her good things, and without war and battle-array her trophy is set up: she not permitting him that possesses her to toil and so to

attain the crown, but without labor conveying to him her prize. For where there is not passion to contend against sober reason, what labor can there be?

2. Does not behave itself unseemly. Nay, why, says he, do I say, she 'is not puffed up,' when she is so far from that feeling, that in suffering the most shameful things for him whom she loves, she does not even count the thing an unseemliness? Again, he did not say, she suffers unseemliness but bears the shame nobly, but, she does not even entertain any sense at all of the shame. For if the lovers of money endure all manner of reproaches for the sake of that sordid traffic of theirs, and far from hiding their faces, do even exult in it: much more he that has this praiseworthy love will refuse nothing whatsoever for the safety's sake of those whom he loves: nay, nor will any thing that he can suffer shame him.

And that we may not fetch our example from any thing base, let us examine this same statement in its application to Christ, and then we shall see the force of what has been said. For our Lord Jesus Christ was both spit upon and beaten with rods by pitiful slaves; and not only did He not count it an unseemliness, but He even exulted and called the thing glory; and bringing in a robber and murderer with Himself before the rest into paradise, and discoursing with a harlot, and this when the standers-by all accused Him, He counted not the thing to be disgraceful, but both allowed her to kiss His feet, and to bedew His body with her tears, and to wipe them away with her hair, and this amid a company of spectators who were foes and enemies; for love does nothing unseemly.

Therefore also fathers, though they be the first of philosophers and orators, are not ashamed to lisp with their children; and none of those who see them find fault with them, but the thing is esteemed so good and right as to be even worthy of prayer. And again, should they become vicious, the parents keep on correcting, caring for them, abridging the reproaches they incur, and are not ashamed. For love does nothing unseemly, but as it were with certain golden wings covers up all the offenses of the beloved.

Thus also Jonathan loved David; and hearing his father say, 1 Samuel 20:30 Thou son of damsels that have run away from their homes, thou womanly bred, he was not ashamed, though the words be full of great reproach. For what he means is this: Thou son of mean harlots who are mad after men, who run after the passers-by, thou unnerved and effeminate wretch, who hast nothing of a man, but livest to the shame of yourself and the mother who bare you. What then? Did he grieve at these things, and hide his face, and turn away from his beloved? Nay, quite the contrary; he displayed his fondness as an ornament. And yet the one was at that time a king, and a king's son, even Jonathan; the other a fugitive and a wanderer, I mean, David. But not even thus was he ashamed of his friendship. For love does not behave itself unseemly. Yea, this is

its wonderful quality that not only it suffers not the injured to grieve and feel galled, but even disposes him to rejoice. Accordingly, he too, of whom we are speaking, after all these things, just as though he had a crown put on him, went away and fell on David's neck. For love knows not what sort of thing shame may be. Therefore it glories in those things for which another hides his face. Since the shame is, not to know how to love; not, when you love, to incur danger and endure all for the beloved.

But when I say, all, do not suppose I mean things injurious also; for example, assisting a youth in a love affair, or whatsoever hurtful thing any one may beseech another to do for him. For such a person does not love, and this I showed you lately from the Egyptian woman: since in truth he only is the lover who seeks what is profitable to the beloved: so that if any pursue not this, even what is right and good, though he make ten thousand professions of love, he is more hostile than any enemies.

So also Rebecca aforetime, because she exceedingly clung to her son, both perpetrated a theft, and was not ashamed of detection, neither was she afraid, though the risk was no common one; but even when her son raised scruples to her, upon me be your curse, my son, she said. Do you see even in a woman the soul of the Apostle how, even as Paul chose, (if one may compare a small thing with a great,) to be anathema for the Jews' sake, Romans 9:3 so also she, that her son might be blessed, chose to be no less than accursed. And the good things she gave up to him, for she was not, it seems, to be blessed with him, but the evils she was prepared to endure herself alone: nevertheless, she rejoiced, and hastened, and this where so great a danger lay before her, and she was grieved at the delay of the business: for she feared lest Esau might anticipate them and render her wisdom vain. Wherefore also she cuts short the conversation and urges on the young man, and just permitting him to answer what had been said, states a reason sufficient to persuade him. For she said not, you say these things without reason, and in vain you fear, your father having grown old and being deprived of clearness of sight: but what? upon me be your curse, my son. Only do thou not mar the plot, nor lose the object of our chase, nor give up the treasure.

And this very Jacob, served he not for wages with his kinsmen twice seven years? Was he not together with the bondage subject to mockery in respect of that trick? What then? Did he feel the mockery? Did he count it behaving himself unseemly, that being a freeman, and free born, and well brought up, he endured slaves' treatment among his own kinsmen: a thing which is wont to be most vexing, when one receives opprobrious treatment from one's friends? In no wise. And the cause was his love, which made the time, though long, appear short. For they were, says he, Genesis 29:20 in his sight as a few days. So far was he from being galled and blushing for this his bondage. Justly then said the

blessed Paul, Love does not behave itself unseemly.

3. 1. Seeks not its own, is not provoked.

Thus having said, does not behave itself unseemly, he shows also the temper of mind, on account of which she does not behave herself unseemly. And what is that temper? That she seeks not her own. For the beloved she esteems to be all, and then only behaves herself unseemly, when she cannot free him from such unseemliness; so that if it be possible by her own unseemliness to benefit her beloved, she does not so much as count the thing unseemliness; for the other party thereafter is yourself, when you love : since this is friendship, that the lover and the beloved should no longer be two persons divided, but in a manner one single person; a thing which no how takes place except from love. Seek not therefore your own, that you may find your own. For he that seeks his own, finds not his own. Wherefore also Paul said, Let no man seek his own, but each his neighbor's good. 1 Corinthians 10:24 For your own profit lies in the profit of your neighbor, and his in yours. As therefore one that had his own gold buried in the house of his neighbor, should he refuse to go and there seek and dig it up, will never seek it; so likewise here, he that will not seek his own profit in the advantage of his neighbor, will not attain unto the crowns due to this: God Himself having therefore so disposed of it, in order that we should be mutually bound together: and even as one awakening a slumbering child to follow his brother, when he is of himself unwilling, places in the brother's hand that which he desires and longs for, that through desire of obtaining it he may pursue after him that holds it, and accordingly so it takes place: thus also here, each man's own profit has he given to his neighbor, that hence we may run after one another, and not be torn asunder.

And if you will, see this also in our case who address you. For my profit depends on you, and your advantage on me. Thus, on the one hand it profits you to be taught the things that please God, but with this have I been entrusted, that you might receive it from me, and therefore might be compelled to run unto me; and on the other hand it profits me that you should be made better: for the reward which I shall receive for this will be great; but this again lies in you; and therefore am I compelled to follow after you that you may be better, and that I may receive my profit from you. Wherefore also Paul says, For what is my hope? Are not even ye? And again, My hope, and my joy, and the crown of my rejoicing. 1 Thessalonians 2:19 So that the joy of Paul was the disciples, and his joy they had. Therefore he even wept when he saw them perishing.

Again their profit depended on Paul: wherefore he said, For the hope of Israel I am bound with this chain. Acts 28:20 And again, These things I endure for the elect's sakes that they may obtain eternal life. 2 Timothy 2:10 And this one may see in worldly things. For the wife, says he, has not power over her own body,

nor yet the husband; but the wife over the husband's, and the husband over the wife's. 1 Corinthians 7:4 So likewise we, when we wish to bind any together, do this. We leave neither of them in his own power, but extending a chain between them, we cause the one to be holden of the other, and the other of the one. Will you also see this in the case of governors? He that judges sits not in judgment for himself, but seeking the profit of his neighbor. The governed on the other hand, seek the profit of the governor by their attendance, by their ministry, by all the other things. Soldiers take up their arms for us, for on our account they peril themselves. We for them are in straits; for from us are their supplies.

But if you say, each one does this seeking his own, this also say I, but I add, that by the good of another one's own is won. Thus both the soldier, unless he fight for them that support him, has none that ministers to him for this end: and this same on the other hand, unless he nourish the soldier, has none to arm himself in his behalf.

4. Do you see love, how it is everywhere extended and manages all things? But be not weary, until thou have thoroughly acquainted yourself with this golden chain. For having said, seeks not her own, he mentions again the good things produced by this. And what are these?

Is not easily provoked, thinks no evil. See love again not only subduing vice, but not even suffering it to arise at all. For he said not, though provoked, she overcomes, but, is not provoked. And he said not, works no evil, but, not even thinks; i.e., so far from contriving any evil, she does not even suspect it of the beloved. How then could she work any, or how be provoked? Who does not even endure to admit an evil surmise; whence is the fountain of wrath.

1 Corinthians 13:6-7

Rejoices not in unrighteousness: i.e., does not feel pleasure over those that suffer ill: and not this only, but also, what is much greater, rejoices with the truth. She feels pleasure, says he, with them that are well spoken of, as Paul says, Rejoice with them that rejoice, and weep with them that weep. Romans 12:15

Hence, she envies not, hence she is not puffed up: since in fact she accounts the good things of others her own.

Do you see how by degrees love makes her nursling an angel? For when he is void of anger, and pure from envy, and free from every tyrannical passion, consider that even from the nature of man he is delivered from henceforth, and has arrived at the very serenity of angels.

Nevertheless, he is not content with these, but has something even more than these to say: according to his plan of stating the stronger points later. Wherefore

he says, bears all things. From her long-suffering, from her goodness; whether they be burdensome, or grievous, or insults, or stripes, or death, or whatsoever else. And this again one may perceive from the case of blessed David. For what could be more intolerable than to see a son rising up against him, and aiming at the usurpation, and thirsting for a father's blood? Yet this did that blessed one endure, nor even so could he bear to throw out one bitter expression against the parricide; but even when he left all the rest to his captains, gave a strong injunction respecting his safety. For strong was the foundation of his love. Wherefore also it bears all things.

Now its power the Apostle here intimates, but its goodness, by what follows. For, it hopes all things, says he, believes all things, endures all things. What is, hopes all things? It does not despair, says he, of the beloved, but even though he be worthless, it continues to correct, to provide, to care for him.

Believes all things. For it does not merely hope, says he, but also believes from its great affection. And even if these good things should not turn out according to its hope, but the other person should prove yet more intolerable, it bears even these. For, says he, it endures all things.

1 Corinthians 13:8

5. Love never fails.

Do you see when he put the crown on the arch, and what of all things is peculiar to this gift? For what is, fails not? it is not severed, is not dissolved by endurance. For it puts up with everything: since happen what will, he that loves never can hate. This then is the greatest of its excellencies.

Such a person was Paul. Wherefore also he said, If by any means I may provoke to emulation them which are my flesh; Romans 11:14 and he continued hoping. And to Timothy he gave a charge, saying, And the Lord's servant must not strive, but be gentle towards all...in meekness correcting those that oppose themselves, if God perhaps may give them the knowledge of the truth. 2 Timothy 2:24-25

What then, says one, if they be enemies and heathens, must one hate them? One must hate, not them but their doctrine: not the man, but the wicked conduct, the corrupt mind. For the man is God's work, but the deceit is the devil's work. Do thou not therefore confound the things of God and the things of the devil. Since the Jews were both blasphemers, and persecutors, and injurious, and spoke ten thousand evil things of Christ. Did Paul then hate them, he who of all men most loved Christ? In no wise, but he both loved them, and did everything for their sakes: and at one time he says, My heart's desire and my supplication to God is for them that they may be saved: Romans 10:1; 9:3 and at another, I could wish that myself were anathema from Christ for their sakes. Thus also Ezekiel seeing

them slain says, Alas, O Lord, dost Thou blot out the remnant of Israel? Ezekiel 9:8 And Moses, If You will forgive their sin, forgive. Exodus 32:32

Why then says David, Do not I hate them, O Lord, that hate You, and against Your enemies did I not pine away? I hate them with perfect hatred. Psalm 139:21-22

Now, in the first place, not all things spoken in the Psalms by David, are spoken in the person of David. For it is he himself who says, I have dwelt in the tents of Kedar; Psalm 120:5 and, By the waters of Babylon, there we sat down and wept: Psalm 137:1 yet he neither saw Babylon, nor the tents of Kedar.

But besides this, we require now a completer self-command. Wherefore also when the disciples besought that fire might come down, even as in the case of Elias, You know not, says Christ, what manner of spirit you are of. Luke 9:55 For at that time not the ungodliness only, but also the ungodly themselves, they were commanded to hate, in order that their friendship might not prove an occasion of transgression unto them. Therefore he severed their connections, both by blood and marriage, and on every side he fenced them off.

But now because he has brought us to a more entire self-command and set us on high above that mischief, he bids us rather admit and soothe them. For we get no harm from them, but they get good by us. What then does he say? We must not hate, but pity. Since if you shall hate, how will you easily convert him that is in error? How will you pray for the unbeliever? For that one ought to pray, hear what Paul says: I exhort therefore, first of all, that supplications, prayer, intercessions, thanksgivings be made for all men. 1 Timothy 2:1 But that all were not then believers, is, I suppose, evident unto every one. And again, for kings and all that are in high place. But that these were ungodly and transgressors, this also is equally manifest. Further, mentioning also the reason for the prayer, he adds, for this is good and acceptable in the sight of God our Saviour; who wills that all men should be saved, and come to the knowledge of the truth. Therefore, if he find a Gentile wife consorting with a believer, he dissolves not the marriage. Yet what is more closely joined than a man to his wife? For they two shall be one flesh, Genesis 2:24 and great in that instance is the charm, and ardent the desire. But if we are to hate ungodly and lawless men, we shall go on to hate also sinners; and thus in regular process you will be broken off from the most even of your brethren, or rather from all: for there is not one, no, not one, without sin. For if it be our duty to hate the enemies of God, one must not hate the ungodly only, but also sinners: and thus we shall be worse than wild beasts, shunning all, and puffed up with pride; even as that Pharisee. But not thus did Paul command us, but how? Admonish the disorderly, encourage the faint-hearted, support the weak, be long suffering toward all. 1 Thessalonians 5:14

6. What then does he mean when he says, If any obeys not our word by this epistle, note that man, that you have no company with him? 2 Thessalonians 3:14 In the first place, he says this of brethren, however not even so without limitation, but this too with gentleness. For do not thou cut off what follows, but subjoin also the next clause: how, having said, keep no company, he added, yet count him not as an enemy, but admonish him as a brother. Do you see how he bade us hate the deed that is evil, and not the man? For indeed it is the work of the devil to tear us asunder from one another, and he has ever used great diligence to take away love that he may cut off the way of correction, and may retain him in error and you in enmity, and thus block up the way of his salvation. For when both the physician hates the sick man and flies from him, and the sick man turns away from the physician, when will the distempered person be restored, seeing that neither the one will call in the other's aid, nor will the other go to him?

But wherefore, tell me, do you at all turn away from him and avoid him? Because he is ungodly? Truly for this cause ought thou to welcome and attend him, that you may raise him up in his sickness. But if he be incurably sick, still you have been bidden to do your part. Since Judas also was incurably diseased, yet God left not off attending upon him. Wherefore, neither do thou grow weary. For even if after much labor thou fail to deliver him from his ungodliness, yet shall you receive the deliverer's reward, and wilt cause him to wonder at your gentleness, and so all this praise will pass on to God. For though you should work wonders, and raise the dead, and whatsoever work you do, the Heathen will never wonder at you so much, as when they see you displaying a meek, gentle, mild disposition. And this is no small achievement: since many will even be entirely delivered from their evil way; there being nothing that has such power to allure men as love. For in respect of the former they will rather be jealous of you, I mean the signs and wonders; but for this they will both admire and love you: and if they love, they will also lay hold of the truth in due course. If however he become not all at once a believer, wonder not nor hurry on, neither do thou require all things at once, but suffer him for the present to praise, and love, and unto this in due course he will come.

