Fifty Spiritual Homilies

Macarius of Egypt (c. AD 300–391)

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Introduction

Traditionally attributed to St. Macarius the Egyptian; conventionally cataloged by modern scholars under Pseudo-Macarius. Translated by A. J. Mason, D.D. London: Society for Promoting Christian Knowledge; New York: The Macmillan Company, 1921. Public-domain in the United States. HTML transcription derived from Wikisource.

INTRODUCTION — 1. THE AUTHOR

THE name of Macarius (= "Blessed") was a common one among the Christians of the fourth and following centuries, especially in Egypt. Two men of the name stand out as twin giants of the ascetic life of that age and country. They are distinguished from each other as Macarius the Egyptian and Macarius the Alexandrian. An "Egyptian" means one who belonged to the ancient race of Egypt—a "Copt"; an Alexandrian means one who belonged to the Greek colony planted in that city. The two were friends and nearly contemporaries, though the Alexandrian was somewhat the younger. The Egyptian Macarius was born about the year 300. Palladius, Bishop of Helenopolis, friend of St. Chrysostom, and historian of the religious life of the wilderness, begins his account of the two by saying that he hesitates to relate what he has to say of them, lest he should be thought a liar, so great and wonderful was their history. Palladius was not personally acquainted with the Egyptian. He says that he knew the Alexandrian, but that the other died a year before his own entrance into the Nitrian desert, which was about the year 390. But he was familiar with the locality, and with the people who knew the great ascetic.

"First," he says, "I will speak of the Egyptian, who lived to the age of ninety years. Sixty of these he spent in the desert, having retired to it as a young man of thirty. He was gifted with such discernment as to be called 'Age-in-Youth,' because he made such swift progress. At the age of forty he received the grace of conquering evil spirits, and of healings and predictions. He was also admitted to the priesthood." Palladius proceeds to relate instances of the exercise of these gifts. "Two disciples accompanied him into the inner desert, called Scetis. One of them served him close at hand, because of those who came to be cured; the other studied in an adjoining cell. In process of time Macarius had a prophetic vision, and said to the

man who served him, whose name was John, 'Hearken to me, brother John, and bear with my admonition. Thou art in temptation; and the spirit of covetousness tempts thee. I have seen it; and I know that if thou bearest with me, thou wilt be perfected in this place, and wilt be glorified, neither shall any plague come nigh thy dwelling. But if thou shalt neglect to hear me, upon thee shall come the end of Gehazi, with whose disease thou art afflicted.' It came to pass after the death of Macarius, indeed fifteen or twenty years after, that he neglected the warning. He used for himself what belonged to the poor, and was so covered with elephantiasis that no whole spot could be found on his body on which a finger could be put. This was the prophecy of Macarius … [Macarius] was said to be continually in trance, and to spend far more time with God than in things below."

Palladius then tells a curious story of a man whose wife had been bewitched and turned to all appearance into a mare. The man bridled her and took her to Macarius. The brethren standing near the cell rebuked him for bringing the animal; but Macarius said to them, "Horses you are, and have horses' eyes. It is a woman, and only transformed to the eyes of those who are deceived." "And he blessed water," the narrative continues, "and poured it over the naked woman's head, and prayed over her, and immediately made her appear a woman to everybody. Then he gave her some food, and made her eat it, and sent her away, thanking the Lord, in her own husband's company. And he gave her this advice: 'Never miss going to church. Never be away from communion. This happened to you because for five weeks you had not gone to the mysteries.'

"Another feature of his asceticism. He made an underground passage from his cell, half a furlong in length, and constructed a cave at the end of it. This took him a long time. If too many people troubled him, he would slip secretly out of the cell, and go into the cave, where nobody could find him. One of his devoted disciples told me the story, and said that on the way to the cave he would say four-and-twenty prayers, and four-and-twenty on the way back." Palladius adds that he was said to have brought a dead man back to life, in order to convince some one who would not believe in the resurrection; and that on one occasion he healed a boy of strangely disordered appetite, which was attributed to a particular species of devil. When the affliction stopped, Macarius asked the mother how much she wished the boy to eat. She answered, "Ten pounds of bread." Macarius told her it was too much; and, fasting and praying over him for a week, he allowed him to eat three pounds, and sent him back to work.

Palladius had been the disciple of Evagrius Ponticus, who had in turn been a disciple to the two Macarii. The account of these two masters given by Evagrius himself has been in part incorporated by Socrates in the fourth book of his Ecclesiastical History. Socrates adds to what we have learned from Palladius that Macarius the Egyptian was a native of "Upper" Egypt, and that with all his piety

he was somewhat austere in his dealings with those who resorted to him. This is doubtless recorded on the authority of Evagrius. Evagrius, in a fragment preserved by Socrates, relates one or two incidents in his intercourse with the master. He says:— "That chosen vessel, the aged Macarius of Egypt, once asked me how it is that in remembering the wrongs done to us by men we ruin our powers of memory, but take no harm by remembering the wrongs done by devils. I was at a loss for an answer, and begged him to tell me the reason. He answered, 'It is because the former is contrary to nature; the latter is in accordance with our mental constitution.' When I first met with this holy father, Macarius, it was the very height of noon, and I was burning with excessive heat, and I asked for some water to drink. He answered, 'Be content with the shade. There are many people travelling now, by land or by sea, who have not even that.' Then, when I was discussing self-discipline with him, he said, 'Be of good courage, my child. For twenty years without a break I have never had as much food, or drink, or sleep, as I liked. My bread I have eaten by weight, and my water by measure; and I have snatched a little sleep, leaning against the wall.' "

In the year 373—the year in which the great Athanasius died—this peaceful life of the wilderness was rudely invaded. The Emperor Valens knew that the ascetics of the Nitrian desert formed a great stronghold of the Athanasian belief, and determined to break it up. Orders were given for the expulsion of Macarius the Egyptian and Macarius the Alexandrian, "the fathers of the monks." "These two were banished to an island which had no Christian inhabitant. In the island there happened to be a temple, and a priest in it whom all the people revered as a god. When the two men of God came to the island, all the demons there were in confusion and terror. The following incident occurred at that very time. The priest's daughter was suddenly possessed by a devil and went mad. She overthrew everything. She was uncontrollable, and could not by any means be kept quiet, but shouted at the top of her voice, and said to those men of God, 'Why have you come to drive us hence also?' The men showed once more in that place the special work which they had received of the grace of God. They expelled the devil from the maiden, and gave her over to her father in good health, and brought both the priest and all those who lived there in the island to the faith of Christianity. They immediately cast out the images, transformed the appearance of the sanctuary into the character of a church, and were baptized and instructed in everything belonging to Christianity with rejoicing. Thus those wonderful men, when banished for the faith of the One Substance, were themselves the more approved, and saved others also, and made the faith yet more sure."

A few more particulars about Macarius may be gathered from the ancient collections of Apophthegms of the Fathers, printed by Migne in the same volume with the works of Macarius, but it is not always possible to be sure that the Macarius

referred to is the great Egyptian, nor whether the anecdotes have any historical foundation.

One of them gives, as from Macarius himself, the account of his withdrawal into the desert of Scetis. When he was a young man, he had settled himself in a cell in some part of Egypt, and the people of the place seized him and made him their clericus. Not wishing to undertake the duty, he removed to another spot, where a pious man, who had not renounced the world, attached himself to him and helped him in the basket-making by which he earned his livelihood. It happened that a girl in the village had fallen into sin, and alleged that she had been seduced by "the anchorite. "Then they came out and took me into the village, and hung sooty kitchen pots round my neck, and handles of broken wine-jars, and paraded me round every quarter of the village, beating me and saying, 'This monk has seduced our girl. Have him, have him. They beat me nearly to death. One of the old men came and said, 'How long will you go on beating the strange monk? The man who served me was following behind me with shame, for they were insulting him much and saying, 'Look at this anchorite whose part you took; what has he done? The girl's parents said, 'We shall not let him off till he gives us a surety for her maintenance'; and I told my helper, and he became surety for me.

When I got to my cell, I gave him all the baskets I had, saying, 'Sell them, and give my wife to eat. And I said to my mind, 'Macarius, see, thou hast found thyself a wife; thou must work a bit harder to support her'; and I worked night and day, and gave it her. When the time came for the birth of the child, the girl confessed that she had been lying, and wanted all the village to go to him to make amends. "And when I heard that, not to be troubled with the men, I arose and fled into the Scetis here. That was the original cause of my coming hither."

Another anecdote relates that Macarius one day came from Scetis to the Nitrian hills, to attend the celebration of the eucharist by the abbot Pambo. "And the old man said, 'Speak a word to the brethren, father. He answered, 'I have not yet become a monk, though I have seen monks. Once as I was sitting in my cell at Scetis, my thoughts troubled me, saying, Go into the desert, and see what you shall see there. I stayed fighting with the thought five years, saying, Perhaps it comes from demons. But when the thought persisted, I went into the desert, and found there a lake of water, and an island in the middle of it; and the beasts of the desert came to drink of it; and among them I saw two naked men; and my body was afraid, for I thought they were spirits. But when they saw me afraid, they spoke to me: Fear not; we too are men. And I said to them, Whence are ye, and how came ye into this desert? And they said, We belong to a convent, and we made an agreement and came out hither, now forty years ago. One of us is an Egyptian, the other a Libyan. And they asked me, saying, How is the world? and does the water [of the Nile] come in its season, and has the world its plenty? I said, Yes; and I

asked them, How can I become a monk? and I said to them, I am weak, and cannot do like you.

And they said to me, And if you cannot do like us, sit in your cell and weep for your sins. And I asked them, When winter comes, are ye not cold? and when the hot weather comes, are not your bodies burned? But they said, It was God who made this ordinance for us, and we are neither cold in winter, nor does the heat in summer hurt us. So, as I said, I have not yet become a monk, but I have seen monks. Forgive me, brethren.' "

"Some of the fathers once asked the abbot Macarius the Egyptian, 'How is it that whether you eat or whether you fast, your body is dry?' The aged man answered, 'The stick which pokes the faggots in the fire gets eaten throughout with the fire; so, if a man cleanses his mind with the fear of God, the fear of God itself eats up his body.' " "They said that the abbot Macarius the Egyptian, going up from Scetis with a load of baskets, was so tired that he sat down and prayed, saying, 'O God, Thou knowest that I cannot'; and immediately he was found at the river." "It is said that two brethren at Scetis went wrong, and the abbot Macarius the City Man [i. e. the Alexandrian] expelled them. Certain men came and told the great abbot, Macarius the Egyptian. He said, 'They are not expelled; it is Macarius that is expelled.' For he loved him. The abbot Macarius heard that he had been expelled by the old man, and fled to the marsh. So the great abbot Macarius went out, and found him bitten by the mosquitoes, and said to him, 'Thou didst expel the brethren, and they had to retire to the village. I expelled thee, and thou fleddest hither like a pretty maiden to her chamber. I called the brethren, and enquired of them, and they assured me that they had not done the thing. Take heed, brother, that thou be not mocked of devils; for thou sawest nothing. Do penance for thy fault.' He answered, 'If thou wilt, give me a penance.' The old man, seeing his humility, said, 'Go, and fast for three weeks, eating once a week,' knowing that this was his constant practice, to fast all the week days."