7. And that you may clearly know how great a thing this is, hear how even Paul, going before an unbelieving judge, made his defence. I think myself happy, says he, That I am to make my defence before you. Acts 26:2 And these things he said, not to flatter him, far from it; but wishing to gain him by his gentleness. And he did in part gain him, and he that was till then considered to be condemned took captive his judge, and the victory is confessed by the person himself who was made captive, with a loud voice in the presence of all, saying, With but little persuasion you would fain make me a Christian. Acts 26:28-29 What then says Paul? He spread his net the wider, and says, I would to God,

that not only thou, but also all that hear me this day, might become such as I am, except these bonds. What do you say, O Paul? except these bonds? And what confidence remains for you, if you are ashamed of these things, and fliest from them, and this before so great a multitude? Do you not every where in your Epistles boast of this matter, and call yourself a prisoner? Do you not every where carry about this chain in our sight as a diadem? What then has happened now that you deprecate these bonds? I myself deprecate them not, says he, nor am I ashamed of them, but I condescend to their weakness. For they are not yet able to receive my glorying; and I have learned from my Lord not to put 'a piece of undressed cloth upon an old garment:' Matthew 9:16 therefore did I thus speak. For, in fact, unto this time they have heard ill reports of our doctrine, and abhor the cross. If therefore I should add also bonds, their hatred becomes greater; I removed these, therefore, that the other might be made acceptable. So it is, that to them it seems disgraceful to be bound, because they have not as yet tasted of the Glory which is with us. One must therefore condescend: and when they shall have learned of the true life, then will they know the beauty also of this iron, and the lustre which comes of these bonds. Furthermore, discoursing with others, he even calls the thing a free gift, saying, It has been granted in the behalf of Christ, not only to believe in Him, but also to suffer in His behalf. Philippians 1:29 But for the time then present, it was a great thing for the hearers not to be ashamed of the cross: for which cause he goes on gradually. Thus, neither does any one introducing a person to a palace, before that he beholds the vestibule, compel him, yet standing without, to survey what is within: since in that way it will not even seem admirable, unless one enter in and so acquaint one's self with all.

So then let us also deal with the heathen sort: with condescension, with love. For love is a great teacher, and able both to withdraw men from error, and to reform the character, and to lead them by the hand unto self-denial, and out of stones to make men.

8. And if you would learn her power, bring me a man timid and fearful of every sound, and trembling at shadows; or passionate, and harsh, and a wild beast rather than a man; or wanton and licentious; or wholly given to wickedness; and deliver him into the hands of love, and introduce him into this school; and you will speedily see that cowardly and timid creature made brave and magnanimous, and venturing upon all things cheerfully. And what is wonderful, not from any change in nature do these things result, but in the coward soul itself love manifests her peculiar power; and it is much the same as if one should cause a leaden sword, not turned into steel but continuing in the nature of lead, to do the work of steel. As thus: Jacob was a plain man, Genesis 25:27 dwelling in a house, and unpracticed in toils and dangers, living a kind of remiss and easy life, and like a virgin in her chamber, so also he was compelled

for the most part to sit within doors and keep the house; withdrawn from the forum and all tumults of the forum, and from all such matters, and even continuing in ease and quietness. What then? After that the torch of love had set him on fire, see how it made this plain and home-keeping man strong to endure and fond of toil. And of this hear not what I say, but what the patriarch himself says: how finding fault with his kinsman, his words are, These twenty years am I with you. Genesis 31:36 And how were thou these twenty years? (For this also he adds,) Consumed by the heat in the day time, and with the frost by night, and sleep departed from my eyes. Thus speaks that plain man, keeping at home, and living that easy life.

Again, that he was timid is evident, in that, expecting to see Esau, he was dead with fear. But see again, how this timid man became bolder than a lion under the influence of love. For putting himself forward like some champion before the rest, he was ready to be first in receiving that savage and slaughter-breathing brother as he supposed him to be, and with his own body to purchase the safety of his wives: and him whom he feared and shuddered at, he desired to behold himself foremost in the array. For this fear was not so strong as his affection for his wives. Do you see how, being timid, he became suddenly adventurous, not by changing his character, but being invigorated by love? For that after this also he was timid, is evident by his changing from place to place.

But let no man consider what has been said to be a charge against that righteous man: since being timid is no reproach, for this is a man's nature; but the doing any thing unseemly for timidity's sake. For it is possible for one that is timid by nature to become courageous through piety. What did Moses? Did he not, through fear of a single Egyptian, fly, and go away into banishment? Nevertheless, this fugitive who could not endure the menace of a single man, after that he tasted of the honey of love, nobly and without compulsion from any man, was forward to perish together with them whom he loved. For if you will forgive their sin, says he, forgive; and if not, blot me, I pray you, out of Your book which you have written. Exodus 32:32

9. Moreover, that love makes also the fierce moderate, and the wanton chaste, we have no longer need of any examples: this being evident to all men. Though a man be more savage than any wild beast, no sheep so gentle as he is rendered by love. Thus, what could be more savage and frantic than Saul? But when his daughter let his enemy go, he uttered not against her even a bitter word. And he that unsparingly put to the sword all the priests for David's sake, seeing that his daughter had sent him away from the house, was not indignant with her even as far as words; and this when so great a fraud had been contrived against him: because he was restrained by the stronger bridle of love.

Now as moderation, so chastity, is an ordinary effect of love. If a man love his

own wife as he ought to love, even though he be never so much inclined to wantonness, he will not endure to look upon another woman, on account of his affection for her. For love, Canticles 8:5 says one, is strong as death. So that from no other source does wanton behavior arise than from want of love.

Since then love is the Artificer of all virtue, let us with all exactness implant her in our own souls, that she may produce for us many blessings, and that we may have her fruit continually abounding, the fruit which is ever fresh and never decays. For thus shall we obtain no less than eternal blessings: which may we all obtain, through the grace and mercy of our Lord Jesus Christ, with Whom to the Father, and also the Holy Ghost, be glory, power, and honor, now and for ever, and world without end. Amen.

Homily 34 on First Corinthians

1 Corinthians 13:8

But whether there be prophecies, they shall be done away; whether there be tongues, they shall cease; whether there be knowledge, it shall be done away.

Having shown the excellency of love from its being requisite both to the spiritual gifts, and to the virtues of life; and from rehearsal of all its good qualities, and by showing it to be the foundation of exact self-denial; from another, a third head, again he points out its worth. And this he does, first from a wish to persuade those who seemed to be accounted inferior that it is in their power to have the chief of all signs, and that they will be no worse off than the possessors of the gifts, if they have this, but rather much better: secondly, with regard on the other hand to them that had the greater gifts and were lifted up thereby, studying to bring them down and to show that they have nothing unless they have this. For thus they would both love one another, envy as well as pride being hereby taken away; and reciprocally, loving one another, they would still further banish these passions. For love envies not, is not puffed up. So that on every side he throws around them an impregnable wall, and a manifold unanimity, which first removes all their disorders, and thereby again waxes stronger. Therefore also he put forward innumerable reasons which might comfort their dejection. As thus: both the same Spirit, says he, is the giver; and He gives to profit withal; and divides as he will, and it is a gift which He divides, not a debt. Though thou receive but a little, thou dost equally contribute to the body, and even thus you enjoy much honor. And he that has the greater, needs you who hast the less. And, Love is the greatest gift, and 'the more excellent way.'

Now all this he said doubly to bind them to each other, both by their not

considering themselves disparaged while they had this; and because, after pursuit and attainment of it, they henceforth would not feel human infirmity; both as having the root of all gifts, and as no longer capable of contentiousness even though they had nothing. For he that is once led captive by love is freed from contentiousness.

And this is why, pointing out to them how great advantages they shall thence reap, he sketched out its fruits; by his praises of it repressing their disorders: inasmuch as each one of the things mentioned by him was a sufficient medicine to heal their wounds. Wherefore also he said, suffers long, to them that are at strife one with another; is kind, to them that stand mutually aloof, and bear a secret grudge; envies not, to them that look grudgingly on their superiors; vaunts not itself, to them that are separated; is not puffed up, to them that boast themselves against others; does not behave itself unseemly, to them that do not think it their duty to condescend; seeks not her own, to them that overlook the rest; is not provoked, takes not account of evil, to them that are insolent; rejoices not in unrighteousness, but rejoices with the truth, to them again that are envious; bears all things, to them that are treacherous; hopes all things, to the despairing; endures all things, never fails, to them that easily separate themselves.

2. Now then after that in every way he had shown her to be very exceedingly great, again he does so from another most important head, by a fresh comparison exalting her dignity, and saying thus; but whether there be prophecies, they shall be done away; whether there be tongues, they shall cease. For if both these were brought in in order to the faith; when that is every where sown abroad, the use of these is henceforth superfluous. But the loving one another shall not cease, rather it shall even advance further, both here and hereafter, and then more than now. For here there are many things that weaken our love; wealth, business, passions of the body, disorders of the soul; but there none of these.

But although it be no marvel that prophecies and tongues should be done away, that knowledge should be done away, this is what may cause some perplexity. For this also he added, Whether there be knowledge, it shall be done away. What then? Are we then to live in ignorance? Far from it. Nay, then specially it is probable that our knowledge is made intense. Wherefore also he said, Then shall I know, even as also I am known. For this reason, if you mark it, that you might not suppose this to be done away equally with the prophecy and the tongues, having said, Whether there be knowledge, it shall be done away, he was not silent, but added also the manner of its vanishing away, immediately subjoining the saying,

1 Corinthians 13:9-10

We know in part, and we prophesy in part. But when that which is perfect has come, then that which is in part shall be done away.

It is not therefore knowledge that is done away, but the circumstance that our knowledge is in part. For we shall not only know as much but even a great deal more. But that I may also make it plain by example; now we know that God is every where, but how, we know not. That He made out of things that are not the things that are we know; but of the manner we are ignorant. That He was born of a virgin, we know; but how, we know not yet. But then shall we know somewhat more and clearer concerning these things. Next he points out also how great is the distance between the two, and that our deficiency is no small one, saying,

1 Corinthians 13:11

When I was a child, I spoke as a child, I felt as a child, I thought as a child; but now that I have become a man, I have put away childish things.

And by another example too he manifests the same thing again, saying,

1 Corinthians 13:12

For now we see in a mirror. Further, because the glass sets before us the thing seen indefinitely, he added, darkly , to show very strongly that the present knowledge is most partial.

But then face to face. Not as though God has a face, but to express the notion of greater clearness and perspicuity. Do you see how we learn all things by gradual addition?

Now I know in part; but then shall I know even as also I have been known. Do you see how in two ways he pulls down their pride? Both because their knowledge is in part, and because not even this have they of themselves. For I knew Him not, but He made Himself known to me, says he. Wherefore, even as now He first knew me, and Himself hastened towards me, so shall I hasten towards Him then much more than now. For so he that sits in darkness, as long as he sees not the sun does not of himself hasten to meet the beauty of its beam, which indeed shows itself as soon as it has begun to shine: but when he perceives its brightness, then also himself at length follows after its light: This then is the meaning of the expression, even as also I have been known. Not that we shall so know him as He is, but that even as He hastened toward us now, so also shall we cleave unto Him then, and shall know many of the things which are now secret, and shall enjoy that most blessed society and wisdom. For if Paul who knew so much was a child, consider what those things must be. If

these be a glass and a riddle, do thou hence again infer, God's open Face, how great a thing It is.

3. But that I may open out to you some small part of this difference, and may impart some faint ray of this thought to your soul, I would have you recall to mind things as they were in the Law, now after that grace has shone forth. For those things too, that came before grace, had a certain great and marvellous appearance: nevertheless, hear what Paul says of them after grace came: That which was made glorious had no glory in this respect, by reason of the glory that surpasses. 2 Corinthians 3:10

But that what I say may be made yet clearer, let us apply the argument to some one of the rites then performed, and then you will see how great is the difference. And if you will, let us bring forward that passover and this, and then shall you be aware of our superiority. For the Jews indeed celebrated it, but they celebrated it so as in a mirror, and darkly. But these hidden mysteries they never at any time did even conceive in their mind, nor what things they prefigured. They saw a lamb slain, and the blood of a beast, and door-posts sprinkled with it; but that the Son of God incarnate shall be slain, and shall set free the whole world, and shall grant both to Greeks and Barbarians to taste of this Blood, and shall open heaven to all, and shall offer what is there to the whole human race, and having taken His blood-stained flesh shall exalt it above the heaven, and the heaven of heavens, and, in a word, above all the hosts on high, of the angels and archangels and all the other powers, and shall cause it shining in unspeakable glory—to sit down upon the throne itself of the King, on the right hand of the Father these things, I say, no one, either of them or of the rest of mankind, either foreknew or was able ever to conceive.

4. But what say those who shrink from nothing? That the expression, now I know in part, is spoken in dispensations; for that the Apostle had the perfect knowledge of God. And now he calls himself a child? How sees he in a mirror? How darkly, if he has the sum of knowledge? And why does he refer to it as something peculiar to the Spirit, and to no other power in the creation, saying, For who among men knows the things of a man, save the spirit of the man which is in him? Even so the things of God none knows, save the Spirit of God. 1 Corinthians 2:11 And Christ again says that this belongs to Himself alone, thus saying, Not that any man has seen the Father, save He which is from God, He has seen the Father, John 6:46 giving the name, sight, to the most clear and perfect knowledge.

And how shall he who knows the Essence, be ignorant of the dispensations? Since that knowledge is greater than this.

Are we then, says he, ignorant of God? Far from it. That He is, we know, but what He is, as regards His Essence, we know not yet. And that you may

understand that not concerning the dispensations did he speak the words, now I know in part, hear what follows. He adds then, but then shall I know, even as also I have been known. He was surely known not by the dispensations, but by God.

Let none therefore consider this to be a small or simple transgression, but twofold, and threefold, yea and manifold. For not only is there this impiety that they boast of knowing those things which belong to the Spirit alone; and to the only-begotten Son of God, but also that when Paul could not acquire even this knowledge which is in part without the revelation from above, these men say that they have obtained the whole from their own reasonings. For neither are they able to point out that the Scripture has any where discoursed to us of these things.

5. But however, leaving their madness, let us give heed to the words which follow concerning love. For he was not content with these things, but adds again, saying,

1 Corinthians 13:13

And now abides, faith, hope, love, these three; and the greatest of these is love.

For faith indeed and hope, when the good things believed and hoped for have come, cease. And to show this Paul said, For hope that is seen is not hope; for who hopes for that which he sees. Again, Now faith is the assurance of things hoped for, the proving of things not seen. Romans 8:24; Hebrews 11:1 So that these cease when those appear; but love is then most elevated, and becomes more vehement. Another encomium of love. For neither is he content with those before mentioned, but he strives to discover yet another. And observe: he has said that it is a great gift, and a still more excellent way to these. He has said, that without it there is no great profit in our gifts; he has shadowed out its image at length; he intends again and in another manner to exalt it, and to show that it is great from its abiding. Wherefore also he said, But now abides faith, hope, love, these three; but the greatest of these is love. How then is love the greater? In that those pass away.

If now so great is the virtue of love, with good reason does he add and say, Follow after love. For there is surely need of following, and a kind of vehement running after her: in such sort does she fly from us, and so many are the things which trip us up in that direction. Wherefore we have ever need of great earnestness in order to overtake her. And to point out this, Paul said not, follow love, but, pursue her; stirring us up, and inflaming us to lay hold on her.

For so God from the beginning contrived ten thousand ways for implanting her in us. Thus, first, He granted one head to all, Adam. For why do we not all spring out of the earth? Why not full grown, as he was? In order that both the

birth and the bringings up of children, and the being born of another, might bind us mutually together. For this cause neither made He woman out of the earth: and because the thing of the same substance was not equally sufficient to shame us into unanimity, unless we had also the same progenitor, He provided also for this: since, if now, being only separated by place, we consider ourselves alien from one another; much more would this have happened if our race had had two originals. For this cause therefore, as it were from some one head, he bound together the whole body of the human race. And because from the beginning they seemed to be in a manner two, see how he fastens them together again, and gathers them into one by marriage. For, therefore, says He, shall a man leave his father and his mother, and shall cleave unto his wife; and they shall be for one flesh. Genesis 2:24 And he said not, the woman, but, the man, because the desire too is stronger in him. Yea, and for this cause He made it also stronger, that it might bow the superior party to the absolute sway of this passion, and might subjugate it to the weaker. And since marriage also must needs be introduced, him from whom she sprang He made husband to the woman. For all things in the eye of God are second to love. And if when things had thus begun, the first man straightway became so frantic, and the devil sowed among them so great warfare and envy; what would he not have done, had they not sprung from one root?

Further, in order that the one might be subject, and the other rule; (for equality is wont oftentimes to bring in strife;) he suffered it not to be a democracy, but a monarchy; and as in an army, this order one may see in every family. In the rank of monarch, for instance, there is the husband; but in the rank of lieutenant and general, the wife; and the children too are allotted a third station in command. Then after these a fourth order, that of the servant. For these also bear rule over their inferiors, and some one of them is oftentimes set over the whole, keeping ever the post of the master, but still as a servant. And together with this again another command, and among the children themselves again another, according to their age and sex; since among the children the female does not possess equal sway. And every where has God made governments at small distances and thick together, that all might abide in concord and much good order. Therefore even before the race was increased to a multitude, when the first two only were in being, He bade him govern, and her obey. And in order again that He might not despise her as inferior, and separate from her, see how He honored her, and made them one, even before her creation. For, Let us make for man, says He, a help meet, implying that she was made for his need, and thereby drawing him unto her who was made for his sake: since to all those things are we more kindly disposed, which are done for our sakes. But that she, on the other hand, might not be elated, as being granted him for help, nor might burst this bond, He makes her out of his side, signifying that she is a part of the

whole body. And that neither might the man be elated therefore, He no longer permits that to belong to him alone which before was his alone, but effected the contrary to this, by bringing in procreation of children, and herein too giving the chief honor unto the man, not however allowing the whole to be his.

Do you see how many bonds of love God has wrought? And these indeed by force of nature He has lodged in us as pledges of concord. For both our being of the same substance leads to this; (for every animal loves its like;) and the woman being produced from the man, and again the children from both. Whence also many kinds of affection arise. For one we love as a father, another as a grandfather; one as a mother, another as a nurse; and one as a son or grandson or great-grandson again, and another as a daughter, or grand-daughter; and one as a brother, another as a nephew; and one as a sister, another as a niece. And why need one recount all the names of consanguinity?

And He devised also another foundation of affection. For having forbidden the marriage of kindred, he led us out unto strangers and drew them again unto us. For since by this natural kindred it was not possible that they should be connected with us, he connected us anew by marriage, uniting together whole families by the single person of the bride, and mingling entire races with races.

For, marry not, says the Lord, Leviticus 18:6 your sister, nor your father's sister, nor any damsel which has such consanguinity with you, as utterly hinders the marriage; naming the degrees of such relationship. It is enough for your affection towards them that you were the fruit of the same birth-pangs, and that the others are in a different relation to you. Why do you narrow the breadth of love? Why do you idly throw away a ground of affection towards her, such as that you might thereby provide yourself with distinct source for affection to spring from; I mean, by taking a wife from another family, and through her a chain of kinsmen, both mother, and father, and brethren, and their connexions!

7. Do you see by how many ways He has bound us together? Nevertheless, not even this sufficed Him, but He likewise made us to stand in need of one another, that thus also He might bring us together, because necessities above all create friendships. For no other reason neither suffered He all things to be produced in every place, that hence also He might compel us to mix with one another. But having set us in need of one another, He on the other hand made the intercourse easy. Since if this were not so, the matter would have turned out painful and difficult in another way. For if one that wanted a physician, or a carpenter, or any other workman, had need to set off on a long foreign sojourn, the whole had come to nought. Here then is why He founded cities also, and brought all into one place. And accordingly that we might easily keep up intercourse with distant countries, He spread the level of the sea between us, and gave us the swiftness of winds, thereby making our voyages easy. And at

the beginning He even gathered all men together in one spot, and did not disperse them until they who first received the gift abused their concord unto sin. However, He has drawn us together in every way; both by nature, and by consanguinity, and by language, and by place; and as he willed not that we should fall from paradise; (for had He willed it, He would not have placed there at all the man whom He had formed, but he that disobeyed was the cause;) so neither was it His will that men should have various tongues; since otherwise He would have made it so from the beginning. But now the whole earth was of one language, and all had one speech. Genesis 11:1

Here is the reason why, when it was needful that the earth should be destroyed, not even then did He make us of other matter, nor did He translate the righteous man, but leaving him in the midst of the deluge, like a kind of spark of the world, He rekindled our race from thence, even by the blessed Noah. And from the beginning He made one sovereignty only, setting the man over the woman. But after that our race ran headlong into extreme disorder, He appointed other sovereignties also, those of Masters, and those of Governors, and this too for love's sake. That is, since vice was a thing apt to dissolve and subvert our race, He set those who administer justice in the midst of our cities as a kind of physicians, that driving away vice, as it were a plague to love, they might gather together all in one.

And that not only in cities, but also in each family there might be great unanimity, He honored the man with rule and superiority; the woman on the other hand He armed with desire: and the gift also of procreation of children, He committed in common to both, and withal He furnished also other things apt to conciliate love: neither entrusting all to the man, nor all to the woman; but dividing these things also severally to each; to her entrusting the house, and to him the market; to him the work of feeding, for he tills the ground; to her that of clothing, for loom and distaff are the woman's. For it is God Himself who gave to woman-kind skill in woven work. Woe be to covetousness, which suffers not this difference to appear! For the general effeminacy has gone so far as to introduce our men to the looms, and put shuttles into their hands, and the woof, and threads. Nevertheless, even thus the forethought of the divine economy shines out. For we still greatly need the woman in other more necessary things, and we require the help of our inferiors in those things which keep our life together.

8. And so strong is the compulsion of this need that though one be richer than all men, not even thus is he rid of this close conjunction, and of his want of that which is inferior to himself. For it is not, we see, the poor only who need the rich, but the rich also the poor; and these require those more than the others them. And that you may see it more clearly, let us suppose, if it seem good, two cities, the one of rich only, but the other of poor; and neither in that of the rich

let there be any poor man, nor in that of the poor any rich; but let us purge out both thoroughly, and see which will be the more able to support itself. For if we find that of the poor able, it is evident that the rich will more stand in need of them.

Now then, in that city of the affluent there will be no manufacturer, no builder, no carpenter, no shoe-maker, no baker, no husbandman, no brazier, no rope-maker, nor any other such trade. For who among the rich would ever choose to follow these crafts, seeing that the very men who take them in hand, when they become rich, endure no longer the discomfort caused by these works? How then shall this our city stand? The rich, it is replied, giving money, will buy these things of the poor. Well then, they will not be sufficient for themselves, their needing the others proves that. But how will they build houses? Will they purchase this too? But the nature of things cannot admit this. Therefore they must needs invite the artificers there, and destroy the law, which we made at first when we were founding the city. For you remember, that we said, let there be no poor man within it. But, lo, necessity, even against our will, has invited and brought them in. Whence it is evident that it is impossible without poor for a city to subsist: since if the city were to continue refusing to admit any of these, it will be no longer a city but will perish. Plainly then it will not support itself, unless it shall collect the poor as a kind of preservers, to be within itself.

But let us look also upon the city of the poor, whether this too will be in a like needy condition, on being deprived of the rich. And first let us in our discourse thoroughly clear the nature of riches, and point them out plainly. What then may riches be? Gold, and silver, and precious stones, and garments silken, purple, and embroidered with gold. Now then that we have seen what riches are, let us drive them away from our city of the poor: and if we are to make it purely a city of poor persons, let not any gold appear there, no not in a dream, nor garments of such quality; and if you will, neither silver, nor vessels of silver. What then? Because of this will that city and its concerns live in want, tell me? Not at all. For suppose first there should be need to build; one does not want gold and silver and pearls, but skill, and hands, and hands not of any kind, but such as have become callous, and fingers hardened, and great strength, and wood, and stones: suppose again one would weave a garment, neither here have we need of gold and silver, but, as before, of hands and skill, and women to work. And what if one require husbandry, and digging the ground? Is it rich men who are wanted, or poor? It is evident to every one, poor. And when iron too is to be wrought, or any such thing to be done, this is the race of men whereof we most stand in need. What respect then remains wherein we may stand in need of the rich? Except the thing required be, to pull down this city. For should that sort of people make an entrance, and these philosophers, for (for I call them philosophers, who seek after nothing superfluous,) should fall to desiring gold

and jewels, giving themselves up to idleness and luxury; they will ruin everything from that day forward.

9. But unless wealth be useful, says one, wherefore has it been given by God? And whence is it evident, that being rich is from God? The Scripture says, 'The silver is Mine, and the gold is Mine,' and to whomsoever I will, I will give it. Haggai 2:8 Here, if I were not doing an unseemly thing, I could at this moment laugh loudly, in derision of those who say these things: because as little children admitted to a King's table, together with that food they thrust into their mouth everything that comes to hand; so also do these together with the divine Scriptures privily bring in their own notions. For this, the silver is Mine, and the gold is Mine, I know to have been spoken by the Prophet; but that, to whomsoever I will, I will give it, is not added, but is brought in by these offscourings of the people. And as to the former, why it was said, I will explain. The Prophet Haggai, because he was continually promising to the Jews after their return from Babylon, that he would show the temple in its former appearance, and some doubted of the thing spoken, and considered it to be well near impossible that after being reduced to dust and ashes, the house should appear again such as it was—he, to remove their unbelief, in the person of God says these things; as if he said, Why are you afraid? And why do ye refuse to believe? 'The silver is Mine, and the gold is Mine,' and I need not to borrow from others, and so to beautify the house. And to show that this is the meaning he adds, and the glory of this house, the latter glory shall be greater than the glory of the former. Let us not then bring in spiders' webs upon the royal robe. For if any person, detected in weaving a counterfeit thread in a purple vest, is to suffer the severest punishment, much more in spiritual things; since neither is it an ordinary sin, which is hereby committed. And why say I, by adding and taking away? By a mere point, and by a mere circumstance of delivery in the reading, many impious thoughts have not seldom been brought into being.

Whence then the rich, says one? for it has been said, 'Riches and poverty are from the Lord.' Let us then ask those who object these things against us, whether all riches and all poverty are from the Lord? Nay, who would say this? For we see that both by rapine, and by wickedly breaking open of tombs, and by witchcraft, and by other such devices, great wealth is gathered by many, and the possessors are not worthy even to live. What then, tell me, do we say that this wealth is from God? Far from it. Whence then? From sin. For so the harlot by doing indignity to her own body grows rich, and a handsome youth oftentimes selling his bloom with disgrace brings himself gold, and the tomb-spoiler by breaking open men's sepulchres gathers together unjust wealth, and the robber by digging through walls. All wealth therefore is not from God. What then, says one, shall we say to this expression? Acquaint yourself first with a kind of poverty which proceeds not from God, and then we will proceed

to the saying itself. I mean, that when any dissolute youth spends his wealth either on harlots, or on conjurers, or on any other such evil desires, and becomes poor, is it not very evident that this has not come from God, but from his own profligacy? Again, if any through idleness become poor, if any through folly be brought down to beggary, if any, by taking in hand perilous and unlawful practices; is it not quite evident, that neither has any one of these and other such persons been brought down to this their poverty by God?

Does then the Scripture speak falsely? God forbid! But they do foolishly, who neglect to examine with due exactness all things written. For if this on the one hand be acknowledged, that the Scriptures cannot lie; and this on the other hand proved, that not all wealth is from God; the weakness of inconsiderate readers is the cause of the difficulty.

10. Now it were right for us to dismiss you, having herein exculpated the Scripture, that you may suffer this punishment at our hands for your negligence concerning the Scriptures: but because I greatly spare you and cannot any longer bear to look on you confused and disturbed, let us also add the solution, having first mentioned the speaker, and when it was spoken, and to whom. For not alike to all does God speak, as neither do we deal alike with children and men. When then was it spoken, and by whom, and to whom? By Solomon in the Old Testament to the Jews, who knew no other than things of sense, and by these proved the power of God. For these are they who say, Can He give bread also? and, What sign showest Thou unto us? Our fathers did eat manna in the desert:— whose God is their belly. Psalm 78:24; Matthew 12:38; John 6:31; Philippians 3:19 Since then they were proving Him by these things, He says to them, This is also possible with God to make both rich and poor; not that it is of course He Himself who makes them, but that He can, when He will. Just as when he says, Who rebukes the sea, and makes it dry, and dries up all the rivers, Nahum 1:4 and yet this was never done. How then does the prophet say so? Not as though it were a doing always, but as a thing that was possible for Him to do.

What kind of poverty then does He give, and what kind of wealth? Remember the patriarch, and you shall know the kind of wealth that is given by God. For He made both Abraham rich, and after him Job, even as Job himself says; If we have received good from the Lord, shall we not also receive evil? Job 2:10 And the wealth of Jacob thence had its beginning. There is also a poverty which comes from Him, that which is commended, such as He once would have introduced to the knowledge of that rich man, saying, If you would be perfect, sell your goods, and give to the poor, and come, follow Me. Matthew 19:21 And to the disciples again, making a law and saying, Provide neither gold, nor silver, nor two coats. Matthew 9:10 Say not then that all wealth is His gift: seeing that cases have been pointed out of its being collected both by murderers, and by rapine, and by ten thousand other devices.

But again the discourse reverts to our former question: viz. if the rich are no way useful to us, wherefore are they made rich? What then must we say? That these are not useful who so make themselves rich; whereas those surely who are made so by God are in the highest degree useful. And do thou learn this from the very things done by those whom we just now mentioned. Thus Abraham possessed wealth for all strangers, and for all in need. For he who on the approach of three men, as he supposed, sacrificed a calf and kneaded three measures of fine flour, and that while sitting in his door in the heat of the day; consider with what liberality and readiness he used to spend his substance on all, together with his goods giving also the service of his body, and this at such an advanced age; being a harbor to strangers, to all who had come to any kind of want, and possessing nothing as his own, not even his son: since at God's command he actually delivered up even him; and along with his son he gave up also himself and all his house, when he hastened to snatch his brother's son out of danger; and this he did not for lucre's sake, but of mere humanity. When, for instance, they who were saved by him would put the spoils at his disposal, he rejected all, even to a thread and a shoe-latchet. Genesis 14:23

Such also was the blessed Job. For my door, says, was open to every one who came: Job 20:15 I was eyes to the blind, and feet to the lame: I was a father of the helpless, the stranger lodged not without, and the helpless, whatever need they had, failed not of it, neither suffered I one helpless man to go out of my door with an empty bosom. And much more too than these, that we may not now recount all, he continued to do, spending all his wealth on the needy.

Will you also look upon those who have become rich but not of God, that you may learn how they employed their wealth? Behold him in the parable of Lazarus, how he imparted not so much as a share of his crumbs. Behold Ahab, how not even the vineyard is free from his extortion: behold Gehazi: behold all such. Thus they on the one hand who make just acquisitions, as having received from God, spend on the commands of God: but they who in act of acquiring offend God, in the expending also do the same: consuming it on harlots and parasites, or burying and shutting it up, but laying out nothing upon the poor.

And wherefore, says one, does God suffer such men to be rich? Because He is long-suffering: because He would bring us to repentance; because He has prepared hell; because He has appointed a day in which He is to judge the world. Acts 17:31 Whereas did He use at once to punish them that are rich and not virtuously, Zacchæus would not have had an appointed time for repentance, so as even to restore fourfold whatever he had unjustly taken, and to add half of his goods; nor Matthew, to be converted and become an Apostle, taken off as he would have been before the due season; nor yet many other such. Therefore does He bear with them, calling all to repentance. But if they will not, but continue in the same, they shall hear Paul saying that after their hardness and

impenitent heart they treasure up unto themselves wrath against the day of wrath, and revelation, and righteous judgment of God: Romans 2:5 which wrath that we may escape, let us become rich with the riches of heaven, and follow after the laudable sort of poverty. For thus shall we obtain also the good things to come: the which may we all obtain through the grace and mercy of our Lord Jesus Christ, with Whom to the Father, with the Holy Ghost, be glory, power, and honor, now and for ever, and world without end. Amen.



Homily on Our Lord

St Epraim the Syrian

Therefore let all mouths render praise to Him Who has removed from them blasphemous speech. Glory to You Who departed from one dwelling to take up your abode in another! That He might come and make us a dwelling-place for His Sender, the only-begotten departed from [being] with Deity and took up His abode in the Virgin; that by a common manner of birth, though only-begotten, He might become the brother of many. And He departed from Sheol and took up His abode in the Kingdom; that He might seek out a path from Sheol which oppresses all, to the Kingdom which requites all. For our Lord gave His resurrection as a pledge to mortals, that He would remove them from Sheol, which receives the departed without distinction, to the Kingdom which admits the invited with distinction; so that, from [the plan] which makes equal the bodies of all men within it, we may come to [the plan] which distinguishes the works of all men within it. This is He Who descended to Sheol and ascended, that from [the place] which corrupts its sojourners, He might bring us to the place which nourishes with its blessings its dwellers; even those dwellers who, with the possessions, the fruits, and the flowers, of this world, that pass away, have crowned and adorned for themselves there, tabernacles that pass not away. That Firstborn Who was begotten according to His nature, was born in another birth that was external to His nature; that we might know that after our natural birth we must have another birth which is outside our nature. For He, since He was spiritual, until He came to the corporeal birth, could not be corporeal; in like manner also the corporeal, unless they are born in another birth, cannot be spiritual. But the Son Whose generation is unsearchable, was born in another generation that may be searched out; that by the one we might learn that His Majesty is without limit, and by the other might be taught that His grace is without measure. For great is His Majesty without measure, Whose first generation cannot be imagined in any of our thoughts. And His grace is abundant without limit, Whose second birth is proclaimed by all mouths.