"A brother once met abbot Macarius the Egyptian, and said to him, 'Abba, say something to me that I may be saved.' The old man said, 'Go to the burying-ground and revile the dead.' The brother went, and reviled them, and threw stones at them, and came and reported to the old man. He said to him, 'Did they not answer thee?' He said, 'No.' The old man said, 'Go again to-morrow and praise them.' So the brother went, and praised them, calling them apostles, and saints, and righteous men, and came to the old man, and said, 'I praised them.' And he said to him, 'Did they make no answer?' The brother said, 'No.' The old man said, 'Thou knowest how much thou didst insult them, and they answered nothing, and how much thou didst praise them, and they spake nothing to thee. If thou wouldest be saved, become thou dead like them. Reck nothing of the wrongs done by men, nor of their praise, any more than the dead do; and thou mayest be saved.' "

“Once as the abbot Macarius was passing through Egypt with some brethren, he heard a child say to his mother, ‘Amma, a rich man loves me, and I hate him; and a poor man hates me, and I love him.’ The abbot Macarius wondered when he heard it. The brethren said to him, ‘What was there to wonder at in the saying, father?’ The old man said to them, ‘Truly, our Lord is rich and loves us, and we will not listen to Him; but our enemy the devil is poor and hates us, and we love his uncleanness.’ ” “Once upon a time, the abbot Macarius visited the abbot Antony, and after conversing with him returned to Scetis. The fathers came out to meet him, and as they talked, the old man said to them, ‘I told the abbot Antony that we have no offering [of the eucharist] in our place.’ And the fathers began to talk of other things, and did not enquire of the old man what he had answered; and the old man did not tell them. One of the fathers has said that when fathers see that the brethren do not ask them questions about a thing that would do them good, they constrain themselves to begin the subject, but if the brethren then do not constrain them [to continue], they say no more, that they may not be found like those who speak when no one asks them, and the conversation is only froth.”

“The abbot Vitimius related that the abbot said: Once, as I sat at Scetis, two young strangers came down there. One had a beard, the other the beginnings of a beard. They came to me, saying, ‘Where is the cell of abbot Macarius? And I said, ‘What do you want with him? They said, ‘We have heard of him and of Scetis, and we came to see him. I said, ‘I am he. And they begged pardon, saying, ‘We wish to stay here. Seeing that they looked delicately nurtured, and as if they came from a home of wealth, I said to them, ‘You cannot settle here. The elder of them said, ‘If we cannot settle here, we must go elsewhere. I said to my own thoughts, ‘Why should I persecute them and be a cause of offence to them? The difficulties will soon make them run away of themselves. And I said to them, ‘Come, make yourselves a cell, if you can. They said, ‘Show us a place, and we will make one. The old man gave them a hatchet, and a wrap full of bread, and some salt, and showed them a hard piece of rock, saying, ‘Quarry here, and fetch yourselves wood from the marsh, and make a thatch, and settle. I thought to myself, he said, that they would take themselves off because of the labour. But they asked me, what they should work at here.

I said, ‘Plaiting,’ and I took palm leaves from the marsh, and showed them how to start a plait, and how to sew them up, and said, ‘Make your baskets, and give them to the guards, and they will bring you bread. Then I went away. But they patiently did all that I had told them, and they never came to me for three years. And I remained wrestling with my thoughts, saying, How then are they getting on with their business, that they have not come to ask advice? Those from afar come to me, but these who are near have never come. Nor did they go to others. They only went to church, in silence, to receive the offering. And I prayed to God, with a week of fasting, to show me their business; and after the week I arose and went to

them, to see how they were situated. When I knocked, they opened, and greeted me in silence, and I said a prayer and sat down. And the elder beckoned to the younger to go out, and sat down to weave his plait without saying a word. And at the hour of none he knocked, and the younger came, and made a little gruel, and at a sign from the elder he set a table, and put on it three biscuits, and stood in silence. Then I said, 'Rise, let us eat'; and we stood and ate; and he brought the water-bowl, and we drank. When evening came, they said to me, 'Art thou going?

I said, 'No, I will sleep here. And they laid me a mat by myself apart, and another for themselves in a corner, and they took off their girdles, and their wrappers, and laid themselves down together on their mat before me. When they were laid down, I prayed to God to show me their business; and the roof was opened, and it became as light as day, but they did not see the light. And when they thought that I was asleep, the elder touched the younger one on the side, and they got up, and girded themselves, and stretched their hands towards heaven. And I saw them, without their seeing me. And I beheld the devils coming at the younger one like flies: some attempted to settle on his mouth, and some on his eyes; and I beheld an angel of the Lord holding a sword of fire, and making a rampart round him, and driving off the devils. They could not get near the elder. About daybreak they lay down, and I made as though I awoke, and they likewise. The elder said to me this and no more, 'Wouldest thou that we should say the twelve psalms? I said, 'Yes. And the younger sang five psalms of six verses and an Alleluia, and at each verse a torch of fire came out of his mouth and went up to heaven. Likewise when the elder opened his mouth to sing, there came out like a cable of fire and reached to heaven.

I also repeated a little by heart; and as I went out I said, 'Pray for me. They bowed to me in silence. So I knew that the elder one was perfect, but that the enemy was still warring with the younger. A few days later, the elder brother fell asleep; and on the third day after, the younger; and when some of the fathers visited the abbot Macarius, he took them to their cell, saying, 'Come, see the martyrdom of the little strangers.' "

"The abbot Paphnutius, the disciple of the abbot Macarius, related that the old man said, 'When I was a boy, I was tending calves with the other boys, and they went to steal figs; and as they ran, one of the figs dropped, and I picked it up and ate it; and when I remember it, I sit and weep.' "

"They related of abbot Macarius the Egyptian, that one day he was going up from Scetis to the Nitrian hills, and when he drew near the place, he said to his disciple, 'Go a little in front.' And as he walked in front, he met a certain heathen priest, and the brother called out to him, crying, 'Aha, devil, where art thou running?' The man turned, and beat him well, and left him half killed, and took up his stick and ran. When he got a little further, the abbot Macarius met him, and said to him, 'Salvation to thee, weary one.' Surprised at this, the man came to him and said,

'What good sawest thou in me, that thou didst accost me?' The old man said to him, 'Because I saw thee tired, and thou knowest not that thy labour is in vain.' The other said to him, 'And I was touched by thy salutation, and saw that thou art on God's side; but another bad monk met me and insulted me, and I beat him to death.' And the old man knew that it was his disciple. Then the priest seized him by the feet and said, 'I will not leave thee till thou makest a monk of me.' Then they went up to where the monk was, and they carried him, and brought him into the church of the hill. And when they saw the priest with him, they were astonished; and they made him a monk, and many of the heathens became Christians because of him. Therefore the abbot Macarius said that a bad word makes even good people bad, but a good word turns bad people into good."

2. HIS WRITINGS

Such was the man. It was hardly to be expected that he would prove to be a great writer. Neither Evagrius nor Palladius makes mention of any literary work of his. Gennadius, who about a hundred years later composed a little book of biographical notices of Christian authors, knew of "only one epistle" of Macarius, addressed "to younger men of his profession," in which he taught that by continual striving against everything that is agreeable in this life, together with prayer to God, it is possible to gain a kind of natural purity, to which self-restraint becomes easy. This epistle cannot now with certainty be identified. As a matter of fact, a considerable number of epistles and other short writings exist, either in Greek or in Syriac and other translations, which are ascribed to Macarius. Of their genuineness it is not necessary here to dispute. It is quite possible that at least one prayer contained in Migne's edition of his works is really his.

The ascription of our Homilies to Macarius the Egyptian rests upon no external evidence. It rests only upon the manuscripts containing them and the internal evidence which they present. That internal evidence has been well drawn out by Bishop Gore in the Journal of Theological Studies, vol. viii. p. 85 ff., and is shown to accord with the date and circumstances of Macarius. The author is one who has known men who suffered in the great persecution, the persecution of Diocletian, which began in 303 (Hom. XXVII. 15). The wars from which he draws his illustrations are those between the Roman and the Persian empires, still equal rivals for dominion (Hom. XV. 46, XXVII. 22). There are no signs of the Nestorian controversy having come into Egypt. The scenery is exactly that of the Egypt of the fourth century, with its educational system (Hom. XV. 42), its nomenclature for the months (Hom. V. 9, cp. XLVII. 7), its collectors of customs-duties, worse there than anywhere, lying in wait to pounce upon wayfarers like devils on bad men when they die (Hom. XLIII. 9), particularly of the Egypt of the desert and its special temptations, its belief in angels and devils, its sometimes quaint, sometimes (we may hope) misleading reminiscences or imaginations of the secular life which had been left behind, its spiritual ambitions.