2. This is He Who was begotten from the Godhead according to His nature, and from manhood not after His nature, and from baptism not after His custom; that we might be begotten from manhood according to our nature, and from Godhead not after our nature, and by the Spirit not after our custom. He then was begotten from the Godhead, He that came to a second birth; in order to bring us to the birth that is discoursed of, even His generation from the Father:— not that it should be searched out, but that it should be believed—and His birth from the woman, not that it should be despised, but that it should be exalted. Now His death on the cross witnesses to His birth from the woman. For He that died was also born. And the Annunciation of Gabriel declares His generation by the Father, namely [the power of the Highest shall overshadow you]. Luke 1:35 If then it was the power of the Highest, it is plain that it was not the seed of mortal man. So then His conception in the womb is bound up with His death on the cross; and His first generation is bound up with the declaration of the Angel; in order that whoso denies His birth may be confuted by His crucifixion, and whoso supposes that His beginning was from Mary, may be admonished that His Godhead is before all; so that whoever has concluded His beginning to be corporeal, [may be proved to err hereby that His issuing forth from the Father is narrated]. The Father begot Him, and through Him created the creatures. Flesh bare Him and through Him slew lusts. Baptism brought him forth, that through Him it might wash away stains. Sheol brought Him forth, that through Him its treasures might be emptied out. He came to us from beside His Father by the way of them that are born: and

by the way of them that die, He went forth to go to His Father; so that by His coming through birth, His advent might be seen; and by His returning through resurrection, His departure might be confirmed.

3. But our Lord was trampled on by Death; and in His turn trod out a way over Death. This is He Who made Himself subject to and endured death of His own will, that He might cast down death against his will. For our Lord bare His cross and went forth according to the will of Death: but He cried upon the cross Matthew 27:50-52 and brought forth the dead from within Sheol against the will of Death. For in that very thing by which Death had slain Him [*i.e.*, the body], in that as armour He bore off the victory over Death. But the Godhead concealed itself in the manhood and fought against Death, Death slew and was slain. Death slew the natural life; and the supernatural life slew Him. And because Death was not able to devour Him without the body, nor Sheol to swallow Him up without the flesh, He came unto the Virgin, that from thence He might obtain that which should bear Him to Sheol; as from beside the ass they brought for Him the colt whereon He entered Jerusalem, and proclaimed concealing her overthrow and the destruction of her children. With the body then that [was] from the Virgin, He entered Sheol and plundered its storehouses and emptied its treasures. He came then to Eve the Mother of all living. This is the vine whose fence Death laid open by her own hands, and caused her to taste of his fruits. So Eve the Mother of all living became the well-spring of death to all living. But Mary budded forth, a new shoot from Eve the ancient vine; and new life dwelt in her, that when Death should come confidently after his custom to feed upon mortal fruits, the life that is slayer of death might be stored up [therein] against him; that when Death should have swallowed [the fruits] without fear, he might vomit them forth and with them many. For [He Who is] the Medicine of life flew down from heaven, and was mingled in the body, the mortal fruit. And when Death came to feed after his custom, the Life in His turn swallowed up Death. This is the food that hungered to eat its eater. So then, by one fruit which Death swallowed hungrily, he vomited up many lives which he had swallowed greedily. The hunger then which hurried him against one, emptied out his greed which had hurried him against many. Thus Death was diligent to swallow one, but was in haste to set many free. For while One was dying on the cross, many that were buried from within Sheol were coming forth at His cry. Matthew 27:50-53 This is the fruit that cleft asunder Death who had swallowed it, and brought out from within it the Life in quest of which it was sent. For Sheol hid away all that she had devoured. But through One that was not devoured, all that she had devoured were restored from within her. He, whose stomach is disordered, vomits forth both that which is sweet to him and that which is not sweet. So the stomach of Death was disordered, and as he was vomiting forth the medicine of life which had sickened it, he vomited forth along with it also those lives that had been swallowed by him with pleasure.

4. This is the Son of the carpenter, Who skilfully made His cross a bridge over Sheol that swallows up all, and brought over mankind into the dwelling of life. And because it was through the tree that mankind had fallen into Sheol, so upon the tree they passed over into the dwelling of life. Through the tree then wherein bitterness was tasted, through it also sweetness was tasted; that we might learn of Him that among the creatures nothing resists Him. Glory be to You, Who laid Your cross as a bridge over death, that souls might pass over upon it from the dwelling of the dead to the dwelling of life!

5. The Gentiles praise You that Your Word has become a mirror before them, that in it they might see death, secretly swallowing up their lives. But graven images were being adorned by their artificers; and by their adornments were disfiguring their adorners. But You drew them to Your cross; and while the beauties of the body were disfigured upon it, the beauties of the mind shone forth upon it. Then, as for the Gentiles who used to go after gods which were no gods, He Who was God went after them, and by His words, as by a bridle, turned them from many gods to the One. This is that Mighty One, Whose preaching became a bridle in the jaws of the Gentiles, and led them away from idols to Him that sent Him. But the dead idols, with their closed mouths, used to feed on the life of their worshippers. On this account You mingled in their flesh that blood of Yours, by

which death was enfeebled and laid low; that the mouths of their devourers might be driven away from their lives. Also because Israel slew You and was defiled by Your blood, that idolatry, that had been engrafted upon him was driven away from him on account of Your blood. For he was weaned from that heathenism through Your blood; because that from it, he had never before been weaned.

6. But Israel crucified our Lord, on the plea that verily He was seducing us from the One God. But they themselves used constantly to wander away from the One God through their many idols. While then they imagine they crucify Him Who seduces them from the One God, they are found to be led away by Him from all idols to the One God; to the end that because they did not voluntarily learn of Him that He is God, they might by compulsion learn of Him that He is God; when the good which had accrued to them through Him should accuse them concerning the evil which their hands had done. Thus even though the tongue of the oppressors denied, yet the help with which they were helped convicted them. For grace loaded them beyond their power, so that they should be ashamed, while laden with Your blessings, to deny Your person. And also You had mercy on those, whose lives had been made food for dead idols. For the one calf which they made in the desert, Exodus 32:4 pastured on their lives as on grass in the desert. For that idolatry which they had stolen and brought out in their hearts from Egypt, when it was made manifest, slew openly those in whom it was dwelling secretly. For it was like fire concealed in wood, which when it is gendered from within it, burns it. For Moses ground to powder the calf and caused them to drink it in the water of ordeal; Exodus 32:20 that by drinking of the calf all those who were living for its worship might die. For the sons of Levi ran upon them, those who ran to [help] Moses and girded on their swords. For the sons of Levi did not know whom they should slay, because those that worshipped were mingled with those that worshipped not. But He, for Whom it was easy to distinguish, distinguished those who were defiled from those who were not defiled; so that the innocent might give thanks that their innocence had not passed [unseen by] the Just One; and the guilty might be convicted that their offense had not escaped [the eye of] the Judge. But the sons of Levi were the open avengers. Accordingly Moses set a mark upon the offenders, that it might be easy for the avengers to avenge. For the draught of the calf entered those in whom the love of the calf was dwelling, and displayed in them a manifest sign, that the drawn sword might rush upon them. The congregation therefore which had committed fornication in [the worship of] the calf, he caused to drink of the water of ordeal, that the mark of adulteresses might appear in it. From hence was derived that law about women, Numbers 5:17-27 that they should drink the water of ordeal, that by the mark that came on adulteresses, the congregation might be reminded of its fornication that was in the worship of the calf, and be on its guard with fear against another [fornication]; and remember the former [fornication] with penitence of soul; and that when they were judging their women, if they played the harlot against them, they might condemn themselves, who were playing the harlot against their God.

7. To You be glory who by Your cross hast taken away the heathenism in which both circumcised and uncircumcised were caused to stumble! To You be praise, the medicine of life, Who hast converted all that are baptised, to Him Who is life of all, and Lord of all! The lost that are found bless You; for by the finding of the lost, You have given joy to the angels that are found and were not lost. The uncircumcised praise You, for in Your peace the enmity that was between is swallowed up, for You received in Your flesh the outward sign of circumcision, through which the uncircumcised that were Yours, used to be accounted as not Yours. For You made as Your sign the circumcision of the heart; by which the circumcised were made known, that they were not Yours. For You came to Your own John 1:2 and Your own received You not; and by this they were made known that they were not Yours. But they to whom You did not come, through Your mercy cry out after You, that You would satisfy them with the crumbs which fall from the children's table.

8. God was sent from the Godhead, to come and convict the graven images that they were no gods. And when He took away from them the name of God which decked them out, then appeared the blemishes of their persons. And their blemishes were these—They have eyes and see not, and ears and hear not. Your preaching persuaded their many worshippers to change their many gods for the

One. For in that You took away the name of godhead from the idols, worship also along with the name was withdrawn; that, namely, which is bound up with the name; for worship also attends on the Name of God. Because, then, worship also was rendered to the Name, by all the Gentiles, at the last the worshipful Name shall be gathered in entirely to its Lord. Therefore at the last worship, also shall be gathered in completely to its Lord, that it may be fulfilled that *all things shall be subjected to Him*. Then, He in His turn *shall be subjected to Him Who subjected all things to Him*.

1 Corinthians 15:27-28 So that that Name, rising from degree to degree, shall be bound up with its root. For when all creatures shall be bound by their love to the Son through Whom they were created, and the Son shall be bound by the love of that Father by Whom He was begotten, all creatures shall give thanks at the last to the Son, through Whom they received all blessings; and in Him and with Him they shall give thanks also to His Father, from Whose treasure He distributes all riches to us.

9. Glory be to You Who clothed Yourself in the body of mortal Adam, and made it a fountain of life for all mortals. You are He that livest, for Your slayers were as husbandmen to Your life, for that they sowed it as wheat in the depth [of the earth], that it may rise and raise up many with it. Come, let us make our love the great censer of the community, and offer on it as incense our hymns and our prayers to Him Who made His cross a censer for the Godhead, and offered from it on behalf of us all. He that was above stooped down to those who were beneath, to distribute His treasures to them. Accordingly, though the needy drew near to His manhood, yet they used to receive the gift from His Godhead. Therefore He made the body which He put on, the treasurer of His riches, that He, O Lord, might bring them out of Your storehouse, and distribute them to the needy, the sons of His kindred.

10. Glory be to Him Who received from us that He might give to us; that through that which is ours we might more abundantly receive of that which is His! Yea through that Mediator, mankind was able to receive life from its helper, as through a Mediator it had received in the beginning death from its slayer. You are He Who made for Yourself the body as a servant, that through it You might give to them that desire You, all that they desire. Moreover in You were made visible the hidden wishes of them that slew [You] and buried [You]; through this, that You clothed Yourself in a body. For taking occasion by that body of Yours, Your slayers slew You, and were slain by You; and taking occasion by Your body, Your buriers buried You, and were raised up with You. That Power Which may not be handled came down and clothed itself in members that may be touched; that the needy may draw near to Him, that in touching His manhood they may discern His Godhead. For that dumb man [whom the Lord healed] with the fingers of the body, discerned that He had approached his ears and touched his tongue; Mark 7:32-37 nay, with his fingers that may be touched, he touched Godhead, that may not be touched; when it was loosing the string of his tongue, and opening the clogged doors of his ears. For the Architect of the body and Artificer of the flesh came to him, and with His gentle voice pierced without pain his thickened ears. And his mouth which was closed up, that it could not give birth to a word, gave birth to praise to Him Who made its barrenness fruitful in the birth of words. He, then, Who gave to Adam that he should speak at once without teaching, Himself gave to the dumb that they should speak easily, tongues that are learned with difficulty.

11. Lo, again, another question is made clear:— We enquire in what tongues our Lord gave the power of speaking to the dumb, who from all tongues came unto Him? And although this be easy to know, yet our soul impels us to that knowledge which is greater than this. That [knowledge] then is, to know that through the Son the first man was made. For in this fact, that through Him speech was given to the dumb, the sons of Adam, we may learn that through Him speech was given to Adam their first father. And here also defective nature was supplied by our Lord. He, then, Who was able to supply the defect of nature,— it is manifest that through Him is established the supplying of nature. But there is no greater defect than this, when a man is born without speech. For since it is in this, in speech, that we excel all the creatures, the defect of it is greater than all [other] defects. He, then, through Whom all this defect was supplied—it is manifest that through Him all fullness is

established. But because through Him the members receive all fullness in the womb secretly, through Him their defect was supplied openly; that we might learn that through Him in the beginning the whole frame was constituted. He spat then on His fingers and placed them in the ears of that deaf man; and He mixed clay of His spittle, and spread it upon the eyes of the blind man; John 9:6 that we might learn that as there was defect in the eyeballs of that man who was blind from his mother's womb, so there was defect in the ears of this [man]. So then, by leaven from the body of Him Who completes, the defect of our formation is supplied. For it was not meet that our Lord should have cut off anything from His body to supply the deficiency of other bodies; but with that which could be taken away from Him, He supplied the deficiency of them that lacked; just as in that which can be eaten, mortals eat Him. He supplied then the deficiency, and gave life to mortality, that we may know that from the body in which fullness dwelt, the deficiency of them that lacked was supplied; and from the body in which life dwelt, Colossians 2:9 life was given to mortals.

12. Now the Prophets performed all [other] signs; but on no occasion supplied the deficiency of members. But the deficiency of the body was reserved, that it should be supplied through our Lord; that souls might perceive that it is through Him that every deficiency must be supplied. It is meet, then, that the prudent should perceive that He Who supplies the deficiencies of the creatures, is Master of the formative power of the Creator. But when He was upon earth, our Lord gave to the deaf [and dumb], [the power] of hearing and of speaking tongues which they had not learned; that after He had ascended, [men] might understand that He gave to His disciples [the power] of speaking in every tongue.

13. Now the crucifiers supposed when our Lord was dead that His signs had died with Him. But His signs manifestly continued to live through His disciples; that the murderers might know that the Lord of the signs was living. Beforehand His murderers made trouble, crying out that His disciples had stolen His corpse. But, afterwards, His signs performed through His disciples, filled them with trouble. For His disciples, who were supposed to have stolen the dead corpse, were found to be raising to life the dead corpses of others. But the ungodly were terrified and said—His disciples have stolen His body; that they might be held in contempt when it should be discovered. But the disciples, who [they said] stole the dead body from the living guards, were found to be assailing Death in the name of Him Who was stolen; that [Death] might not steal the life of the living. So then, before He was crucified, He gave the deaf the power of hearing, that after He was crucified, all ears should hear and believe in His resurrection. For beforehand He confirmed our hearing by [the word] of the dumb whose mouth was opened, that it should not doubt concerning the preaching of the Word. Our Redeemer was in every way equipped, that in every way He might rescue us from our captor. For our Lord did not merely clothe Himself in a body, but also arrayed Himself in members and in garments; that through His members and His garments, they that were afflicted with plagues might be encouraged to approach the treasury of healing, that they who were encouraged by His mercy might approach His body and they who were dismayed by His terror might approach His vesture. For with one woman her fear suffered her merely to approach the hem of His raiment; Matthew 9:20 but with another, her love impelled her even to approach His flesh. Now by her who received healing by His garments, those were put to shame who did not receive healing from His words; and by her who kissed His feet, he was rebuked who did not desire to kiss His lips.

14. Now our Lord bestowed great gifts through small means; that He might teach us of what they are deprived who have scorned great things. For if from the hem of His garment, healing like this was secretly stolen, could He not assuredly heal when His word distinctly granted healing? And if defiled lips were sanctified by kissing His feet, how much more should not pure lips be sanctified by kissing His mouth? For the sinful woman by her kisses received the grace of His sacred feet, which had come with toil to bring her remission of her sins. She was refreshing the feet of her Healer with oil freely, for freely had He brought her the treasure of healing for her sickness. For it was not for the sake of his stomach that He Who satisfies the hungry was a guest; but for the sake of the sinful woman's repentance He Who justifies sinners made Himself a guest.

15. For it was not for the dainties of the Pharisees that our Lord hungered, but for the tears of the sinful woman He was an hungered. For when He was satisfied and refreshed by the tears for which He hungered, He turned and rebuked him who had bidden Him to the food that passes away, that He might show that it was not for the sake of food for the body that He had become a guest, but for the sake of help to the soul. For it was not for the sake of pleasure that our Lord mingled with gluttonous men and winebibbers, as the Pharisee supposed; but that in their food as mortals He might mingle for them His teaching as the medicine of life. For even as it was in the matter of eating that the Evil One gave his deadly counsel to Adam and his helpmeet, so in the matter of eating the Good Lord gave His life-giving counsel to the sons of Adam. For He was the fisherman Who came down to fish for the lives of the lost. He saw the publicans and harlots rushing into prodigality and drunkenness; and He hastened to spread His nets among their places of assembly, that He might capture them from food that fattens bodies, to fasting that fattens souls.

16. Now the Pharisee made great preparations for our Lord in His banquet; and the sinful woman did but little things for Him there. Yet he by his great dainties displayed the smallness of his love to our Lord; but she by her tears displayed the greatness of her love to our Lord. Thus he that had invited Him to the great banquet was rebuked because of the smallness of his love; but she by her few tears atoned for the many follies of her offenses. Simon the Pharisee received our Lord as a prophet; because of the signs, and not because of faith. For he was a son of Israel, who when signs drew near, himself also drew near to the Lord of the signs; and when the signs ceased, he also stood naked without faith. This man also when he saw our Lord with signs, esteemed Him as a prophet; but when our Lord ceased from signs, the doubting mind of the sons of his people entered him. *This man if He had been a prophet, He would have known that this woman is a sinner.* But our Lord for Whom in every place all things are easy, here also did not cease from His signs. For He saw that because He had ceased a little from signs, the blind mind of the Pharisee had turned away from Him. For he had said in error, *This man, had He been a prophet, He would have known.* In this reflection therefore the Pharisee doubted concerning our Lord, whether He were a prophet or no; but by this very reflection he learned that He is Lord of the prophets; so that from the source from which error entered him, from that source our Lord might bring help to Him.

17. Our Lord then told him the parable of the two debtors; and made him judge; that by his tongue He might catch him in whose heart the truth was not. *One owed five hundred dinars.* Here then our Lord showed to the Pharisee the multitude of the offenses of the sinful woman. He then who imagined concerning our Lord that He did not know that she was a sinner, in the result heard from Him how great was the debt of her sins. The Pharisee, then, who imagined that our Lord did not know who she was, and what was the reputation of the sinful woman, was found himself not to know who our Lord was, and what was His reputation. Thus he was reprov'd in his error, who did not even perceive his error. For the knowledge that he was assuredly erring eluded him in his error. But he received a reminder from Him Who came to remind them that err. The Pharisee had seen great signs done by our Lord, as Israel by Moses; but because there was not faith in him, that those prodigies which he saw might be conjoined with that faith, a little cause hindered and annulled them. *Had this man been a prophet, he would have known that this woman is a sinner.* For he let slip the wonders that he had seen, and blindness readily entered into him. For he was of the sons of Israel, whom terrible signs accompanied up to the sea, that they might fear; and blessed miracles surrounded in the waste desert, that they might be reconciled; but through lack of faith, for a slight cause, they rejected them [saying]; *As for this Moses who brought us up, we know not what has become of him.* Exodus 32:1 For they ceased to regard the mighty works that had been surrounding them. They perceived that Moses was not near them; so that for this cause that had come near, they drew [near] to the heathenism of Egypt. For Moses was for a little removed from before them, that the calf that was before them might appear, that they might worship it openly also; for they had been secretly worshipping it in their hearts.

18. But when their heathenism from being inward became open, then Moses also from being hidden openly appeared; that he might openly punish those whose heathenism had revelled beneath the

holy cloud which had overshadowed them. But God removed the Shepherd of the flock from it for forty days, that the flock might show that its trust was fixed upon the calf. While God was feeding the flock with all delights, it chose for itself as its Shepherd the calf, which was not able even to eat. Moses who kept them in awe was removed from them, that the idolatry might cry aloud in their mouths, which the restraint of Moses had kept down in their hearts. For they cried: *Make us gods, to go before us.* Exodus 32:1

19. But when Moses came down, he saw their heathenism revelling in the wide plain with drums and cymbals. Speedily, he put their madness to shame by means of the Levites and drawn swords. So likewise here, our Lord concealed His knowledge for a little when the sinful woman approached Him, that the Pharisee might form into shape his thought, as his fathers had shaped the pernicious calf. But when the Pharisee's error came to a head within him, then the knowledge of our Lord was manifested against it and dispelled it; *I entered into your house; you gave Me no water for My feet: But she has moistened them with her tears. Therefore her sins which are many are forgiven her.* Luke 7:44-47 But the Pharisee when he heard our Lord naming the sins of the woman, *many sins*, was greatly put to shame because he had greatly erred. For he had supposed that our Lord did not even know that she was a sinner. Our Lord had before shown Himself as though not knowing her for a sinner. For He allowed him who had seen His signs, to show the doubt of his mind, that it might become manifest that his mind was bound in the ungodliness of his fathers. But the physician, who by his medicines brings out the hidden disease, is not the helper of the disease but its destroyer. For while the disease is hidden, it rules in the members, but when it is made manifest by medicines, it is rooted out. So then the Pharisee saw great things and doubted about small things. But when our Lord saw that his littleness made little of great things in his mind, He speedily showed him not only that she was a sinner, but even the multitude of her sins; that he might be put to shame by little things—he who had not believed in wonders.

20. God gave room to Israel to enlarge its heathenism in the wide desert; whom God cut short with whetted sword, that their idolatry might not be spread abroad among the Gentiles. So our Lord allowed the Pharisee to imagine perverse things, that He might in turn duly reprove his pride. For concerning those things which the sinful woman was doing rightly, the Pharisee was thinking wrongly. But our Lord in His turn rebuked him, concerning the right things which he had wrongly withheld: *I entered your house; you gave Me no water for My feet.* Behold the withholding of that which was due! *But she has moistened them with her tears.* Behold the payment of what was due! *You did not anoint Me with oil.* Behold the token of neglect! *But she has anointed My feet with sweet ointment.* Behold the sign of zeal! You did not kiss Me. Behold the testimony of enmity! But she has not ceased to kiss My feet. Behold the sign of love! So then, by this enumeration our Lord showed that the Pharisee owed Him all those things and had withheld them; but that the sinful woman had come in and rendered all those things which he had withheld. Because then she had paid the debts of him who wrongfully withheld them, the Just One forgave her, her own debt, even her sins.

21. Now the Pharisee, while he was doubting concerning our Lord, that He was not a prophet, pledged himself to the truth unawares, in saying— *Had this man been a prophet, he would have known that this woman is a sinner.* Therefore, if it should be found that our Lord knew that she was a sinner, He is, according to your word, O Pharisee, a prophet. Our Lord, therefore, hastened to show both that she was a sinner, and that her sins were many; that the testimony of his own mouth might confute him as a liar. For he was companion of those that said: *Who is able to forgive sins, but God only?* Mark 2:7 For from them our Lord received testimony, that, therefore, He Who is able to forgive sins, is God. Thenceforth, then, the contention was this, that our Lord should show them whether He was able to forgive sins or no. So He speedily healed the members that were visible, that it might be made sure that He had forgiven the sins that were invisible. For our Lord cast before them the word which was expected to catch him that said it; so that when they should rush forward to catch Him by it, according to their wish, they might be caught by Him according to His wish. *Fear not, My son, your sins are forgiven you.* Matthew 9:2 While they were hastening to catch Him

on the charge of blasphemy, they pledged themselves unawares to the truth. For *Who is able forgive sins but God only?* Accordingly, our Lord confuted them [as though saying]: If I shall have shown that I am able to forgive sins, even though you do not believe in Me that I am God; yet abide by your word, which determined that whoso forgives sins is God. Therefore that our Lord might teach them that He forgives sins, He forgave that man his hidden sin, and caused him to carry his bed openly; that by the carrying of the bed which carries [those that lie on it], they might believe in the slaying of the sin that slays.

This is a wonderful thing, that while our Lord there called Himself the Son of man, His adversaries, unawares, made Him to be God as forgiving sins. Accordingly, while they supposed that they had ensnared Him by their craftiness, He entangled them in their craftiness; He made it a testimony to His truth. So their evil thoughts became unto them as bitter bonds; and that they might not free themselves from their bonds, our Lord strengthened them by giving strength to him [to whom He said]— *Arise, take up your bed and go into your house.* Matthew 9:6 For the testimony could not again be undone, as though He were not God; inasmuch as He forgave sins. Nor yet could it be falsely affirmed that He had not forgiven sins; for lo! He had healed [men's] limbs. For our Lord bound up His hidden testimonies in those which were manifest; that their own testimony might choke the infidels. Accordingly our Lord made their thoughts to war against them, because they had warred with the Good One, who by His healing power warred against their diseases. For that which Simon the Pharisee imagined, and that which the scribes his companions imagined, they imagined in their hearts secretly; but our Lord spread it forth openly. Our Lord represented their hidden imaginations before them, that they might learn that His knowledge reveals and shows their secret things(;) so that though they had not recognized Him by His open signs, they might recognize Him when He represented their secret imaginations; and that if only but by this—that He searched out their hearts—their hearts might perceive that He was God—that at least when they saw that their imaginations could not be hidden from Him, they might cease from imagining evil against Him. For they had imagined evil in their heart; but He exposed it openly, by this [word] *Why are you imagining evil in your heart?* So that by this, that our Lord perceived their hidden imagination, they should recognize His hidden Godhead. For that Godhead, by this very thing that they in their error were reviling it, was by that reviling made known to them. For they reviled our Lord in the body, and supposed that He was not God, and cast Him down below from on high; but by the body He was made known to them as being God, by that body which was found passing to and fro among them. For they, by casting Him down to the depth, attempted to show this, that God Who is above, cannot in bodily wise be born below. But He by His passage up to the height, taught them this; that for the body also that is sent down below, it is not its nature to pass up to the height rather than down to the depths; so that by the body which from below passed on high upwards in the air, they might learn of God that by His grace He descended down below from on high.

22. But why instead of a stern reproof did our Lord speak a parable of persuasion to that Pharisee? He spoke the parable to him tenderly, that he, though froward, might unawares be enticed to correct his perversities. For the waters that are congealed by the force of a cold wind, the heat of the sun gently dissolves. So our Lord did not at once oppose him harshly, that he might not give occasion to the rebellious to rebel again. But by blandishment He brought him under the yoke, that when he had been yoked, He might work with him, though rebellious, according to His will. Now, because Simon was proudly minded, our Lord began humbly with him, that He might not be to him a teacher according to his folly. For if that Pharisee retained the Pharisees' pride, how could our Lord cause him to acquire humility, when the treasure of humility was not under his hand? But since our Lord was teaching humility to all men, He showed that His treasury was free from every form of pride. But this was for our sakes, that He might teach us, that whatever treasuries pride enters into, it is by boastfulness that it gains access to them. On this account *let not your left hand know what your right hand does.* Matthew 2:3 Our Lord then did not employ harsh reproof, because His coming was of grace: He did not refrain from reproof, because His later coming will be of retribution. For He put men to fear in His coming of humility; because *it is a fearful thing to fall*

into His hands Hebrews 10:31 when He shall come *in flaming fire*. 2 Thessalonians 1:7-8 But our Lord bestowed the most part of His helps rather by persuasion than by reproof. For the gentle shower softens the earth and penetrates all through it: but violent rain binds and hardens the face of the earth, so that it does not receive it. For a harsh word excites wrath, and with it are bound up wrongs. And when a harsh word has opened the door, wrath enters in, and at the heels of wrath, along with it enter in wrongs.

23. But because all helps attend on humble speech, He who came to render help employed it. Observe how mighty is the power of a humble word; for lo! By it vehement wrath is put down, and by it the billows of a swelling mind are calmed. But hear whence this was. That Pharisee thought, *had this man been a prophet, he would have known*. Contempt as well as blasphemy can be discerned here. Hear how our Lord in reply encountered this: *Simon, I have somewhat to say unto you*. Love and reproof can be discerned here. For this is a word of love such as friends use with their friends. For when an adversary reproaches his adversary, he speaks not to him like this; for the madness of anger does not allow enemies to speak reasonably one to another. But He Who prayed for them that crucified Him, that He might show that the fury of anger had no power over Him, was about to put to the question those that crucified Him, that He might show that He was governed by reason and not by anger.

24. Accordingly, our Lord placed a word of conciliation at the beginning of His speech, that by conciliation He might pacify the Pharisee, into whose mind discord and division had entered. He was the physician who ranged His cures against the things hurtful [to men]. Our Lord then shot forth this word as an arrow, and set in the head of it conciliation as the barb. And He anointed it with love, that soothes the members; so that when it flew into him who was full of discord, he was at once changed from discord to harmony. For straightway upon hearing that humble voice of our Lord, saying— *Simon, I have somewhat to say unto you*, that secret despiser returned his answer, *Say on, Lord*. For the sweet voice entered his bitter mind, and begot of it pleasant fruit. For he who before this voice was one that secretly despised, after this voice became one that openly honoured. For humility, by its sweet utterance, subdues even its adversaries into rendering it honour. For it is not over its friends that humility tests its power, but over its enemies it exhibits its victories.

25. Thus the heavenly King arrayed Himself in armour of humility, and so conquered the bitter one, and drew from him a good answer as a sure pledge [of victory]. This is the armour concerning which Paul said, that by it *we humble the loftiness that exalts itself against the knowledge of God*. 2 Corinthians 10:5 For Paul had received the proof of it in himself. For as he had been warring in pride, but was conquered in humility, so is to be conquered every *lofty thing which exalts itself* against this humility. For Saul was journeying to subdue the disciples with hard words, but the Master of the disciples subdued him with a humble word. For when He to whom all things are possible manifested Himself to him, giving up all things else, He spoke to him in humility alone, that He might teach us that a soft tongue is more effectual than all things else against hard thoughts. For neither threats nor words of terror were heard by Paul, but weak words not able to avenge themselves: *Saul, Saul, why do you persecute Me?* Acts 9:4 But the words which were thought not even capable of avenging themselves, were found to be taking vengeance by drawing him away from the Jews and making him a goodly vessel. He who was full of the bitter will of the Jews, was then filled with the sweet preaching of the cross. When he was filled with the bitterness of the crucifiers, in his bitterness he made havoc of the churches. But when he was filled with the sweetness of the Crucified, he embittered the synagogues of the crucifiers. Our Lord then strove with humble voice with him, who had been warring against His churches with hard bonds. Thus Saul, who had been binding the disciples with bitter chains, was bound with pleasant persuasions; that he might not again cast the disciples into bonds; since he was bound by the Crucified, Who puts to silence evil voices, whom all they that were set against Him could not bind or injure. But when Paul ceased from binding the disciples, he himself was bound with chains by the persecutors. But when he was bound with chains, he loosed the bonds of idolatry by his bonds.

26. *Saul, Saul, why do you persecute me?* He who had conquered His persecutors in the world

below, and ruled over the angels in the world above, spoke from above with humble voice. And He Who while He was upon earth had denounced ten woes against His crucifiers, when He was in heaven, did not denounce even one woe against Saul, His persecutor. Now, our Lord denounced woe to His crucifiers, that He might teach His disciples not to be dismayed by His murderers. But our Lord spoke in humility from heaven, that in humility the heads of His church might speak. And if any one should say, Wherein did our Lord speak humbly with Paul? For lo! The eyes of Paul were grievously smitten; let him know that it was not from our merciful Lord that this chastisement proceeded, who spoke those words in humility; but from the vehement light that vehemently shone forth there. And this light did not strike Paul by way of retribution on account of his deeds, but on account of the vehemence of its rays it hurt him, as he also said: *When I arose, I could discern nothing for the glory of the light.* Acts 22:11 But if that light was glorious, O Paul, how did the glorious light become a blinding light to you yourself? The light was that which, according to its nature, illuminates above, but contrary to its nature, it shone forth below. When it illumined above, it was delightful; but when it shone forth below, it was blinding. For the light was both grievous and pleasant. It was grievous and violent towards the eyes of the flesh; and it was pleasant and lightful to those who are fire and spirit. Matthew 4:11

27. *For I saw a light from heaven that excelled the sun, and its light shone upon me.* Acts 26:13 So then mighty rays streamed forth without moderation, and were poured upon feeble eyes, which moderate rays refresh. For, lo! The sun also in measure assists the eyes, but beyond measure and out of measure it injures the eyes. And it is not by way of vengeance in wrath that it smites them. For lo! It is the friend of the eyes and beloved of the eyeballs. And this is a marvel; while with its gentle lustre it befriends and assists the eyes; yet by its vehement rays it is hostile to and injures the eyeballs. But if the sun which is here below, and of kindred nature with the eyes that are here below, yet injures them, in vehemence and not in anger, in its proper force and not in wrath; how much more should the light that is from above, akin to the things that are above, by its vehemence injure a man here below who has suddenly gazed upon that which is not akin to his nature? For since Paul might have been injured by the vehemence of this sun to which he was accustomed, if he gazed upon it not according to custom, how much more should he be injured by the glory of that light to which his eyes never had been accustomed? For behold, Daniel also Daniel 10:5-6 was melted and poured out on every side before the glory of the angel, whose vehement brightness suddenly shone upon him! And it was not because of the angel's wrath that his human weakness was melted, just as it is not on account of the wrath or hostility of fire that wax is melted before it; but on account of the weakness of the wax it cannot keep firm and stand in presence of fire. When then the two approach one another, the power of the fire by its quality prevails; but the weakness of the wax on the other hand is brought lower even than its former weakness.