It is, however, difficult to make sure whether Macarius himself wrote the Homilies down in their present form. That they represent addresses actually delivered appears clearly. Passages from the Apophthegmata above quoted show that Macarius was often invited to "speak a word," to "say something," to monks whom he visited. These Homilies are for the most part such as might well have been delivered on occasions of the kind. The fervour and directness of the appeal in most of them does not suggest composition in the cell, with no concrete hearers in view. And many of them consist largely in questions and answers. The questions are often only remotely connected with the subject with which the Homily begins. It appears as if the enquirer had long been bursting with his question, and seized the opportunity of the great teacher's visit, irrespective of the matter in hand. Some disciple skilled in shorthand has taken notes of what passed, and thrown them into the form of a "Homily," which means, strictly, a conversation. Yet, on the other hand, the last of the fifty Homilies concludes by describing either that Homily itself or the whole collection as being of the nature of an "epistle," addressed to a body of well-disposed readers. In the Bodleian MS., as a kind of title to the collection, occur the words "First Epistle of our holy father Macarius the Egyptian to the Abbot Symeon of Mesopotamia of Syria," and the seven additional Homilies, first printed by Mr. Marriott in 1918, are prefaced in that MS.

and in its daughter at Holkham by the words, "A Second Epistle of the same divine monk our father Macarius to the Abbot Symeon, the ascetic of Mesopotamia of Syria, and to the rest of the brethren that are with him. It has even been contended that the fifty Homilies are the "one epistle" of which Gennadius knew. As the "second epistle" undoubtedly contains matter belonging to a date later than the death of Macarius, it might have been conjectured that both collections were put together in the fifth century by a disciple of the great abbot, and sent, with an interval of time between them, to the Syrian ascetic. But the first Homily of the second collection begins in proper letter form, "Macarius to the beloved and like-minded brethren in the Lord. Peace be multiplied unto you exceeding abundantly from the Lord," etc. Macarius must therefore himself have sent the collections in some form or other to his correspondents. How the later matter got into the second collection need not concern us at present. The fifty Homilies contain no such perplexing element. They are homogeneous in form, thought, and style, and there appears to be nothing in them inconsistent with their attribution to the great Egyptian. At the same time, it is possible that some of the prolixities and unnecessary repetitions which occasionally mar the artistic effect of the Homilies may be due to the hand of Symeon Metaphrastes, or whoever it was that inserted into his collection the fourth of the seven new Homilies.

Perhaps it was the same hand which threw the material which he found into the form of the present fifty. Some of the fifty are so long that they could hardly have been delivered as they stand, while others are so short as to appear to be fragments.

Some have so little internal cohesion that they might well have been made up of disjointed pieces, or be the result of a succession of "questions" which are not recorded in the MSS. as we now have them. The headings of the Homilies may be the work of the same editor. But in spite of these defects of form the Homilies as a whole bear the stamp of individuality, and proceed from a master mind.

3. HIS TEACHING

The Homilies are well described as "spiritual" Homilies. That is their purpose and their character. They are not dogmatic; they are not controversial; they are not expository; they are not concerned with the politics or the expansion of the church; they have little to say about the Christian's duty to his fellow-men. There is a strange aloofness about them. The struggles of the Nicene faith against Arianism, the last struggle of Paganism against Christianity under Julian, the Meletian schism which rent the church of Egypt in twain, wake no echo in them. They have but one object, to help to bring individual souls to God in perfect self-subdual and absolute devotion. The persons to whom they are addressed are all monks Macarius can, indeed, contemplate the possibility of people in the world being saved. Saints of God, he says, may be found sitting in the theatres, apparently looking on at the performance, while their hearts are holding intercourse with God (XV. 8, cp. XXIX. 1). It is part of Christian perfection to pass no judgment upon those who remain in the world, not even upon those whose lives are notoriously bad (XVIII. 8, cp. XLII. 2). But to Macarius and those to whom he speaks it is the obvious and only natural thing, that when a man hears the word of God, he should forsake the world as they themselves had done, and withdraw to the wilderness. The call of the Gospel can scarcely take any other form (XI. 6 ff.). Christian and monk are almost convertible terms (XXXVIII. 1). For a system of social ethics a man must go to some other teacher than Macarius. God and the soul, the soul and God—this is his topic.

Even about God Macarius does not give much direct teaching. He rather assumes that his hearers know the truth, and only need to apply it. "God is infinite and incomprehensible" (XVI. 5), and is therefore even "in" hell, "in" Satan: to exclude Him would be to limit Him. Macarius labours to explain, when questioned, how this can be. His doctrine of the relation between the Divine Persons is wholly that of Athanasius, though it is implied rather than taught. Once the great key-word is used, in passing, in an ascription: "Glory to the consubstantial Trinity for ever" (XVII. 15). That the Son is all that this word implies is seen from the way in which Macarius passes from the one Person to the other, so that sometimes it is not easy to say at once which he is speaking of. He dwells with delight upon the Incarnation, which brought God within man's reach. "The infinite, inaccessible, uncreated God, through His infinite and inconceivable kindness, embodied Himself, and, if I may say so, diminished Himself from His inaccessible glory, to make it possible for Him to be united with His visible creatures" (IV. 9 ff.). It was the outcome of a charity and a compassion which extends to all mankind. The Lord wills to beget all men

anew of the seed of His Godhead, and is grieved if they will not come to the new birth, after all that He suffered for them (XXX. 2 ff.). "God and the holy angels are in tears" over such souls (I. 11).

The mode of the Incarnation was full of significance: "instead of bringing with Him a body from heaven, the Lord made a new thing from the Ever-Virgin Mary, and put this on" (XI. 9). In it He endured unlimited humiliation: "the Lord Himself, who is the Way, and is God, when He came for thy sake, not for His own … see to what humiliation He came.… When they spat in His face, and put on Him the crown of thorns … God for thy sake humbled Himself" (XXVI. 25 ff.). His manhood was no fiction. If at one time Macarius seems to attribute Christ's overthrow of Satan to His divine immunity to evil (XXVI. 15), at another he takes a deeper view: as the serpent overcame Adam by pride and self-esteem, so "Christ took upon Him the form of a servant and conquered the devil by humility" (XXVII. 5). Macarius makes no attempt to formulate a doctrine of the Atonement. It is enough for him that Christ's death is a conquest of death, because death had no claim upon Him, as it has upon us (XI. 10); that we are saved by it like the bird in the Law which was dipped in the blood of its fellow (XLVII. 2), or the Israelites whose houses were sealed by the blood of the Passover (XLVII. 8). There is no salvation except in Christ. This is everywhere the doctrine of Macarius:

with true evangelical fervour he returns again and again to the cry, "Behold the Lamb of God, which taketh away the sin of the world" (e.g. XXVIII. 6). Yet it is not to what Christ once did for us that Macarius most characteristically turns, but to what He is, to what He is now. He exhausts the power of language to set this forth: "Himself in thee made all things—Paradise, Tree of Life, pearl, crown, builder, husbandman, sufferer, incapable of suffering, man, God, wine and living water, lamb, bridegroom, warrior, armour, Christ all in all" (XXXI. 4). His teaching of the person and work of the Spirit is rich and abundant, but presents no novelty. Once there appears a trace of the primitive (but not scriptural) identification of the Holy Spirit with the as yet not incarnate Word (XII. 6. ff). Frequently, like the New Testament itself, Macarius passes from the action of the Spirit to that of Christ, or from the action of Christ to that of the Spirit, without noting the transition. It is not that he is unaware of the difference; but for the moment the mode of the divine operation does not concern him. What the Spirit does, God does.

The aloofness of these Homilies extends even to the church and its ordinances. Not that Macarius despises them. In one place he speaks of Peter as having succeeded Moses and Aaron—and Caiaphas—as trustee of "Christ's new church and the true priesthood"; but it is in order to show that even such an one, so long as he is in the flesh, has reason to fear lest he should fail (XXVI. 23). Once he refers to resorting "to the place of prayer"; but it is to insist that the Christian ought to "have the remembrance of God" quite as much with him when walking, or eating, or talking

(XLIII. 3). That he valued the reception of the holy eucharist is certain from the story told by Palladius of the woman who had laid herself open to bewitchment by going for five weeks without it (p. vii). When asked to explain what it was that eye had not seen, nor ear heard, till Christianity came, he answers among other things that the Old Testament saints never knew "that in the church bread and wine should be offered, the symbol of [the Redeemer's] flesh and blood, and that those who partake of the visible bread eat spiritually the flesh of the Lord" (XXVII. 17). But there is nothing in these Homilies like the wonderful Fourth Book of the Imitatio Christi. In general, when Macarius speaks of Christ as the bread of life, the reference is mystical, not sacramental. "The Lord," he says, "embodies Himself even in meat and drink";

but He makes Himself "meat" for the refreshment of the faithful in the same sense as He becomes a well of water springing up within them (IV. 12). Baptism, like the eucharist, is one of the peculiar glories of Christianity; but it is the "baptism of fire and of the Holy Ghost" (XXVII. 17), of which the sacrament of baptism—no doubt through the fault of the recipients—often falls deplorably short. Here is the appeal to facts. "If you say … that after baptism evil is no more at liberty to argue in the heart, do you not know that from the advent of the Lord to this day all that have been baptized have had bad thoughts at times?… All the worldly people dwelling within the pale of the church, are their hearts spotless and pure? (XV. 14). The seal, the unction, which form a part of the initiatory sacrament of the church, are represented in these Homilies only by their spiritual counterparts. We must seek "to have the brand and seal of the Lord upon us" (XII. 13). If the anointing oil under the Old Testament made men kings, how much more profit is there in the only unction for which Macarius seems to care, the unction of the inner man with the Holy Ghost the Comforter (XVII. 1, cp. XV. 35). It has been well pointed out by a modern teacher of the religion of experience that St. Paul nowhere appeals "to the man already in Christ to seek the baptism of the Spirit.

But this is what Macarius does again and again. To find the new birth, to become a Christian, to be made a child of God, to receive the gift of the Spirit, this is the object of every effort. It is not the equipment with which a man under the gospel starts on his career towards perfection; it is the crowning grace which perfects him after he has passed faithfully through a thousand temptations and years of self-mastery (e.g. IX. 10, 13; XI. 6), to be sought by incessant prayer.

In a life such as Macarius contemplates, Holy Scripture naturally occupies an important place. He is not himself one of the great interpreters of Scripture, but he has a wide range of acquaintance with it. "Reading" is one of the normal occupations of those whom he addresses; it is of course the reading of the Bible (III. 1, 2; cp. XXIX. 6). The Bible is given us by God, as a king may send a letter to inform his subjects of privileges to be had on application. It is ill for those who know the

offer and will not avail themselves of it (XXXIX. 1). Macarius uses the promises with all the literal earnestness of a Bunyan or a John Newton. When Satan seeks to depress us by reminding us of our sins, we are to answer, "I have the testimonies of the Lord in writing, that say, I desire not the death of the sinner" (XI. 15). But the true Christian will not rest his assurance only upon the written word, but will seek the impression of the Spirit upon his inner consciousness (XV. 20). It is a natural and holy impulse which makes a believer wish to impart to others the word which has proved helpful to himself; and Macarius draws an unfavourable picture of the man who is so intoxicated with the revelations made to him that he is unable to think of the needs of others or to minister the word to them (VIII. 4). But he has heart-searching things to say about those who attempt to edify others by "words borrowed from various parts of the Bible" without having themselves the experience of their spiritual force (XVIII. 5). When all is said and done, Macarius teaches that even the most inspired words, full of divine efficacy, are inadequate to convey all that they suggest. "The word is like a shadow of the truth of Christ" (XXX. 1).

It is in dealing with human nature and its strivings after perfection that Macarius is seen at his greatest, though even here we are not to look for a logical system, or an exact science. A few broad principles are postulated; and the rest is the result of experience. The nomenclature is not, as a rule, the nomenclature of the schools of philosophy. It is tentative, a little wavering, the outcome of the noble experiment, still new, of the solitudes of the desert.

And first, Macarius insists upon the greatness of the human soul. It is no part of Christian humility to think meanly of what we are by nature. Quite the contrary. "The soul in itself is neither of the nature of the Godhead, nor of the nature of the darkness of wickedness, but is a creature intellectual, beauteous, great, and wonderful, a fair likeness and image of God" (I. 7). However wonderful God's other creations are, God does not find in them satisfaction and "rest," as He does in the soul of man—no, not even in Michael and Gabriel (XV. 22). This is a point to which Macarius returns so frequently that it seems to be taken from an authority like that of Scripture (see e.g. XVI. 7, XXVI. 1, XLV. 5). The worth of the soul can only be measured by the price which God was prepared to pay for it (XV. 43 ff.). It is akin to God, though with a folly which the animals do not share it does not recognise its kindred (XLV. 5, 6). Its "subtilty" is so great that earthly wisdom fails to comprehend it (XLIX. 4). It is capable of infinite distention under the power of the Spirit (XLVI. 5). Even without the help of grace, it moves at large throughout all creation, annihilating space in its fleetness and nimbleness (XLVI. 4; cp. XII. 12). This belief must be borne in mind when we find Macarius elsewhere asserting that souls, like the angels, or the devils, have a "body" of their own. (IV. 9; cp. VII. 7). It is his way of asserting that each has its special characteristics, limitations, and idiosyncrasies, which give it a kind of outline, and, in the case of man, prescribe also the bodily configuration.

"For soul is form, and doth the body make." From the current psychology of the schools Macarius borrows the word which describes the intelligence as the guiding or ruling principle of the soul (ἡγεμονικόν XXV. 3; cp. XL. 5). But he has hardly made the definition his own. He loves rather to dwell upon the complexity of man's inner constitution. "The soul has many members, intelligence, conscience, will, thoughts accusing and excusing; but all these are dependent upon one factor (εἰς ἕνα λογισμόν)." This "factor" is what we should call the personality, or ego. Macarius calls it the soul. "They are members of the soul, and the soul is one, the inward man" (VII. 8): the mind is "the eye of the soul" (ibid.). Elsewhere Macarius gives a different enumeration. The soul s ruling, or "more kingly," factors "are the will, the conscience, the intelligence, and the faculty of love" (I. 3). Elsewhere again he speaks of "the five rational (or spiritual) senses of the soul," corresponding to the physical senses of the body (IV. 7), but without specifying them. In one place he seems to make conscience the supreme governing power of the soul; or perhaps he identifies it with the intelligence when the intelligence is brought to bear upon the moral aspects of conduct. "The heart has a captain in the intelligence, the conscience which is ever judging us.... It is the intelligence and conscience that chides and guides the heart, and calls from sleep the natural faculties.... For the soul has many members, though it is but one" (XV. 33, 34). Macarius never tires of impressing this unity of the soul in its multiplicity of "members" (e.g. XV. 7, XLI. 1, L. 4).

Such is the constitution of the soul; but as things are, it is all plunged into disorder. No one has ever taken more seriously the doctrine of the Fall than Macarius does. It would be scarcely an exaggeration to say that there is some reference to it on every page. To "the transgression of the commandment" all our disasters and our difficulties are traced. It has vitiated our moral nature. "One thing foreign to our nature, the disaster of the passions, we have received into ourselves through the first man's disobedience, and it has taken its place as almost a part of our nature by long custom and propensity" (IV. 8). "From the time that Adam transgressed the commandment the serpent entered in and made himself master of the house, and became like a second soul beside the soul" (XV. 35). Through man, the mischief penetrated to all creation. "When the evil word came to Adam ... he first received it by the outward hearing, then it penetrated through his heart, and took possession of all his being. When he was thus seized, creation, which served him and ministered to him, was seized with him. Through him, death reigned over every soul, and defaced every image of Adam" (XI. 5). The taint has become hereditary. Macarius knows of some "who say that evil is not born and bred in man" (XV. 21), but they are mistaken.

"We all are his sons of that dark race; ... the malady from which he suffered, we all who are of Adam's seed suffer from the same" (XXX. 8, cp. XXIV. 2). It rendered man liable to bodily disease, (XLVIII. 5). Its primary effect upon the soul, from

which all flows, is to "darken" it. By this Macarius means that the Fall has dulled all man's perceptions, especially with regard to moral truth. Man has so lost this perception as to be unconscious of the loss. "The world that you see round you, from the king to the beggar, are all in confusion and disorder and battle, and none of them knows the reason, or that it is the manifestation of the evil which crept in through Adam's disobedience, the sting of death.... The sin that crept in works upon the inner man without being detected.... Men are not aware that they are doing these things at the instigation of a foreign force. They think it all to be natural, and that they do these things of their own determination, while [Christians] know very well the source of these movements. The world is subject to the lust of evil, and knows it not" (XV. 48 ff.). Macarius does not admit that the evil which has invaded us is actually a substantive thing (ἐνυπόστατον): those who so affirm know nothing. "To God there is no substantive evil ... but in us it works with full force and makes itself felt, suggesting all foul concupiscence" (XVI. 1).

It is "a kind of invisible power of Satan, and a reality (οὐσία)" (XV. 49). "To us evil is a real thing, because it dwells and works in the heart, suggesting wicked and defiling thoughts, and not allowing us to pray purely, but bringing our mind into captivity to this world. It has clothed itself with our souls, and touched even our bones and members" (XVI. 6), It is like a kind of evil leaven which has grown and increased with the increase of the race "to such an extent that they have come to think that there is no God, and to worship inanimate stones, and to be unable so much as to take in the notion of a God" (XXIV. 2).

The case was desperate; but Macarius says that not all was lost. That could not be, so long as man "lives, and discerns, and has the power of will" (XXVI. 1). The contest which gathers round the names of Augustine and Pelagius had not begun; but Macarius had already heard of some who went too far in their depreciation of fallen nature. "It is not as some say, who are led astray by wrong teachings, that man is dead once for all, and cannot accomplish anything good whatever" (XLVI. 3). What Macarius thought that man could still do we shall see presently; but meanwhile the utmost that he could do could not avail to restore or save him. No evangelical Christian of modern times can be more emphatic on the point than he. "Only the appearing of Christ is able to cleanse soul and body" (XLV. 3). "If thou hadst been able to do it, what need was there of the coming of the Lord? As the eye cannot see without light, as a man cannot speak without a tongue, or hear without ears ... so he cannot be saved without Jesus, nor enter into the kingdom of heaven" (III. 4). "If any one takes his stand upon his own righteousness and redemption, not looking for the righteousness of God, which is the Lord (as the apostle says, 'Who is made to us righteousness and redemption') he labours in vain and to no purpose. All the dream of a righteousness of his own is at the last day manifested as nothing but filthy rags" (XX. 3). Man "was so sore wounded that none could cure him, but the Lord only" (ibid. 5), "Moses came, but he could not bestow a complete cure....

Every righteousness of the soul [under the law] was unavailing to heal man, until the Saviour came, the true Physician, who cures without cost, who gave Himself a ransom for mankind" (ibid. 6; cp. XXX. 8).

What, then, is man's part in the work, and what, besides the cost of the Incarnation and the Sacrifice, is God's? Where does grace come in, and where the will of man?

It must be remembered that the aim of Macarius is strictly practical, that he is not setting forth a scheme of Christian doctrine, but appealing to companies of men whose temptation is to think that they have done all that is required of them in renouncing the world, and to become indolent and secure. This may be a reason why he does not make much of the ideas of predestination and election and vocation, and of the initial grace which starts the Christian on his distinguishing career. Such thoughts lead naturally to complacency. His view is that all men would like to be good (XVII. 15), though they will not take the trouble to become so. Mere wishing will not do it. A man may wish to fly, but he cannot. "So the will is present with a man to be pure and blameless and without spot; but he has not the power" (II. 3). Some men, indeed, are bad because they choose to be bad; but others are bad in spite of themselves. They fight against it and resent it, but do not succeed in overcoming it. "These are far nobler and more honourable in God's eyes than the other" (XXVII. 2), and no doubt receive a better lot hereafter from a righteous Judge, whose awards in heaven and hell admit of infinite gradations (XL. 3 ff.). Even among those who hear the call of the gospel, not all respond to it. "If merely hearing made a man to belong without more ado to the good, then all the theatre-people and the whoremongers will go into the kingdom and the life" (XXVII. 20). The call, then, goes out universally, but only particular souls benefit by it, namely those who choose to accept it.

The freedom of the will is a main article in the creed of Macarius. Nothing takes it away. God Himself respects it. He will do nothing to force it. The apostles would have been glad to heal all the sick in the places that they came to; but they were not allowed, for if they had done so, faith would have been extorted from everybody. "Men and their free will would have been planted in God's service by compulsory force" (XXVI. 6). If Christians did not die, like others, "the whole world would come over by a kind of compulsion, not by a voluntary decision." Providence orders things thus, "that the freedom of will which God gave man at the beginning might abide" (XV. 39 ff.). "If it were possible to succeed without effort, Christianity would no longer be a stone of stumbling and a rock of offence. There would be no faith and unbelief. You would make man a creature of necessity," like the sun and the earth, for which there can be no praise or blame, reward or punishment (XXVII. 21, cp. XV. 22). From the outset to the finish, all depends upon man's free will.

Macarius accordingly represents God as waiting upon the movement of man's will. God and the devil both desire to gain him. "The soul is in the middle between the

two subsistences, and to whichever side the will of the soul inclines, of that side it becomes a possession and a son" (XXVI. 24). It is like a babe on the floor, which cannot get up and go to its mother, but has just the power to roll towards her and cry to her, and when God sees that movement of the soul, He comes to it and takes it up (XLVI. 3). Man cannot do a great deal, but what he can do, he must. "It is not possible or within a man's competence to root out sin by his own power, [but] to wrestle against it, to fight against it, to give and receive blows, is thine; to uproot is God's" (III. 4, cp. XXVII. 22). "That the war comes upon you is not your doing; but to hate it is; and then the Lord, seeing your mind, that you are striving … parts death from your soul" (XXVI. 18). "What is man's working? To renounce, to go out of the world, to pray when it is hard, to be on the watch, to love God and the brethren—this is his own doing," though he needs much in addition (ibid., 19, cp. XLVI. 2). God therefore meets man's natural efforts with a corresponding grace.