28. But the majesty of the angel was manifested in itself; the weakness of flesh in itself could not endure. *For my inward parts were turned into corruption.* Daniel 10:8 But yet men see men, their fellows, and faint before them: Yet it is not by their bright splendour that they are moved, but by their harsh will. For servants are terrified by the wrath of their masters, and those that are judged tremble through fear of their judges. But this did not befall Daniel on account of threatening or anger from the angel; but on account of his terrible nature and prevailing brightness. For it was not with threatening, the angel came to him. For if he had come with threatening, how could a mouth full of threatening become full of peace, when it came, saying, *Peace be unto you, you man of desire?* Thus that mouth that was a fountain of thunderings— *for the voice of his words was like the voice of many hosts,* Daniel 10:6 that voice became to him a fountain teeming with and containing peace. And when [the voice] reached the terrified ears which were thirsty for the encouraging greeting of peace, there was opened and poured out [for Daniel] a draught of peace. And by the angel's later [word of] peace, those ears were encouraged, which had been terrified by his former voice first. For [he said], *Let my Lord speak because I have been strengthened.* Daniel 10:19 But because in that heart-moving vision the fiery angel was about to announce nothing concerning Him, [the Lord], on this account that majesty [of the angel] was forward to give the salutation of peace to

the lowliness [of the prophet]; that by the gladdening salutation which that awful majesty gave, the dread should be removed which lay on the mind of the lowliness and that was terrified.

29. But what shall we say about the Lord of the Angel, Who said to Moses— *No man shall see Me and live?* Exodus 33:20 Is it on account of the fury of His anger, that whoso shall see Him shall die? Or on account of the splendour of His Being? For that Being was not made and was not created: so that eyes which have been made and created cannot look upon it. For if it is on account of His fury that whoso shall look upon Him shall not live, lo! He would have granted to Moses to see Him because of His great love to him. Accordingly, the Self-Existent by His vision slays them that look upon Him; but He slays, not because of harsh fury but because of His potent splendour. Because of this He in His great love granted to Moses to see His glory; yet in the same great love He restrained him from seeing His glory. But it was not that the glory of His majesty would have been at all diminished, but that weak eyes could not suffice to bear the overpowering billows of His glory. Therefore God, Who in His love desired that the vision of Moses should be directed upon the goodly brightness of His glory, in His love did not desire that the vision of Moses should be blinded amidst the potent rays of His glory. Therefore Moses saw and saw not. He saw, that he might be exalted; he saw not, that he might not be injured. For by that which he saw, his lowliness was exalted; and by that which he saw not, his weakness was not blinded. As also our eyes look upon the sun and look not upon it; and by what they see are assisted; and by what they see not, are uninjured. Thus the eye sees, that it may be benefited; but it ventures not [to look], that it may not be injured. So then through love God hindered Moses from seeing that glory that was too hard for his eyes: As also Moses through his love prevented the children of his people from seeing the brightness that was too strong for their eyes. For he learned from Him Who covered him, and spread His hand, and hid from him the splendour of the glory, that it might not injure him; so that he also should spread the veil and conceal from the feeble ones the overpowering splendour, that it might not hurt them. Now when Moses saw that the sons of perishable flesh could not gaze upon the borrowed glory that was on his face, his heart failed within him; for that he had sought to dare to gaze upon the glory of the Eternal Being; in whose floods, lo! Those above and those below are plunged and spring forth; the depths whereof none can fathom; the shores whereof none can reach; whereof no end or limit can be found.

30. Now if any one should say, Was it not then possible for God [to bring it to pass] that Moses should look upon that glory and not be injured; and that Paul likewise should look upon the light and take no hurt? Let him that says this understand that though it is possible for the power and overruling force of God, that the eyes should change their nature; yet it is inconsistent with the wisdom and nature of God that the order of nature should be confused. For, lo! It is also easy for the arm of the artificer to destroy [his fabrics]; but it is inconsistent with the good sense of the artificer to ruin goodly ornaments. And if any one wishes to say, concerning something which to himself seems meet—It were meet for God to do this; let him know that it is meet for himself not to speak thus concerning God. For the chief of all things meet is this: that a man should not teach God what is meet. For it becomes not man to become God's instructor. For this is a great wickedness, that we should become teachers to Him, of Whom these created mouths of ours are unable to tell, in the formation of His handiwork. For it is an unpardonable iniquity, that the mouth in its boldness should teach what is proper to that God by Whose grace it learned to speak at all. If any one then shall say, It had been meet for God to do this, I also, because I have a mouth and a tongue, may say, It had been meet for God not to give to man freedom by which he thus reproaches Him Who is not to be reproached. But I do not dare to say that it was not meet for Him to give it; lest I also make myself an instructor of Him Who is not to be instructed. For because He is just, He would have been reproached by Himself, had He not given freedom to men, as though through grudging He had withheld from lowly man the gift that makes great. Therefore He gave it betimes by His grace, that He might not be justly reproached by Himself; even though through freedom, His own gift, lo! blasphemers wickedly reproach Him.

31. Now why were the eyes of Moses made to shine because of the glory which he saw, while on

the contrary [the eyes of] Paul, instead of being made to shine, were made utterly blind? Yet we may be sure that the eyes of Moses were not stronger than those of Paul; for they were akin in one brotherhood of blood and flesh. But another power through grace sustained the eyes of Moses; whereas no power was added in mercy to the eyes of Paul, beyond their natural power, which in wrath was taken from them. But if we say that their natural power was taken away from them, and that [it was] on this account he was defeated and overcome by the overpowering light—for had their natural power remained, they would have been able to endure that supernatural light. Yet let us be sure of this, that as often as anything transcendent is revealed, that surpasses and transcends our nature, our natural power is not able to stand before it. But if on the other hand another power beyond our natural one is added to us, then by that power received by us in excess of and beyond nature, we shall be able to stand before any strange thing which comes upon us supernaturally.

32. For, lo! The power of our ears and eyes is in us and is formed in us in its natural manner; and yet our sight and hearing cannot stand before mighty thunder and lightning; first, because they come with vehemence; and secondly, because their potency suddenly surprises and astounds our feebleness. This is what happened to Paul. For the potency of the light suddenly surprised his feeble eyes and injured them. But the greatness of the voice brought low his strength and entered his ears and opened them. For they had been closed up by Jewish contentiousness as by wax. For the voice did not plough up the ears, as the light injured the eyeballs. Why? But because it was meet that he should hear, but not that he should see. Therefore the doors of hearing were opened by the voice as by a key: but the doors of sight were shut by the light that should open them. Why then was it meet that he should hear? Clearly because by that voice our Lord was able to reveal Himself as being persecuted by Saul. For He was not able to show Himself by sight as being persecuted; for there was no way whereby this should be, that the son of David should be seen fleeing and Saul pursuing after Him. For this happened in very deed with that first Saul and with the first David. The one was pursuing; the other was being persecuted; they both of them saw and were seen, each by the other. But here the ear alone could hear of the persecution of the Son of David; the eye could not see that He was being persecuted. For it was in [the person of] others He was being persecuted, while He was Himself in heaven;— He Who beforetime had been persecuted in His own person while He was upon earth. Therefore the ears [of Saul] were opened and his eyes were closed. And He Who by sight could not represent Himself before Saul as persecuted, represented Himself by word before him as persecuted; when he cried and said— *Saul, Saul, why do you persecute Me?* Accordingly, his eyes were closed, because they could not see the persecution of Christ; but his ears were opened, because they could hear of His persecution. So then although the eyes of Moses were bodily eyes, as those of Paul, yet his inward eyes were Christian; for *Moses wrote of Me*, John 5:46 but the outward eyes of Paul were open, while the inward [eyes] were shut. Then because the inward eyes of Moses shone clear, his outward eyes also were made to shine clearly. But the outward eyes of Paul were closed, that by the closing of those that were outward, there might come to pass the opening of those that were inward. For he who by the outward eyes was not able to see the Lord in His signs, he when those bodily eyes were closed, saw with those within. And because he had received the proof in his own person, he wrote to those who had their bodily eyes full of light— *May He illumine the eyes of your hearts.* Ephesians 1:18 Therefore the signs manifested to the external eyes of the Jews, profited them not at all; but faith of the heart opened the eyes of the heart of the Gentiles. But because, had Moses come down in his accustomed aspect from the mountain, without that shining of countenance, and said, I saw there the glory of God, the faithless fathers would not have believed him; so also, had Paul, without suffering blindness of his eyes, said, I heard the voice of Christ, the sons who crucified Christ would not have received it as true. Therefore He set on Moses as in love, an excelling sign of splendour, that the deceivers might believe that he had seen the Divine glory; but on Saul, as on a persecutor, He set the hateful sign of blindness, that the liars might believe that he had heard the words of Christ; that so you might not again speak against Moses, and that these might not doubt concerning Paul. For God set signs on the bodies of the blind, and sent them to those who were in error, who used to make signs upon the borders of their garments. But they remembered not the signs on their garments, and in the signs of

the body they greatly erred. The fathers who saw the glory of Moses, did not obey Moses; nor did the sons who saw the blindness of Paul believe Paul. But three times in the desert they threatened to stone Moses and his house with stones as dogs. For *all congregation bade stone them with stones*. Numbers 14:10 And thrice they scourged Paul with rods as a dog on his body. [?] Thrice was I beaten with rods. 2 Corinthians 11:25 These are the lions who through their love for their Lord were beaten as dogs and were torn as flocks of sheep, those flocks that used to stone their guardian shepherds, in order that ravening wolves might rule over them.

33. But the crucifiers who corrupted the soldiers with a bribe, they perhaps said concerning Paul—The disciples have bribed him with a bribe; therefore he associates with the disciples. For those who by the giving of a bribe strove that the resurrection of our Lord might not be preached, slandered Paul with the name of a bribe, that his revelation might not be believed. Therefore the voice astonished him, and the light blinded him, that his astonishment might pacify his violence, and his blindness might put to shame his slanderers. For the voice astounded his hearing in this, that it said meekly to him—(*Saul, why do you persecute Me?*): and the light blinded his sight, that when the slanderers should have said that he had received a bribe, and thereby was suborned to lie, his blindness which had been brought about by that light might confute them, showing that it was through it that he had been driven to speak what was true. So that those who supposed that his hands had received a bribe, and that because of it his lips lied, might know that his eyes had given up their light and because of this his lips proclaimed the truth. But again for another reason the meek voice accompanied the overpowering light; namely, that as it were from meekness unto exaltation our Lord might produce help for the persecutor; in like manner as also all His helps were produced, from lowliness unto greatness. For our Lord's meekness continued from the womb to the tomb. And observe that greatness comes close upon His lowliness, and exaltation on His meekness. For whereas His greatness was observed in various things, His Divinity was revealed by glorious signs; that it might be known that the One Who stood among them, was not one but two. For His nature is not humble nature alone, nor is it an exalted nature alone; but there are two natures that are mingled, the one with the other; the exalted and the humble.

Therefore these two natures show forth their qualities; so that by the quality of each of the two, mankind might distinguish between the two; that it might not be supposed that He was merely one—He Who was two by commingling: but that it might be known that He was two in respect of the blending, though He was one in respect of His Being. These things our Lord, through His humility and exaltation, taught to Paul also in the way to Damascus.

34. For our Lord appeared to Saul in meekness, since meekness was close to His greatness; that because of His greatness it might be known Who He is Who spoke meekly. For even as His disciples preached on earth of our Lord in meekness and in exaltation—in the meekness of His persecution, and in the exaltation of His signs,— so also our Lord preached of Himself in meekness and in exaltation in Paul's presence—in the exaltation of the potency of the light which flashed, and in the meekness of that meek voice which said; *Saul, why do you persecute Me?*— so that the preaching of Him which His disciples preached concerning Him in presence of many, should be like to that preaching which He preached concerning Himself. But even as, if He had not spoken meekly, it would not have been made known there that He was meek, so, had He not appeared there as an overpowering light, it would not have been made known there that He was exalted.

35. And if you should say; What necessity was there that He should speak humbly? Could He not have convinced him also through the greatness of the light? Know, you that questionest, that this rejoinder may be returned to you; that because it was necessary that He should speak humbly, He therefore spoke humbly. For by Him Who is wise in all things, there was done there nothing that was not meet to be done. For He Who has given knowledge to artificers to do each thing severally with the instrument meet for it, does He not Himself know that which He gives others the power of knowing? Therefore whatsoever has been wrought or is being wrought by the Godhead, that very thing that is wrought by Him at that time, is for the furtherance of [God's] working at that time, even though to the blind the Divine orderings seem contrariwise. But that we may not restrain by

constraint of words a wise enquirer, one that wishes to grow by true persuasion as the seed by the rain-drops; know, O enquirer, that because Saul was a persecutor, but our Lord was endeavouring to make him persecuted instead of persecutor, therefore He of His wisdom made haste to cry— *Saul, why do you persecute Me?*— in order that, when Saul who was being made a disciple, heard Him Who was making him a disciple, saying, *Why do you persecute Me?* he might know that the Master Whose servant he was becoming, was a persecuted Master, and so might quickly cast away the persecution of his former masters, and might clothe himself in the persecuted state of his persecuted Master. Now any master who wishes to teach a man anything, teaches him either by deeds or by words. But if he teach him neither by words nor by deeds, the man cannot be instructed in his craft. So that, even though our Lord did not teach Paul humility by deeds, yet by voice He taught him endurance of persecution which He could not teach him by deed. For before our Lord was crucified, He taught His disciples humble endurance of persecution by deed. But after He had finished His persecution by crucifixion, as He said, *Lo! All things are finished.* John 19:30 He could not vainly return and begin again anything which once for all had been wisely finished. Or why again do you seek for the crucifixion and shame of the Son of God?

36. For even though our Lord in His grace had beforetime brought the majesty of His Godhead into humility, yet afterwards in His justice He willed not again to bring back to humiliation the littleness of manhood which had been made great. But because it was necessary that the persecuting disciple should learn endurance of persecution, while yet it was impossible that the Master should again come down and be persecuted afresh; He taught him by voice that which could not be taught by deeds. *Saul, why do you persecute Me?* The explanation of which utterance is this—Saul, why are you not persecuted in Me? But in order that Saul might not suppose that it was because of His weakness our Lord was persecuted, the strength of the overpowering light which shone upon him, convinced him. For if the eyes of Saul could not endure the shining of that light, how could the hands of Saul bind and fetter the disciples of the Lord of that light? But his hands had fettered the disciples, that he might learn their power in their bonds; while his eyes could not endure the beams, that by their strength he might learn his own weakness. But had not the power of that light shone upon him, when the Lord said to him; *Saul, why do you persecute Me?* Then because of the madness of the pride wherein Paul was set up at that time, he would perhaps have said this to Him, I am persecuting You for this reason, because You have said, *Why do you persecute Me?* For who is there that would not persecute You, when You, with such strength, troublest Your persecutor with these feeble cries. But the humility of our Lord was heard in the voice, and the power of the light shone forth in the beams. So Paul could not despise the humility of the voice, because of the glory of the light.

37. Thus were his ears brought into discipleship to the voice which he heard, because his eyes sufficed not to endure the beams which they saw. That marvel of the dawning of the light was shed forth upon his eyeballs and did them hurt; and the voice of the Lord of the light entered his ears, but did them no harm. But between the light and the Lord of the light, which ought to have been the stronger? For if the light which was created by Him was so overpowering, how much more overpowering He by Whom this very light was created! But if the Lord of the light was overpowering, as indeed He is overpowering, how did His voice enter the hearing and not harm it? Even as that light which hurt the sight? But hear the wonder and the marvel which our Lord wrought by His grace. For our Lord willed not to humble that light which is His; but He being Lord of the light humbled Himself. But as the Lord of the light is greater than the light which is His, so great is the glory that the Lord of the light should humble Himself rather than humble the light.

38. As also in the night, while He was praying, it is written— *There appeared to Him an angel strengthening Him.* Luke 22:43 But here all mouths, celestial and terrestrial, are insufficient to give thanks to Him by Whose hand the angels were created; that He was strengthened for the sake of sinners by that angel who was created by His hand. As then the angel from above stood in glory and in brightness, while the Lord of the angel, that He might *exalt* man who was degraded, stood in degradation and humility; so also here that light flashed forth in manifestation; but the Lord of the

light, for the sake of helping one persecutor, spoke with humble voice and lowly words.