"The things which you do yourself are all very well, and acceptable to God, but they are not quite pure. For instance, you love God, but not perfectly. The Lord comes and gives a love which is unchangeable, the heavenly love. You pray in the natural manner, with wandering and doubt. God gives you the pure prayer, in spirit and in truth" (XXVI. 21). "The man to whom He gives help is the one who turns away from material pleasures and from his former habits, who drags his mind at all times to the Lord, whether it will or no, who denies himself, and seeks the Lord only. This is the man whom He keeps under His care" (IV. 5). Again and again Macarius speaks of help coming "when the Lord sees" that the soul is in earnest, but He holds His hand till then.

If it should seem that too much is thus left for man to do, Macarius answers that nothing is required of him but what lies within his power. He often uses the expression that man is a "match" for the power opposed to him. "The mind, as I have said many times, is an even match for it, and possesses a power that is well balanced against sin, to withstand and repel its suggestions. If you say that the opposing power is too strong, and that evil has complete sovereignty over man, you make God unrighteous, when He condemns man for submitting to Satan.… 'It is as though a young man should wrestle with a little child, and the child, when he is worsted, is condemned for getting worsted. This is a great injustice.' I tell you that the human mind is a good match for the enemy, and evenly balanced against him; and a soul of that kind, when it seeks, finds help and succour, and redemption is vouchsafed to it. The contest and struggle is not an unequal one" (III. 5). The description takes almost an epic form. The Persians and the Romans are in opposing camps, and "two winged youths of equal powers "come out and engage in a struggle between the lines: "so the opposing force and the mind are in equipoise" (XXVII. 22). Macarius repeats a former simile. "Those who say that sin is like a mighty giant, and the soul like a little child, are wrong. If things were so ill-matched … the Lawgiver would be unjust, in having given man a law to struggle

against Satan" (ibid., cp. XV. 23). The tempter is, after all, in God's hands, and God only "lets him loose upon men by a kind of measure," as a man suits the burden to his beast (XXVI. 3).

Macarius holds out no great hope of the struggle being ended before death. On the one hand, Satan is remorseless and relentless in his siege; and, on the other, man always remains free to change. "You see how alterable this nature is. You find it inclining to evil, you find it again inclining to good. In both cases it is in a position to assent to such action as it likes. Nature is susceptible both of good and of evil, either of Divine grace or of the contrary power, but is under no compulsion" (XV. 25). "In the depth of wickedness and the bondage of sin a man is at liberty to turn to what is good. A man bound over to the Holy Spirit, and inebriated with heavenly things, has power to turn to evil" (ibid., 36, cp. 40). "I assure you that freedom of choice remains even in perfect Christians, who are subjugated to what is good and intoxicated with it.... You may believe me that even the apostles, perfected as they were in grace, were not hindered by that grace from doing as they desired." Macarius gives instances of the apostles' wrongdoing. When questioned upon the point, he answers that the apostles "could not sin"—no doubt in the sense of giving themselves up to it—"because they could not choose to sin, being in light and in such grace. I do not say that grace in them was weak. What I say is that grace permits even perfect spiritual persons to have the use of their will, and power to do what they choose, and to turn in which direction they like. And human nature, which is weak, has power to turn, even when good is present with it" (XXVII. 9 ff.). He tells many warning tales of men who had received high measures of grace, and fallen away.

The purpose of this continual warfare is, of course, to test the sincerity and steadfastness of man's will. This thought recurs continually, and hardly needs illustration. "Man's resolution in combat and strife, and his genuine worth, and his goodwill towards God, are then shown when grace withdraws and he will still be brave and cry to God" (XVI. 13). So Macarius interprets the story of Job. "So it is still with those who endure afflictions and temptations; Satan is ashamed and sorry, because he has got nothing by it. The Lord begins to reason with him: 'Behold I suffered thee to tempt him. Wast thou able to do anything?' " (XXVI. 8). It seems to be God's way to give the minimum of grace that will be effective. This is partly to check spiritual pride. "The Lord knows the man's weakness, that he is easily lifted up. Therefore He withdraws, and permits the man to be exercised and put to trouble" (XXVII. 8). But it has a more general purpose. "In order that your free will and your liberty may be tested, which way it inclines, grace makes way for sin" (ibid., 9). "Grace purposely withdraws, for the man's good, and he enters into training, and [eventually] becomes a Christian" (XXVII. 20). To some, "even when they have withdrawn from the world,—and pass their time in much perseverance in prayer and fasting ... God does not immediately grant the grace

and the refreshment and rejoicing of the Spirit, being patient with them," in the sense of Luke 18:7, i. e., being willing to spend time over the business, instead of hurrying it on, "and reserving the gift. This He does not idly, nor unseasonably, nor at random, but with unspeakable wisdom, for the testing of their free will, to see whether they have counted God faithful and true who promised" (XXIX. 2, cp. XLVII. 13).

All this reserve on God's part, and laying so much upon the will of man, might seem to lead up to something like a doctrine of human merit. Nothing could be further from the teaching of Macarius. All is of God's doing. "Never think that you have been beforehand with the Lord in your virtue; it is He that worketh in you both to will and to do" (XXXVII. 9). Is that not prevenient grace? In a noble passage Macarius speaks of the inconceivable "minuteness "of God, which goes into every particular to effect the salvation of man. He arranges for the afflictions which make a man think of giving up the world. Then He teaches him that there is an inward renuntiation to be made, as well as the outward. "And when thou deemest thyself to have done all by renouncing, the Lord taketh account with thee. 'Why dost thou boast? Did not I create thy body and thy soul? Did not I make the gold and silver? What hast thou done? The soul begins to make confession, and to beseech the Lord and say, 'All things are Thine. The house I am in is Thine. My clothes are Thine. From Thee is my food, and of Thee am I supplied for every need. Then the Lord begins to reply, 'I thank thee. The goods are thine own. The goodwill is thine own;

and because of thy love towards Me, since thou hast made Me thy refuge, come, I will now give thee what hitherto neither thou hast gained, nor do men have it upon earth. Take Me, thy Lord, with thine own soul, that thou mayest ever be with Me in joy and gladness' " (XXXII. 8). Again, "This is the part of man, that whether he fasts, or keeps watch, or prays, or does some fine thing, he should ascribe all to the Lord and say, 'If God had not enabled me, I could not have fasted, or prayed, or gone out of the world. In this way, God, seeing your intention, that you ascribe to God the things that are yours, which you do of your own nature, bestows upon you in return the things that are His, the spiritual things, the divine and heavenly things" (XXVI. 20). Although the language may not be quite that of St. Augustine or of the Council of Orange, Macarius does not differ from them in meaning. The Lord, he says, "secretly helps" the man in his striving (XXI. 5). "Whatever the soul may think fit to do of itself, whatever care and pains it may take … without the cooperation of the Spirit … it is of no use for the heavenly places" (XXIV. 5). Indeed St.

Augustine's famous saying, Fac quod iubes, is almost verbally anticipated by Macarius when he speaks of the man who comes at last to doing all the commandments with ease, and then corrects himself, "or rather, the Lord in him does His own commandments" (XIX. 2).

The result of this conception is a profound humility. The nearer a man approaches to perfection, the more he is conscious how ill he has corresponded to the divine influence, and that whatever success may have been gained is due to that influence, and not to himself. And the humility thus formed combines with an ardent longing for better and better things. "The soul that really loves God and Christ … esteems itself as having wrought nothing, by reason of its insatiable aspiration after God. Though it should exhaust the body with fastings, with watchings, its attitude towards the virtues is as if it had not yet even begun to labour for them" (X. 4). "Until a man … makes progress, he is not poor in spirit, but has some opinion of himself; but … grace itself teaches him to be poor in spirit, which means that a man, being righteous and chosen of God, does not esteem himself to be anything, but holds his soul in abasement and disregard, as if he knew nothing and had nothing, though he knows and has" (XII. 3). "The sign of Christianity is this … to say continually, 'It is not mine; another has put this treasure in my charge. I am a poor man, and when He pleases, He takes it from me … I am not fit for this sun to shine upon me. This is the sign of Christianity, this humility" (XV. 37; cp. XXVI. 11, XLI. 2).

"Such an one despises himself beyond all sinners, and holds this notion implanted in him as if by nature, and the further he advances in the knowledge of God, the more he considers himself an ignoramus. It is grace which ministers this effect, and makes it like a part of nature in the soul" (XVII. 12; cp. XXVII. 5). This was Christ's way of conquering the devil, "and howsoever thou mayest be humbled, thou wilt never do anything like thy Master" (XXVI. 26). The author of the Pilgrim's Progress was not the first to teach that "he that is down need fear no fall. Macarius had taught the safety of humility before him. "The humble never falls. Whence indeed could he fall, being lower than all? A proud mind is a great humiliation; a humble mind is a great exaltation and honour and dignity" (XIX. 8).

The Homilies contain some wonderful passages about "the measures of perfection," which Macarius and his hearers were endeavouring to reach. The Eighth Homily is given up to the subject. Macarius appears to be about to describe the various stages in the spiritual progress. But if that was his intention he does not carry it into effect. He leaves the "measures" undefined, but gives glimpses of spiritual experience which surpass "measurement. Yet he avows that he has never seen "a perfect Christian, one completely free" (VIII. 5). A daring disciple ventures to ask Macarius in what "measures" he is himself. The reply can only be read with awe. There are other places, however, where Macarius defines the highest point as the attainment of "charity" or "love. By it he means an absolute and entire love of God for God's own sake. It is characteristic of him to regard it as a thing not of degrees or of progressive attainment, but marking a positive and well-ascertained position. Other gifts "serve only as inducements" to attain it. "Those who are contented with them are but children, though in the light. Many of the brethren have come to such

measures, and had gifts of healing and revelation and prophecy, and because they did not reach the perfect charity, wherein lies the bond of perfectness, war came upon them … and they fell. But if any one reaches the perfect love, that man is from thenceforth fast bound, and is the captive of grace" (XXVI. 16; cp. XXVII. 14).

As a bride is not satisfied with her bridegroom's gifts, but craves for the bridegroom himself, "so the soul … receives as an earnest from the Spirit gifts of healings, it may be, or of knowledge, or of revelation, but it is not satisfied with these, until it attains the complete union, namely charity, which can never change nor fail, and which sets those who have longed for it free from passion and from agitation" (XLV. 7).