39. For this cause therefore that light which was overpowering, because it was not diminished, entered the eyeballs with overpowering manifestation and injured them. But the Lord of the light, because He had lowered Himself in order to help, His lowly voice entered the ears that had need and helped them. But in order that the help of that voice which had become lowly, might not fail Him, therefore the strength of that light was not lowered, in order that because of that light, which was not lowered, the help of that voice which was lowered, might be believed. But this is a marvel, that until our Lord made Himself lowly in voice, Paul was not made lowly in deed; for even as, before He came down and clothed Himself in a body, our Lord was in exaltation with His Father; yet in His exaltation men did not learn humility; but when He humbled Himself and came down from His exaltation, then by His humbleness humility was soon among men; so again after His resurrection and ascension He was in glory at the right hand of God His Father, but by that His exaltation, Paul did not learn humility. Therefore He that was exalted and sat at the right hand of His Father, ceased from glorious and lofty speech, and He cried as one wronged and oppressed, with feeble and meek words, saying— *Saul, Saul, why do you persecute Me?* Thus, humble words prevailed over harsh bridles. For by humble words, as by bridles, the persecuted led the persecutor from the broad way of the persecutors into the narrow way of the persecuted. And since all the signs that were done in the Name of our Lord did not convince Paul, our Lord made haste to meet with humility him who was hastening on the way to Damascus in the vehemence of pride. Thus by His humble words, the harsh vehemence of pride was checked.

40. He then Who used humble words with Paul His persecutor, He also used humble sayings with the Pharisee. For so great is the power of humility that even God Who overcomes all did not overcome without it. Humility was able also in the wilderness to bear the burden of the stiff-necked people. For against the people who were more stubborn than all men, was set Moses who was more meek than all men. For God Who needs not anything, when He had set free the people, afterwards had need of the humility of Moses, that this humility might endure the wrath and murmuring of the People that provoked him. For humility alone could endure the gainsayings of that people, which the signs of Egypt and the prodigies (wrought) in the desert could not subdue. For when pride had wrought divisions among the people, humility by its prayer used to close up their divisions. If then the humility of the Stammerer endured six hundred thousand, how much more exceedingly did the humility of Him, Who gave speech to the Stammerer endure? For the humility of Moses is a shadow of the humility of our Lord.

41. Our Lord then saw that Simon the Pharisee did not believe the signs and wonders which he had seen. He came to him to persuade him with humble words; and humble utterances overcame him, whom mighty wonders had not overcome. What then are the wonders which that Pharisee had seen? He had seen the dead raised to life, the lepers cleansed, the blind with eyes opened. These signs compelled that Pharisee to entertain our Lord as a prophet. But he who entertained Him as a prophet, changed so as to despise Him for one who had not knowledge, saying (namely);— *Had this man been a prophet, He would have known that this woman— who had approached Him— is a sinner.* But we may despise the Pharisee and say, Had he been a man of discernment, he would have learned from that sinful woman, who approached our Lord, not that He was a prophet, but the Lord of the Prophets. For the tears of the sinful woman testified, that it was not a prophet they were propitiating, but Him, Who, as God, was angry with her sins. For, because the prophets sufficed not to raise sinners to life, the Lord of the prophets came down to heal those who were in evil case. But what physician is there who hinders the smitten, that they should not come to him, O blind Pharisee, as it befell that she came to our Physician! For why did the smitten woman approach Him—she, whose wounds were healed by her tears? He Who had come down to be a fountain of healing among the diseased, was proclaiming this— *Let every one that is thirsty, come and drink.* John 7:37 But when the Pharisees, this man's companions, murmured at the healing of sinners, the Physician taught concerning His art, that the door is opened for the diseased and not for the whole, for *they that are whole need not a physician but they that are sick.* Matthew 9:12 Therefore the praise of the

physician is the healing of the diseased—that the shame of the Pharisee who reproved the praise of our physician may be greater. But our Lord used to show signs in the streets; and also when He entered into the house of the Pharisee, He showed signs which were greater than those He had shown outside. For in the street He made whole the bodies that were sick, but within He healed the souls that were diseased. Outside, He raised to life the mortality of Lazarus: but within, He raised to life the mortality of the sinful woman. He restored the living soul to the corpse from which it had gone out; and He expelled from the sinful woman the deadly sin which dwelt within her. But the blind (Pharisee) who was insufficient for great things, because of the great things which he saw not, belied those small things which he had seen. For he was a son of Israel who attributed weakness to his God, and not to himself. For (Israel said), *Though He smote the rock and the waters flowed, can He also give us bread?* But when our Lord saw his weakness, that it missed the great things and, because of them, the small things also, He hastened to put forward a simple word, as though for a babe that was being reared on milk, and was not capable of solid food.

42. For by that wherein you knew, O Pharisee, that our Lord was not a prophet, by that very thing it was proved that you did not know the prophets. For by this that you said— *Had this man been a prophet, he would have known*, you show herein that (in your esteem) whoever is a prophet knows all things. But lo! some matters were hidden from the prophets; how then do you attribute the revelation of all hidden things to the prophets? But this unwise teacher who perverted the scriptures of the Prophets, did not even understand what he read in the scriptures. For it was not only that the greatness of the Lord was not discerned by that Pharisee, but he did not even discern the weakness of the prophets. For our Lord, as knowing all things, allowed that sinful woman to come in and receive His peace. But Elisha, as one ignorant, said to the Shunamite;— *Peace to you and peace be to the child.* 2 Kings 4:26 Accordingly he who supposed that our Lord was proved not to be a prophet, was himself proved not to know the Prophets. When the mind contains malice and cannot refrain, then that malice which is in it, is cunning in finding a pretext for opening a door; but in case that pretext, in which the deceiver takes refuge is confuted, he knows that within this there is another concealed which he may employ.

Now observe this son of Israel, how he was like Israel in stubbornness. For heathenism was bound up in the mind of the People; therefore Moses was taken away from them, that the wickedness that was within them might become manifest. But that they might not be put to shame, and that it might not be known how they were seeking idols, they first sought for Moses, and then for idols. *As for this Moses, we know not what has become of him.* Exodus 32:1 And if God, Who cannot die, brought you out of Egypt, why do you seek for a man, who at some time must die? Yet they did not desire Moses, that he should become a god to them; because Moses could hear and see and reprove; but they sought for a god who could neither hear nor see nor reprove. But whenever Moses shall have died, what shall remain of him? For behold, your God is a living God, and lo! He has revealed Himself to you by living testimonies. For the bright cloud was at that time overshadowing them, and they had the pillar of light in the night-time. Water flowed for them from the rock, and they drank its streams. They were delighted every day by tasting that manna, the fame of which we have heard. How was Moses far from you? Behold the signs of Moses surround you. Or how does the person of Moses profit you, when you have such a guide as this? If your garments wear not old, and a temperate air refreshes you, if the heat and the cold do not hurt you, and you have rest from war, and art far removed from the fear of Egypt—what thing then was lacking to Israel that he sought for Moses? Open heathenism was lacking to him. For it was not for Moses that he sought, but on the pretext of Moses' absence he followed after the calf. Thus briefly have we showed, that when the mind is full of anything, but an opposing reason meets it, then it forces it by violence to open for it a door to that which it desires.

43. You too, O Pharisee, thirsty for blasphemy, what did you see in our Lord, to show that He was not a prophet? For lo! The things that belong to the Lord of the Prophets were seen in Him. For the gushing tears made haste to proclaim that they were shed as before God. The sorrowing kisses testified that they sought to win over the creditor to tear up the debt-bonds. The goodly ointment of

the sinful woman proclaimed that it was a bribe of penitence. These medicines the sinful woman offered to her Physician, that by her tears He might wash away her stains, by her kisses He might heal her wounds, by her sweet ointment He might make her evil name sweet as the odour of her ointment. This is the Physician who heals men by the medicines which they bring to Him. These marvels were shown at that time; but to the Pharisee instead of these there appeared blasphemy. For what could be established in the weeping of the sinful woman, but that He can justify sinners? Else, judge in your mind, O blind teacher, why was that mournful weeping in the joyful feast, so that, while they were making merry with food, she was in bitterness with her tears? Because she was a sinner, her deeds were unchaste, and these (deeds) she was wont to do. But if at that time, from the wantonness of sinners she was turned to chastity, then acknowledge, you who said *He is not a prophet*, that He is One who makes those chaste that have been wanton. For by this, that you know that she is a sinner, and by this, that you see her now penitent, search out where is the power that changed her. For he ought to have fallen down and worshipped Him Who, while silent, in His silence turned to chastity those sinners whom the Prophets by their vehement utterances could not turn to chastity. A wonderful and marvellous thing was seen in the house of the Pharisee; a sinful woman that sat and wept, and she who wept said not wherefore she wept; nor did He at Whose feet she sat say to her, Why do you weep? The sinner did not need with her lips to petition our Lord, because she believed that He knew, as God, the petitions that were hidden in her tears. Nor did our Lord ask her, What have you done? For He knew that by her pure kisses she was atoning for her transgressions. So then she, because she believed that He knew the things that were hidden, offered to Him her prayers in her heart; for knowing secret things He had no need of the outward lips. If then the sinner, because she knew that our Lord was God, sought not to persuade Him with her lips; and our Lord, because as God He discerned her thoughts, therefore questioned her not; do you not, O tyrant Pharisee, from the silence of both understand the position of both; that she was praying as to God in her heart, and that He as God was in silence searching out her thoughts? But the Pharisee could not see and understand these things, because he was a son of Israel who though perceiving, saw not, and though he heard, understood not. Though then our Lord knew that that Pharisee thought evil thoughts concerning Him, He confuted him gently and not harshly. For sweetness came down from on high to break down the bitterness with which the Evil One had stamped us. Therefore our Lord taught that Pharisee of Himself and in Himself, as though saying, Even as I, though I knew the evil things in your heart, yet gently persuaded you, so though I knew the evil things of this woman, I mercifully received her.

But let us hear how long-suffering was drawn after the hasty thought, so as to draw it from haste to understanding. *A certain creditor had two debtors. One owed five hundred dinars, and the other fifty dinars.—* (Be not wearied, O hearer, at the length of the repetition of the parable, lest you be contrary to Him Who in the parable was long-suffering for the sake of giving help.)— *At length, when neither of them had wherewithal to pay, he forgave them both. Which of them do you think would love him more? Simon said to Him, I suppose that he, to whom more was forgiven. Our Lord said to him, You have rightly judged.* Our Lord in His justice commended the perverse (Pharisee), because of the right judgment, which he had judged, though he in his wickedness had answered the good Lord concerning the mercy He had wrought. Now many things are laid up in this parable; for it is a treasury full of many helps. Why then did our Lord require that the Pharisee should pass judgment for Him between the two debtors? Was it not that the greatness, coming after the littleness, might show itself that nothing of the littleness was drawn after the greatness? For our Lord, since He knew the secret things, was long-suffering and questioned Simon, that those might be put to shame who, though not knowing, were hasty to blame, but not to enquire. For if, O man, before I heard your judgment passed, I judged not of it, why did you, before you heard from Me, the case of the sinful woman, hastily blame? Now this was done for our instruction, that we might be swift to enquire, but slow to pass our sentence. For had that Pharisee been long-suffering, lo! That pardon which our Lord in the end gave to the sinful woman, would have taught him everything. Long-suffering is wont to acquire all things for those that acquire it.

44. But again; through the forgiveness of the two debtors, our Lord led into forgiveness him who was in need of forgiveness, yet in whose eyes the forgiveness of debts was hateful. For though the debts of the Pharisee himself needed forgiveness, yet the forgiveness of the debts of the sinful woman was hateful in his eyes. For had there been this forgiveness of debts in the mind of the Pharisee, it would not have been in his eyes disgraceful that that sinful woman should have come for forgiveness of her debts to God and not to the priests; for the priests could not forgive sins such as those. But this sinful woman from the glorious works which our Lord did, believed that He could also forgive sins. For she knew that whoso is able to restore the members of the body, is able also to cleanse away the spots of the soul. But the Pharisee, though he was a teacher, did not know this. For the teachers of Israel were wont to be fools, put to shame by the despised and vile. For they were put to shame by that blind man to whom they said— *We know that this man is a sinner.* John 9:24-31 But he said to them:— *How did He open my eyes? Lo! God hears not sinners.* John 9:24-31 These are the blind teachers who were made guides to others; and their perverse path was made straight by a blind man.

45. But hear the marvel that our Lord wrought. Because that Pharisee supposed that our Lord did not know that the woman who touched Him was a sinner; our Lord made the lips of the Pharisee like the strings of a harp; and by his very lips He sang how she was trampling under foot his sins, though he knew it not. And he who as though he knew had blamed, was found to be a harp, whereto another could sing of that which he knew. For our Lord compared the sins of the sinful woman to five hundred dinars, and caused them to pass into the hearing of the Pharisee by the parable which he heard; and again brought them forth from his mouth in the judgment he gave; though Simon knew not, when he was judging, that those five hundred dinars denoted the sins of the sinful woman. And (the Pharisee) who thought concerning our Lord that He had not knowledge of her sins, was himself found not to have knowledge of them, when he heard of those debts in the parable, and gave judgment concerning them with his voice. But when it was explained to him at last by our Lord, then the Pharisee knew that alike his ears and also his lips were, as it were, instruments for our Lord, through which He might sing the glories of His knowledge.

For this Pharisee was the fellow of those scribes, whose sentence by their own mouths our Lord gave against them— *What then will the Lord of the vineyard do to those husbandmen?* Matthew 21:40-44 They say unto Him, against themselves:— *He will terribly destroy them, and will hire out the vineyard to husbandmen who will render unto Him the fruit in its season.* This is the Godhead to which all things are easy, which by the mouths, the very mouths that blasphemed it, pronounced the sentence of those very mouths against them.

46. Glory then be to Him the Invisible, who clothed Himself in invisibility, that sinners might be able to draw near to Him. For our Lord did not repel the sinful woman as the Pharisee expected; inasmuch as He descended from the height which no man can reach unto, altogether in order that lowly publicans, like Zaccheus, might reach unto Him. And the Nature which none can handle, clothed Itself in a body, altogether in order that all lips Isaiah 6:7 might kiss His feet as the sinful woman did. For the sacred soul was hidden within the veil of flesh, and so touched all unclean lips and sanctified them. Thus He Whom His appetite was supposed to invite to feasting, His feet invited to tears; He was the good Physician, who came forth to go to the sinful woman who was seeking Him in her soul. She then anointed the feet of our Lord, who (anointed) not His head—she who was trodden down in the dust by all. For those Pharisees who justified themselves and despised all (else), trod her down. But He the Merciful, Whose pure body sanctified her uncleanness, had pity on her.

47. But Mary anointed the head of our Lord's body, Matthew 26:7 as a token of the better part which she had chosen. And Christ prophesied concerning that which her soul had chosen. While Martha was cumbered with serving, Mary was hungering to be satisfied with spiritual things by Him Who also satisfies us with bodily things. So Mary refreshed Him with precious ointment, as He had refreshed her with His exalted teaching. Mary by the oil showed forth the mystery of His mortality, Who by His teaching mortified the concupiscence of her flesh. Thus the sinful woman by

the flood of her tears, in full assurance was rewarded with remission of sins from beside His feet; and she who had the issue of blood, stole healing from the hem of His garment. But Mary received blessing openly from His mouth, as a reward of the service of her hands upon His head. For she poured out on His head the precious ointment, and received from His mouth a wonderful promise. This is the ointment which was sown above and yielded fruit below. For she sowed it on His head and gathered its fruit from between His lips— *She shall have a name and this memorial in every place where My Gospel shall be preached.* Matthew 26:13 Accordingly, what she then received of Him, He is able to cause to pass unto all generations: and in no generation can any hinder it. For the ointment which she poured upon His head, gave its odour in presence of all the guests and refreshed Him; so also the goodly name which He gave her, passes down through all generations and brings honour to her. Even as all who were at the feast were sensible of her ointment; it was meet that all who come into the world should be sensible of her triumph. This is a loan whereof the increase is exacted in all generations.