Hard though it is to attain these "perfect measures," Macarius will not let us be daunted by the difficulties. A more encouraging teacher it would not be easy to find. "Every day a man should have the hope and the joy and the expectation of the coming kingdom and deliverance, and to say, 'If to-day I have not been delivered, I shall to-morrow.' … If a man does not keep before his eyes the joy and the hope … he cannot endure" (XXVI. 11). One great element of evangelical comfort is, indeed, scarcely mentioned by name in the Homilies—the forgiveness of sins. But the substance of it is always there, implied in the patient kindness and helpfulness of God towards the striving soul. The striving is everything. We must "not disbelieve that the grace of God has pleasure even in sinners when they repent; for that which is bestowed according to grace is not measured by comparison with previous infirmity; otherwise grace is no more grace" (XXXVII. 7). By an anticipation of some of the most encouraging passages of Robert Browning, Macarius bids us think that the virtuous soul is accepted "not because of what it has done, but because of what it has desired" (ibid., 9).

It has been said above that Macarius in these Homilies is not much concerned with what man owes to man. His main preoccupation is with the struggle of the solitary soul to find God and to love Him aright. But Macarius discloses, if but incidentally, the Christian's concern for other men. His hearers, cut off from parents and kinsfolk, whom the Homilies treat unsympathetically, as only so many encumbrances to be shaken off, live in some kind of community, sometimes thirty together under a governor (III. 1). He encourages them to seek the judgment of a spiritual man upon their state (XLVIII. 2). It is their duty to be considerate for each other—for instance, not to pray in such a manner as to disturb the brethren around them (VI. 3). To have an eye to the spiritual advantage of the brethren is better than to be wholly wrapped up in the pursuit of one's own (ibid., 4; cp. VIII. 4). Instead of judging or envying others, we ought to feel that all are contributing to the welfare of all, whatever the work assigned to us and to them may be (III.). "Though grace works after a different manner in each individual Christian … yet all are of one

city, of the same mind, of the same tongue, recognising one another" (XII. 4). This fellowship extends beyond the visible world.

As a merchant abroad sends word home to prepare for his return, so "if any are making the heavenly wealth their merchandise, their fellow citizens, the spirits of saints and angels, are aware of it, and say with admiration, 'Our brethren on the earth have come into great wealth. So they … come with mighty rejoicing to those above, and those who belong to the Lord receive them, having prepared for them there houses, and gardens, and clothes, all bright and costly" (XVI. 8). But it cannot be said that the relation of the Christian to his fellow creatures occupies a prominent part in the teaching of these Homilies. Macarius is even jealous that it should not become too prominent. "Even the much-loved brethren, whom such a soul has under its eye, if they hinder it from that love [of God], it turns from them, in a sense. Here speaks that aloofness of spirit which allowed two "little strangers" to live for three years within a bowshot without once interfering in their inward concerns.

Enough has been said about the nature of the teaching of these Homilies. They leave upon the reader an impression of the tremendous reality of the contest in which the Christian is engaged. Macarius insists frequently that these things are not to be regarded as matters of words, or doctrines, or systems, but as practical truths of which the force ought to be felt in experience (I. 10, 11). It is of comparatively little account to have right theories on religious subjects. "It is one thing to give descriptive accounts with a certain head-knowledge and correct notions, and another, in substance and reality, in full experience, and in the inward man, and in the mind, to possess the treasure and the grace and the taste and the effectual working of the Holy Ghost" (XXVII. 12). As Bishop Gore has said, these Homilies "constitute one of the best guides to the spiritual life that the church possesses."

4. THE TEXT AND TRANSLATION

The fifty Homilies were first printed at Paris in 1559, by Morel, from a MS. in the French King's library. In 1562 a Latin translation by Picus was added; and in 1699 J. G. Pritius published at Leipzig an edition of the works of Macarius then known, or attributed to him, containing, amongst other pieces, the fifty Homilies. This was the standard edition, till 1850, when H. J. Floss published at Köln a new and improved edition, reprinted with further improvements and enrichments in Migne's Patrologia Græca, vol. xxxiv. The text as given in Migne has been taken as the basis of the present translation. But the translator has employed in addition the two MSS. now to be found in English libraries. The first of these is in the Bodleian Library (Cod. Baroccianus, 213). The second is at Holkham, and belongs to the Earl of Leicester, who kindly allowed the translator to collate it. The Holkham MS. is a direct transcript of the Bodleian, and only varies from it in a few places. Where these MSS. differ from Floss's text, their reading has generally been found superior,

and has been followed accordingly. As the translator has wished the book to be rather a book of spiritual edification for the general reader than an aid to the critical student, he has usually refrained from calling attention to textual points. Those who have Migne's text before them will kindly remember this when the translation silently parts company with that text.

The work of Macarius has received but scanty attention from English scholars and divines. The article upon him and his Alexandrian namesake in the Dictionary of Christian Biography is little short of a scandal. Even so admirable and judicious a book as Dr. Swete's Patristic Study makes no reference to him. No edition of any text of his had appeared by an English hand till Mr. G. L. Marriott in 1918 published from the Harvard University Press the seven additional Homilies contained in the Bodleian and Holkham MSS. The one happy exception to this conspiracy of neglect is the translation of the fifty Homilies "by a Presbyter of the Church of England," published in 1721. The "Presbyter" was Thomas Haywood, and he used the Bodleian MS. as the basis of his translation. His book, entitled Primitive Morality, or, The Spiritual Homilies of St. Macarius the Egyptian, is now not often found. The copy which the present translator is fortunate enough to possess was given to him by the late Bishop of Gibraltar, William Edward Collins, who picked it up on a bookstall. As long ago as 1893 the translator had remarked, in his book on The Relation of Confirmation to Baptism, that "it seems strange that his Homilies have never been brought to the knowledge of the modern church as a companion volume to the Imitation of Christ." He did not then know the work of Haywood. When he began the present translation he was in hopes that he would not find it necessary to do more than modernise, with some corrections, the translation of his predecessor. The hope proved illusory; and though he has often borrowed a racy word or phrase from the "Presbyter," he has been compelled to work independently.

Perhaps some apology is needed for a certain freedom in the translation. No attempt has been made to represent the same Greek word by the same English one throughout. Certain words recur again and again, such as ἀναπαύεσθαι or ἐπαναπαύεσθαι, εὐδοκία, πληροφορία, νοῦς, πάθη, λογισμός. They bear various shades of meaning, according to the context, and it has been felt useless, to aim at a rigid uniformity of rendering. The translator has wished to make the meaning and spirit of the saint felt through the English sentences, rather than to secure a pedantic and tiresome literalness. God grant that those who read may be moved to that "insatiable" desire after Him which breathes in all the Homilies. "If you believe that these things are true, as indeed they are, take heed to yourself, whether your soul has found the light to guide it, and the true meat and drink, which is the Lord. If you have not, seek night and day, that you may receive" (XXXIII. 4).

ADDITIONAL NOTE

Since this book was set in type, two French scholars, Dom Villecourt and Dom

Wilmart, have endeavoured to prove that these Homilies are in fact a manual of the sect of the Massalians or Euchites, who were condemned by various councils of the fourth and fifth centuries. Their history may be seen in the Dictionary of Christian Biography, under the name Euchites. The work of these two scholars is noticed, and accepted as convincing, by the Rev. G. L. Marriott in the Journal of Theological Studies for April, 1921. That certain propositions taken from these Homilies, and from the seven others referred to on p. xviii, were used by the Euchites, and (as used by them) condemned, is certain. St. John Damascene, in his de Haeresibus (vol. I, p. 95 in Le Quien's edition of his works), gives eighteen propositions of the Massalians "collected from a book of theirs." He does not name the author of the book. It would seem likely that it was the book called Asceticus, from which extracts were read at the Council of Ephesus in 431. If so, the Asceticus must have been largely based on these Homilies.

The second of the propositions, for instance, is "that Satan and the devils have hold of the mind of men, and the nature of men is capable of communion with the spirits of wickedness." The first half of this sentence, severed from its context, is taken from Hom. XXVII, 19; the second half occurs a few lines lower down in the same section. The eighteenth proposition is based upon Hom. VIII, 3: it runs, "That the Saviour may be manifested to those at prayer in light, and that a man was found at a certain time standing by the altar and that three loaves were offered to him, kneaded with oil." Parallels to most of the other propositions could be found in the Homilies. Not all of them, however, are taken from the Homilies, so that the Homilies cannot themselves be the Euchite book from which St. John's propositions are extracted. The origin of the Euchites, as known to history, was in Mesopotamia. Our Homilies were not composed in that country. The words of the title quoted on p. xviii, "Epistle … to the Abbot Symeon of Mesopotamia in Syria," are sufficient proof that they came from elsewhere. A certain Symeon, according to Theodoret, was among the founders of the sect. It was a common name in the East, but the Symeon to whom the Homilies were sent may well have made a harmful use of them, in a heretical direction. Because they lent themselves to such treatment is not a sufficient reason for doubting the authorship of Macarius, nor for ceasing, as Dom Wilmart regretfully does, to regard the author as a doctor of the Catholic Church.

June 11, 1921.

HOMILY I

An allegorical interpretation of the vision described in the prophet Ezekiel 1. THE blessed prophet Ezekiel relates a glorious and inspired vision or apparition which he saw, and his description is that of a vision full of mysteries unspeakable. He saw in the plain a chariot of Cherubim, four spiritual living creatures. Each living creature had four faces, one the face of a lion, another the face of an eagle, another the face of a calf, and the fourth the face of a human being. To every face there were wings, so that there were no hinder parts to any of them. Their backs were full of eyes; their bellies likewise were thick set with eyes; there was no part about them that was not full of eyes. There were also wheels to every face, wheel within wheel. In the wheels there was a Spirit. And Ezekiel saw as it were the likeness of a man, and under his feet as it were a work of sapphire. The Cherubim-chariot and the living creatures bore the Master who rode upon them. Wheresoever He chose to go, it was with face forward. Beneath the Cherubim he saw as it were a man's hand supporting and carrying.

2. And this that the prophet saw was in substance true and certain, but it signified and foreshadowed something else, mysterious and divine—a mystery hidden verily from ages and from generations, but in the last times made manifest at the appearing of Christ. The mystery which he beheld was that of the soul, that was to receive her Lord, and to become a throne of glory for Him. For the soul that is privileged to be in communion with the Spirit of His light, and is irradiated by the beauty of the unspeakable glory of Him who has prepared her to be a seat and a dwelling for Himself, becomes all light, all face, all eye; and there is no part of her that is not full of the spiritual eyes of light. That is to say, there is no part of her darkened, but she is all throughout wrought into light and spirit, and is full of eyes all over, and has no such thing as a back part, but in every direction is face forward, with the unspeakable beauty of the glory of the light of Christ mounted and riding upon her.

As the sun is of one likeness all over, without any part behind or inferior, but is all glorified with light throughout, and is, indeed, all light, with no difference between the parts,—or as fire, the very light of the fire, is alike all over, having in it no

first or last, or greater or less,—so also the soul that is perfectly irradiated by the unspeakable beauty of the glory of the light of the face of Christ, and is perfectly in communion with the Holy Ghost, and is privileged to be the dwelling-place and throne of God, becomes all eye, all light, all face, all glory, all spirit, being made so by Christ, who drives, and guides, and carries, and bears her about, and graces and adorns her thus with spiritual beauty; for it says, the hand of a man was under the Cherubim, because He it is that is carried upon her and directs her.

3. The four living creatures which bore the chariot were a symbol of the ruling factors of the soul. As the eagle is the king of birds, and the lion of wild beasts, and the bull of tame ones, and man of creatures in general, so the soul also has its ruling factors. They are the will, the conscience, the intelligence, and the faculty of love. By these the chariot of the soul is controlled, and upon these God rests. According to another interpretation the symbolism is applied to the church of the saints in heaven. As it is here said that the living creatures were exceeding high, and full of eyes, and it was not possible for any one to apprehend the number of the eyes, or the height, because the knowledge of these was not given; and as it is with the stars in the sky, to see and wonder at them was given to all men, but to know and apprehend the number was not given; and with the plants of the earth, to enjoy them was given to all, but it is impossible for any one to know the number of them; so with regard to the church of the saints in heaven, to enter into it and enjoy it was given to all who will but strive, but how to see and apprehend the number is reserved for God alone to know.

The Rider, then, is conveyed and carried by the chariot or throne of the living creatures which are all eye, or, in other words, by every soul that has become His throne and seat, and is now eye and light. He is mounted thereon, and governs her with the reins of the Spirit, and guides her according to His understanding. For as the spiritual living creatures went not whither they were minded to go, but whither He that sat upon them and directed them knew and willed, so here it is He that holds the reins and drives by His Spirit, and they go accordingly, not by their own will when they are minded to go through heaven. Sometimes, discarding the body, He drives and takes the soul in thought through heaven; sometimes, when so it pleases Him, He comes into the body and its affairs; sometimes, when so minded, to the ends of the earth, and discovers to the soul mysteries revealed. Oh, the noble and good and only true Charioteer! In like manner shall our bodies also be privileged at the resurrection, the soul being thus pre-glorified even now, and mingled with the Spirit.

4. That the souls of the righteous become heavenly light, the Lord Himself told the apostles, when He said, Ye are the light of the world. He first wrought them into light, and ordained that through them the world should be enlightened. Neither do men light a lamp, He says, and put it under the bushel, but on the lampstand,

and it giveth light to all that are in the house. Let your light so shine before men. In other words, Hide not the gift which ye have received from Me, but give to all that are minded to receive it. Again, The light of the body is the eye; if thine eye be full of light, thy whole body is enlightened, but if thine eye be evil, thy whole body is dark. If therefore the light that is in thee be darkness, how great is that darkness. As the eyes are the light of the body, and, so long as the eyes are well, the whole body is enlightened, but, if any accident befalls them and they are darkened, the whole body is in darkness, so the apostles were set to be the eyes and light of the whole world. The Lord therefore charged them by this saying, If ye who are the light of the body, stand fast and turn not aside, behold, the whole body of the world is enlightened; but if ye who are the light are darkened, how great is that darkness, which is nothing less than the world. So the apostles, being themselves light, administered light to those who believed, enlightening their hearts with that heavenly light of the Spirit by which they were themselves enlightened.

5. And being themselves salt they seasoned and salted every believing soul with the salt of the Holy Ghost; for the Lord said to them, Ye are the salt of the earth, meaning by earth the hearts of men. They administered in the souls of men the heavenly salt of the Spirit, seasoning them and rendering them free from corruption and from going bad, instead of that unsavoury condition they were in. Flesh, if it be not salted, corrupts and is filled with ill savour, so that every one turns from the evil odour, and worms creep into the corrupted flesh, and there dwell, and feed, and burrow; but when the salt comes, the worms that dwell there are destroyed, and the offensive smell is at an end; for it is the property of salt to kill worms and to banish an ill smell. In the same manner, every soul that is not salted with the Holy Ghost, and does not partake of the heavenly salt, which is the power of God, corrupts, and is filled with the ill odour of bad thoughts, so that the countenance of God turns from the dreadful odour of the vain thoughts of darkness, and from the passions that dwell in such a soul. The evil and dreadful worms, which are the spirits of wickedness, and the powers of darkness, walk up and down in it, and dwell there, and burrow, and creep, and devour it, and bring it to decay. My wounds stink and are corrupt, says the Psalm.

But when the soul flies to God for succour, and believes, and asks for the salt of life, which is the good Spirit that loves mankind, then the heavenly salt comes, and kills those dreadful worms, and banishes the ill savour, and cleanses the soul by the effectual working of its power, and thus the soul is made sound and free from deterioration by that true salt, and is restored to being useful and serviceable to the heavenly Lord. That is why in the Law God, using a figure, commanded that every sacrifice should be salted with salt.

6. First the sacrifice must be slain by the priest, and die, then cut in pieces and salted, and then laid upon the fire. Unless the priest first slays the lamb, so that it

dies, it is neither salted nor brought to the Lord for a burnt offering. Thus our soul also must come to Christ, the true High-priest, and be slain by Him, and die to its own mode of thought, and to the evil life of sin which it lived before. The life must go out of it—that life of bad passions. As the body, when the soul goes out of it, is dead, and lives no longer with the life which it lived before, and neither hears nor walks, so when Christ, our heavenly Highpriest, by the grace of His power, slays our life to the world and puts it to death, it dies to the life of evil which it lived, and no longer hears, nor speaks, nor maintains any citizenship in the darkness of sin, because the evil passions which were its soul have by grace gone out of it. The apostle cries, The world is crucified to me, and I unto the world. The soul which yet lives in the world, and in the darkness of sin, and has not been done to death by Him, but still has the soul of wickedness in it, that is, the activity of the darkness of the passions of evil, and is governed by it, does not belong to the body of Christ, does not belong to the body of light, but is indeed the body of darkness, and is still part and parcel of the darkness; while they who have the soul of light, that is, the power of the Holy Ghost, form part and parcel of the light.

7. But some one may say, How is it that you call the soul the body of darkness, when it is no creation of the darkness? Attend, and understand me aright. As the coat or garment that you have on was made by another, and you wear it, and your house was created or built by another, and you live in it, so when Adam transgressed the commandment of God, and hearkened to the wicked serpent, he was sold, or sold himself, to the devil, and the evil one put on his soul like a garment—his soul, that fair creation, which God had fashioned after His own image. Thus the apostle says, Having stripped the principalities and powers, He triumphed over them in the cross. This was the purpose of the Lord’s coming, that He might cast them out, and recover His own house and temple, man. For this reason, the soul is called the body of the darkness of wickedness, as long as the darkness of sin is in it, because there it lives to the evil world of darkness, and is there held fast. So Paul calls it the body of sin, the body of death, saying, that the body of sin might be destroyed, and, Who shall deliver me from the body of this death?

On the other hand, the soul which has believed God, and has been rescued from sin, and done to death out of the life of darkness, and has received the light of the Holy Ghost as its life, and by that means has come to life indeed, spends its existence in the same for ever after, because it is there held fast by the light of the Godhead. For the soul in itself is neither of the nature of the Godhead, nor of the nature of the darkness of wickedness, but is a creature intellectual, beauteous, great, and wonderful, a fair likeness and image of God. It was through the transgression that the wickedness of the passions of darkness entered into it.

8. Whichever the soul, then, is mixed with, it is thenceforward united with the same in the motions of the will. Either it has the light of God within it, and lives in

the same, in all virtues, and belongs to the light of rest, or it has the darkness of sin, and meets with condemnation. The soul that desires to live with God in rest and eternal light must come, as was said before, to Christ the true High-priest, and be slain, and die to the world, and to the former life of the darkness of wickedness, and be translated into another life and to a conversation that is divine. As when a man dies in some city, he neither hears the voice of the people there, nor their talking, nor the noise that they make, but is once for all dead, and is translated to another region, where there are no voices and none of the cries of that city, even so the soul, when it is once slain and dead to that city of the evil passions in which it dwells and lives, hears no longer within itself the voice of the communings of darkness; no longer is heard the talking and crying of vain disputation, or of the hubbub of the spirits of darkness; but it is translated into a city all full of goodness and peace, into the city of the light of the Godhead, and there it lives, and hears, and there it has its citizenship, and talks, and communes, and there it works spiritual works, that are worthy of God.

9. Let us therefore pray that we ourselves may be slain through His power, and die to the world of the wickedness of darkness, and that the spirit of sin may be destroyed in us, and that we may put on and receive the soul of the heavenly Spirit, and be translated from the wickedness of darkness into the light of Christ, and may rest in life through world after world. For as on the race-course the chariots run, and the one that gets the start of the other is a clog, and check, and hindrance to the other, so that it cannot make progress and get to victory first, so do the thoughts of the soul and of sin run in man. If the thought of sin happens to get the start, it clogs and checks and hampers and hinders the soul, so that it cannot get near to God and carry off the victory from it. But where the Lord mounts and takes the reins of the soul into His own hands, He always wins, skilfully managing and guiding the chariot of the soul into a heavenly and inspired mind for ever. He does not war against wickedness; having always supreme power and authority in Himself, He works Himself the victory. So the Cherubim are driven, not where they are inclined of themselves to go, but where the Rider or Charioteer directs. Where He wills, they go; and He supports them. The hand of a man, it says, was under them. These holy souls are driven and guided by the Spirit of Christ, who holds the reins, whithersoever He pleases—when He pleases, in heavenly communings; when He pleases, that it should be in the body; where He pleases, there they minister. As the wings are the feet of the bird, so the heavenly light of the Spirit takes up the wings of the thoughts of worthy souls, guiding and managing as He knows best.