48. Now Simeon the priest, when he took Him up in his arms to present Him before God, Luke 2:28 understood as he saw [Him] that He was not presenting Him, but was being himself presented. For the Son was not presented by the servant to His Father, but the servant was presented by the Son to his Lord. For it is not possible that He, by Whom every offering is presented, should be presented by another. For the offering does not present him that offers it; but by them that offer are offerings presented. So then He Who receives offerings gave Himself to be offered by another, that those who presented Him, while offering Him, might themselves be presented by Him. For as He gave His body to be eaten, that when eaten It might quicken to life them that ate Him; so He gave Himself to be offered, that by His Cross the hands of them that offered Him might be sanctified. So, then, though the arms of Simeon seemed to be presenting the Son, yet the words of Simeon testified that he was presented by the Son. Therefore we can have no dispute concerning this, because that which was said put an end to dispute— *Now let Your servant depart in peace.* Luke 2:29 He then who is let depart to go in peace to God, is presented as an offering to God. And in order to make known by whom he was presented, he said— *For lo! My eyes have seen Your mercy.* Luke 2:30 If there was no grace wrought on him, why then did he give thanks? But rightly did he give thanks, that he was thought worthy to receive in his arms Him, Whom angels and prophets greatly desired to see. For *lo! my eyes have seen Your mercy.* Let us understand then and see. Is *mercy* that which shows mercy to another, or is it that which receives mercy from another? But if *mercy* is that which shows mercy to all, well did Simeon call our Lord by the name of the mercy that showed mercy to him—Him Who freed him from the world which is full of snares, that he might go to Eden which is full of pleasures; for he who was priest said and testified that he was offered as an offering, that from the midst of the perishing world he should go and be stored up in the treasure-house which is kept safe. For one for whom it may be that what he has found should be lost, to him it belongs to be diligent that it should be kept safe. But for our Lord it could not be that He should be lost; but by Him the lost were found. So then, through the Son Who could not be lost, the servant who was very desirous not to be lost, was presented. *Lo! My eyes have seen Your mercy.* It is evident Simeon received grace from that Child Whom he was carrying. For inwardly he received grace from that Infant, Whom openly he received in his arms. For through Him Who was glorious, even when He was carried, being small and feeble, he that carried Him was made great.

49. But inasmuch as Simeon endured to carry on his weak arms that Majesty which the creatures could not endure, it is evident that his weakness was made strong by the strength which he carried. For at that time Simeon also along with all creatures was secretly upheld by the almighty strength of the Son. Now this is a marvel, that outwardly it was he that was strengthened that carried Him Who strengthened him; but inwardly it was the strength that bore its bearer. For the Majesty straitened itself, that they who carried it might endure it; in order that as far as that Majesty stooped to our littleness, so far should our love be raised up from all desires to reach that Majesty.

50. So likewise the ship that carried our Lord; it was He that bare it, in that He stayed from it the wind that would have sunk it. Peace, for you are shut up. While He was on the sea, His arm reached

even to the fountain of the wind, Mark 4:39 to shut it up. The ship bare His manhood, but the power of His Godhead bare the ship and all that was therein. But that He might show that even His manhood needed not the ship, instead of the planks which a shipwright puts together and fastens, He like the Architect of creation, made the waters solid and joined them together and laid them under His feet. So the Lord strengthened the hands of Simeon the Priest, that his arms might bear up in the Temple the strength that was bearing up all; as He strengthened the feet of Simeon the Apostle, that they might bear themselves up on the water. And so that name which bore the first-begotten in the Temple was afterwards borne up by the first-begotten in the sea; that He might show that as in the sea the drowning was borne up by Him, He did not need to be borne by Simeon on the dry ground. But our Lord bare Simeon up openly in the midst of the sea to teach that also on the dry land He supported him secretly.

51. Accordingly, the Son came to the servant; not that the Son might be presented by the servant, but that by the Son the servant might present to His Lord Priesthood and Prophecy, to be laid up with Him. For prophecy and priesthood, which were given through Moses, were handed down, both of them, and reached to Simeon. For he was a pure vessel, who sanctified himself that he might be like Moses, capable for both of them. There are small vessels which are capable for great gifts. There are gifts for which one is capable, by reason of their grace; yet many are not capable for them, by reason of their greatness. Thus, then, Simeon presented our Lord, and in Him offered both these things; so that that which was given to Moses in the wilderness, was received from Simeon in the Temple. But seeing that our Lord is the vessel wherein all fullness dwells, when Simeon was offering Him before God, he poured over Him (as a drink-offering) those two (gifts), priesthood from His hands and prophecy from His lips. Priesthood continued on the hands of Simeon, because of his purifications; and prophecy dwelt in operation upon his lips, because of revelations. When then these two powers saw Him who was Lord of both, they two united together and poured themselves into the vessel that was capable of both; that could contain priesthood and kingdom and prophecy. That Infant then, who was wrapped in swaddling clothes, because of His graciousness, clothed Himself in priesthood and prophecy because of His Majesty. For Simeon clothed Him in these, and gave Him to her who had wrapped Him in swaddling clothes. For when he gave Him to His mother, he gave along with Him the priesthood; and when he prophesied to her concerning Him, *This (child) is set for the fall and rising again*, Luke 2:34 he gave prophecy also with Him.

52. Then Mary received her firstborn and went forth. He was outwardly wrapped in swaddling clothes, but secretly He was clothed with prophecy and priesthood. Whatsoever then was handed down from Moses, was received from Simeon, but continued and was possessed by the Lord of both. So then the steward first, and the treasurer lastly, handed over the keys of priesthood and prophecy to Him who has authority over the treasurer of them both. Therefore, His Father gave Him the spirit not by measure, John 3:34 because all measures of the spirit are under his hand. And that our Lord might show that He received the keys from the former stewards, He said to Simeon: *To you I will give the keys of the doors*. Matthew 16:19 But how should He have given them to another, had He not received them from another? So, then, the keys which He had received from Simeon the priest, them He gave to another Simeon the Apostle; that even though the People had not hearkened to the former Simeon, the Gentiles might hearken to the latter Simeon.

53. But because John also was the treasurer of baptism, the Lord of the stewardship came to him to receive from him the keys of the house of reconciliation. For John used to wash away in common water the blemishes of sins; that bodies might become meet for the garment of the Spirit, given by our Lord. Therefore, because the Spirit was with the Son, He came to John to receive from him baptism, that He might mingle with the visible waters the invisible Spirit; that they whose bodies should feel the moistening of the water, their souls should feel the gift of the Spirit; that even as the bodies outwardly feel the pouring of the water upon them, so the souls inwardly may feel the pouring of the Spirit upon them. Accordingly, even us our Lord when He was baptised, was clothed in baptism and carried baptism with Him, so also when He was presented in the Temple, He put on prophecy and priesthood, and went forth bearing the purity of the priesthood upon His pure

members, and bearing the words of prophecy in His wondrous ears. For when Simeon was sanctifying the body of the Child who sanctifies all, that body received the priesthood in its sanctification. And again, when Simeon was prophesying over Him, prophecy quickly entered the hearing of the Child. For if John leaped in the womb and perceived the voice of the Mother of our Lord, Luke 1:41 how much more should our Lord have heard in the Temple? For lo! It was because of Him that John knew (so as) to hear in the womb.

54. Accordingly, each one of the gifts that was stored up for the Son, He gathered from their true tree. For He received baptism from the Jordan, even though John still after Him used to baptise. And He received priesthood from the Temple, even though Annas the High Priest exercised it. And again, He received prophecy which had been handed down among the righteous, even though by it Caiaphas in mockery platted a crown for our Lord, and He received the kingdom from the house of David, even though Herod held the place and exercised it.

55. This is He Who flew and came down from on high; and when all those gifts which He had given to those of old time saw Him, they came flying from every quarter and rested on Him their Giver. For they gathered themselves together from every side, to come and be grafted into their natural tree. For they had been grafted into bitter trees, namely into wicked kings and priests. Therefore they hastened to come to their sweet parent-stock; namely to the Godhead Who in sufficiency came down to the people of Israel, that the parts of Him might be gathered to Him. And when He received of them that which was His own, that which was not His own was rejected; since for the sake of His own He had borne also with that which was not His own. For He bore with the idolatry of Israel, for the sake of His priesthood; and He bore with its diviners, for the sake of His prophets; and He bore with its wicked dominion, for the sake of His holy crown.

56. But when our Lord took to Himself Priesthood from them, He sanctified by it all the Gentiles. And again, when He took to Himself prophecy, He revealed by it His counsels to all nations. And when he wove His crown, He bound the strong One who takes all men captive, and divides his spoils. These gifts were barren, with the fig-tree, which while it was barren of fruit made barren such glorious powers as these. Therefore as being without fruit, it was cut off, that these gifts might pass forth from it and bring forth fruit abundantly among all the Gentiles.

57. So He, Who came to make our bodies abodes for His indwelling, passed by all those dwelling-places. Let each one of us then be a dwelling-place for Him Who loves me. Let us come to Him and make our abode with Him. This is the Godhead Whom though all creation cannot contain, yet a lowly and humble soul suffices to receive Him.

Confession

The Didache

“Confess your sins in church, and do not go up to your prayer with an evil conscience. This is the way of life. . . . On the Lord’s Day gather together, break bread, and give thanks, after confessing your transgressions so that your sacrifice may be pure” (*Didache* 4:14, 14:1 [A.D. 70]).

The Letter of Barnabas

“You shall judge righteously. You shall not make a schism, but you shall pacify those that contend by bringing them together. You shall confess your sins. You shall not go to prayer with an evil conscience. This is the way of light” (*Letter of Barnabas* 19 [A.D. 74]).

Ignatius of Antioch

“For as many as are of God and of Jesus Christ are also with the bishop. And as many as shall, in the exercise of penance, return into the unity of the Church, these, too, shall belong to God, that they may live according to Jesus Christ” (*Letter to the Philadelphians* 3 [A.D. 110]).

“For where there is division and wrath, God does not dwell. To all them that repent, the Lord grants forgiveness, if they turn in penitence to the unity of God, and to communion with the bishop” (*ibid.*, 8).

Irenaeus

“[The Gnostic disciples of Marcus] have deluded many women. . . . Their consciences have been branded as with a hot iron. Some of these women make a public confession, but others are ashamed to do this, and in silence, as if withdrawing from themselves the hope of the life of God, they either apostatize entirely or hesitate between the two courses” (*Against Heresies* 1:22 [A.D. 189]).

Tertullian

“[Regarding confession, some] flee from this work as being an exposure of themselves, or they put it off from day to day. I presume they are more mindful of modesty than of salvation, like those who contract a disease in the more shameful parts of the body and shun making themselves known to the physicians; and thus they perish along with their own bashfulness” (*Repentance* 10:1 [A.D. 203]).

Hippolytus

“[The bishop conducting the ordination of the new bishop shall pray:] God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ. . . . Pour forth now that power which comes from you, from your royal Spirit, which you gave to your beloved Son, Jesus Christ, and which he bestowed upon his holy apostles . . . and grant this your servant, whom you have chosen for the episcopate, [the power] to feed your holy flock and to serve without blame as your high priest, ministering night and day to propitiate unceasingly before your face and to offer to you the gifts of

your holy Church, and by the Spirit of the high priesthood to have the authority to forgive sins, in accord with your command” (*Apostolic Tradition* 3 [A.D. 215]).

Origen

“[A final method of forgiveness], albeit hard and laborious [is] the remission of sins through penance, when the sinner . . . does not shrink from declaring his sin to a priest of the Lord and from seeking medicine, after the manner of him who say, ‘I said, “To the Lord I will accuse myself of my iniquity”’” (*Homilies on Leviticus* 2:4 [A.D. 248]).

Cyprian of Carthage

“The apostle [Paul] likewise bears witness and says: ‘ . . . Whoever eats the bread or drinks the cup of the Lord unworthily will be guilty of the body and blood of the Lord’ [1 Cor. 11:27]. But [the impenitent] spurn and despise all these warnings; before their sins are expiated, before they have made a confession of their crime, before their conscience has been purged in the ceremony and at the hand of the priest . . . they do violence to [the Lord’s] body and blood, and with their hands and mouth they sin against the Lord more than when they denied him” (*The Lapsed* 15:1–3 (A.D. 251)).

“Of how much greater faith and salutary fear are they who . . . confess their sins to the priests of God in a straightforward manner and in sorrow, making an open declaration of conscience. . . . I beseech you, brethren, let everyone who has sinned confess his sin while he is still in this world, while his confession is still admissible, while the satisfaction and remission made through the priests are still pleasing before the Lord” (*ibid.*, 28).

“[S]inners may do penance for a set time, and according to the rules of discipline come to public confession, and by imposition of the hand of the bishop and clergy receive the right of Communion. [But now some] with their time [of penance] still unfulfilled . . . they are admitted to Communion, and their name is presented; and while the penitence is not yet performed, confession is not yet made, the hands of the bishop and clergy are not yet laid upon them, the Eucharist is given to them; although it is written, ‘Whosoever shall eat the bread and drink the cup of the Lord unworthily, shall be guilty of the body and blood of the Lord’ [1 Cor. 11:27]” (*Letters* 9:2 [A.D. 253]).

“And do not think, dearest brother, that either the courage of the brethren will be lessened, or that martyrdoms will fail for this cause, that penance is relaxed to the lapsed, and that the hope of peace [i.e., absolution] is offered to the penitent. . . . For to adulterers even a time of repentance is granted by us, and peace is given” (*ibid.*, 51[55]:20).

“But I wonder that some are so obstinate as to think that repentance is not to be granted to the lapsed, or to suppose that pardon is to be denied to the penitent, when it is written, ‘Remember whence thou art fallen, and repent, and do the first works’ [Rev. 2:5], which certainly is said to him who evidently has fallen, and whom the Lord exhorts to rise up again by his deeds [of penance], because it is written, ‘Alms deliver from death’ [Tob. 12:9]” (ibid., 51[55]:22).

Aphraahat the Persian Sage

“You [priests], then, who are disciples of our illustrious physician [Christ], you ought not deny a curative to those in need of healing. And if anyone uncovers his wound before you, give him the remedy of repentance. And he that is ashamed to make known his weakness, encourage him so that he will not hide it from you. And when he has revealed it to you, do not make it public, lest because of it the innocent might be reckoned as guilty by our enemies and by those who hate us” (*Treatises* 7:3 [A.D. 340]).

Basil the Great

“It is necessary to confess our sins to those to whom the dispensation of God’s mysteries is entrusted. Those doing penance of old are found to have done it before the saints. It is written in the Gospel that they confessed their sins to John the Baptist [Matt. 3:6], but in Acts [19:18] they confessed to the apostles” (*Rules Briefly Treated* 288 [A.D. 374]).

John Chrysostom

“Priests have received a power which God has given neither to angels nor to archangels. It was said to them: ‘Whatsoever you shall bind on earth shall be bound in heaven; and whatsoever you shall loose, shall be loosed.’ Temporal rulers have indeed the power of binding; but they can only bind the body. Priests, in contrast, can bind with a bond which pertains to the soul itself and transcends the very heavens. Did [God] not give them all the powers of heaven? ‘Whose sins you shall forgive,’ he says, ‘they are forgiven them; whose sins you shall retain, they are retained.’ What greater power is there than this? The Father has given all judgment to the Son. And now I see the Son placing all this power in the hands of men [Matt. 10:40; John 20:21–23]. They are raised to this dignity as if they were already gathered up to heaven” (*The Priesthood* 3:5 [A.D. 387]).

Ambrose of Milan

“For those to whom [the right of binding and loosing] has been given, it is plain that either both are allowed, or it is clear that neither is allowed. Both are

allowed to the Church, neither is allowed to heresy. For this right has been granted to priests only” (*Penance* 1:1 [A.D. 388]).

Jerome

“If the serpent, the devil, bites someone secretly, he infects that person with the venom of sin. And if the one who has been bitten keeps silence and does not do penance, and does not want to confess his wound . . . then his brother and his master, who have the word [of absolution] that will cure him, cannot very well assist him” (*Commentary on Ecclesiastes* 10:11 [A.D. 388]).

Augustine

“When you shall have been baptized, keep to a good life in the commandments of God so that you may preserve your baptism to the very end. I do not tell you that you will live here without sin, but they are venial sins which this life is never without. Baptism was instituted for all sins. For light sins, without which we cannot live, prayer was instituted. . . . But do not commit those sins on account of which you would have to be separated from the body of Christ. Perish the thought! For those whom you see doing penance have committed crimes, either adultery or some other enormities. That is why they are doing penance. If their sins were light, daily prayer would suffice to blot them out. . . . In the Church, therefore, there are three ways in which sins are forgiven: in baptisms, in prayer, and in the greater humility of penance” (*Sermon to Catechumens on the Creed* 7:15, 8:16 [A.D. 395]).



Help the poor please.

"The bread you do not use is the bread of the hungry. The garment hanging in your wardrobe is the garment of the person who is naked. The shoes you do not wear are the shoes of the one who is barefoot. The money you keep locked away is the money of the poor. The acts of charity you do not perform are the injustices you commit."

- St. Basil the Great