10. When thou hearest these things, therefore, look to thyself, whether thou art in deed and in truth possessed of them in thine own soul. They are not mere words spoken; it is a work of truth going on in thy soul. If thou hast it not, but art destitute of such spiritual good things, thou oughtest to have continual grief and sorrow and trouble, as one still dead to the kingdom. Like one that is wounded, be always

crying to the Lord, and ask in faith, that this true life may be vouchsafed even to thee. When God made this body of ours, He did not grant to it that it should have life either from His own nature or from the body itself, nor meat and drink, raiment and shoes; He appointed that it should have all the supplies of life from without, making the body in itself quite naked, and it is impossible for the body to live at all apart from things outside itself, without food and drink and clothing. If it attempts to subsist upon its own nature alone, taking nothing from without, it wastes and perishes. In the same manner is it with the soul also. It has not the divine light, though it is created after the image of God. So has He ordered its conditions, and has been pleased that it should not have eternal life of its own nature; but of His Godhead, of His Spirit, of His light, it has spiritual meat and drink, and heavenly clothing, which are the soul's life, the life indeed.

11. As, then, we have seen that the body's life is not from itself, but from without, from the earth, and apart from the things without it is impossible for it to live, so also, unless the soul be born now into that land of the living and spiritually draw nourishment from it and make increase, growing up unto the Lord, and be arrayed from the Godhead with the ineffable raiment of heavenly beauty, without that sustenance it is impossible for it to live, of itself, in enjoyment and rest. The divine nature contains the bread of life, which said, I am the bread of life and living water, and wine that maketh glad the heart of man, and the oil of gladness, and the whole variety of the food of the heavenly Spirit, and the heavenly raiment of light which comes from God. In these things the eternal life of the soul consists. Woe to the body when it stands upon its own nature, because then it wastes and dies; and woe to the soul if it takes its stand upon nothing but its own nature, and puts its trust in nothing but its own works, not having the fellowship of the Spirit of God, because it dies, not having the eternal life of the Godhead vouchsafed to it. When men are sick, as soon as the body is no longer able to receive nourishment, all hopes of them are given over, and all true friends and kinsfolk and lovers are in tears. In the same way, God and the holy angels are in tears over souls that are not nourished with the heavenly nourishment of the Spirit, and have not come to life in incorruption. These things, I say again, are not merely words that are spoken, but the work of spiritual life, the work of truth accomplished upon the soul that is worthy and faithful.

12. If then thou art become a throne of God, and the heavenly Charioteer has mounted thee, and thy whole soul has become a spiritual eye, and thy whole soul light; and if thou hast been nourished with that nourishment of the Spirit, and if thou hast been made to drink of the Living Water, and if thou hast put on the garments of the ineffable light; if thine inward man is established in the experience and full assurance of all these things, behold, thou livest, thou livest the eternal life indeed, and thy soul from henceforth is at rest with the Lord. Behold, thou hast received these things from the Lord and possessest them in truth, that thou

mayest live the true life. But if thou art conscious that thou hast none of these things, then weep, and mourn, and lament, because even yet thou hast not found the eternal heavenly riches. Be in trouble therefore for thy penury, beseeching the Lord night and day, because thou hast stopped short in the dreadful poverty of sin. Would to God that a man had even gained as much as this trouble because of his poverty—that we did not go on without a care, as though we were full! because one that is seriously troubled, and seeks and asks of the Lord continually, will soon find redemption and the heavenly riches, as the Lord said at the conclusion of His discourse of the Unjust Judge and the Widow, How much more shall God avenge them that cry to Him night and day? Yea, I say unto you, He shall avenge them speedily. To whom be glory and power for ever. Amen.

HOMILY II

Concerning the kingdom of darkness, that is, of sin, and that God alone is able to take away sin from us, and to deliver us out of the bondage of the evil prince. 1. THE kingdom of darkness, the evil prince, having taken man captive at the beginning, enveloped and clothed the soul in the power of darkness, as a man might clothe another. "And that they may make him king, and clothe him with royal garments, so that from head to foot he may wear royal apparel." In this manner the evil prince clothed the soul and all its substance with sin. He defiled it all, and brought it all into captivity to his kingdom, leaving not one member of it free from him—not the thoughts, not the understanding, not the body; he clothed it all with the purple of darkness. For as it is the body that suffers, not one part or member of it, but the whole is liable to suffer together, so the whole soul suffered the passions of unhappiness and sin. The evil one clothed the whole soul, which is the indispensable part or member of man, with his own unhappiness, which is sin, and thus the body became liable to suffering and decay.

2. For when the apostle says, Put off the old man, he means a complete man, with eyes for eyes, ears for ears, hands for hands, and feet for feet. For the evil one has defiled the entire man, soul and body, and dragged him down, and has clothed the man with an "old man," polluted man, unclean, at enmity with God, not subject to the law of God, and all identified with sin, that he may no longer see as the man himself wishes, but may see wrongly, and hear wrongly, and have feet that are swift to do evil, and hands that work iniquity, and a heart that devises evil things. Let us therefore beseech God that He would put off the old man from us; because He alone is able to take away sin from us, for those that have taken us captive, and that detain us in their kingdom, are too mighty for us. But He has promised to deliver us from this sore bondage. When there is a hot sun and a wind blowing, the sun and the wind each have a body and nature of their own, but no one can separate between sun and wind, unless God, who alone can, should make the wind to cease from blowing. In like manner sin is mingled with the soul, though each has its own nature. 3. It is impossible to separate between the soul and sin, unless God should stop and repress this evil wind, which dwells in the soul and in the body.

A man watches a bird flying, and wishes to fly himself, but he cannot, because he has no wings. Even so the will is present with a man to be pure, and blameless, and without spot, and to have no wickedness in him, but to be always with God; but he has not the power. To fly into the air of God and the liberty of the Holy Ghost may be his wish, but unless wings are given him, he cannot. Let us then beseech God to bestow upon us the wings of a dove, even of the Holy Ghost, that we may fly to Him and be at rest, and that He would separate and make to cease from our souls and bodies, that evil wind, which is the sin that dwelleth in the members of our souls and bodies. None but He can do it. Behold, it says, the Lamb of God, that taketh away the sin of the world. He alone has shewn this mercy to those men who believe Him, redeeming them from sin; and for those who are always waiting for Him, and hope, and seek without ceasing, He achieves this unutterable salvation.

4. As in a gloomy black night a fierce wind blows, and stirs and searches and shakes all the plants and seeds, so when man falls under the power of the darkness of the devil's night, and is in night and darkness, he is agitated by that dreadful wind of sin that blows, and is shaken and stirred, and searched through all his nature, his soul, his thoughts, his understanding; and all the limbs of his body are shaken, and no member of either soul or body escapes free and immune from the sin that dwelleth in us. In like manner there is a day of light and a divine wind of the Holy Ghost, which blows and refreshes the souls that are in the day of the light of God. It penetrates all the substance of the soul and its thoughts, and all the being and all the members of the body, refreshing and resting them with a divine, unspeakable rest. This is what the apostle declared when he said, We are not children of the night or of darkness, for ye are all the sons of light and the sons of day. And as yonder, in the state of error, the old man put on man as a complete whole, and wears the garment of the kingdom of darkness, the garment of blasphemy, unbelief, unconcern, vainglory, pride, avarice, lust, and all the other trappings of the kingdom of darkness, ragged, unclean, and abominable; so here, all who have put off the old man, which is from beneath the earth—all whom Jesus has stripped of the clothing of the kingdom of darkness—have put on the new and heavenly man, Jesus Christ, once more corresponding, eyes to eyes, ears to ears, head to head, to be all pure, and wearing the heavenly image.

5. The Lord has clothed them with the clothing of the kingdom of ineffable light, the clothing of faith, hope, charity, of joy, peace, goodness, kindness, and all the other divine and living clothing of the light of life, of inexpressible rest, that, as God Himself is love, and joy, and peace, and kindness, and goodness, so the new man may be through grace. And as the kingdom of darkness, and sin, are hidden in the soul until the day of resurrection, when the bodies also of sinners shall be covered with the darkness that is now hidden in the soul, so the kingdom of light, and the heavenly Image, Jesus Christ, now mystically enlightens the soul, and reigns in the soul of the saints, but is hidden from the eyes of men, and only with the eyes of

the soul is Christ truly seen, until the day of resurrection; but then the body also shall be covered and glorified with the light of the Lord, which is now in the man's soul, that the body also may reign with the soul which now receives the kingdom of Christ and rests and is enlightened with eternal light. Glory to His mercies and His tender compassion, for that He has such pity on His servants, and enlightens them, and delivers them from the kingdom of darkness, and bestows upon them His own light and His own kingdom. To Him be glory and might for ever. Amen.

HOMILY III

That the brethren ought to live in sincerity, simplicity, love, and peace with each other, and to carry on contest and war in their inward thoughts. 1. THE brethren ought to dwell together in much charity, whether they are praying, or reading the scriptures, or doing some kind of work, that they may have the foundation of mutual charity. In this way, those various inclinations may find favour, and those who pray, and those who read, and those who work, can all live in sincerity and simplicity with each other to their profit. What is written? Thy will be done, as in heaven, so on earth, in order that as the angels in heaven dwell together in great concord, peace, and charity, and there is no such thing there as pride, or as envy, but they live together in charity and sincerity, so should the brethren dwell together. Some thirty, perhaps, are under one government; they cannot continue all day and night at one thing. Some give themselves up to prayer for six hours, and then would like to read; others are very ready to serve, while others work at some form of labour.

2. Whatsoever they are about, the brethren ought to be in charity and cheerfulness with each other. Let him who is at work say of him who is at prayer, “The treasure that my brother gets is common, and therefore mine.” Let him who prays say of the reader, “The profit which he gets by reading is to my advantage.” Let him who is at work say, “The service which I am doing is for the benefit of all.” As the members of the body, being many, are one body, and help each other, and each performs its own function, but the eye sees on behalf of the whole body, and the hand labours for all the members, and the foot, as it walks, carries them all, and another member suffers with all alike, so let the brethren be with one another. Let not him who prays judge the labouring brother because he is not at prayer. Let not him that is at work judge the one who is praying, or say, “He lies by, while I am working.” Let not him who serves judge some one else, but let each one do whatever he is doing to the glory of God. Let him who reads hold him who prays in charity and cheerfulness, with the thought, “It is for me that he prays”; and let him who prays think of him who is at work, “What he is doing is done for the benefit of us all.”

3. Thus much concord and peace and unity in the bond of peace holds them all fast, and they are enabled to live together in sincerity and simplicity and the favour of God. No doubt the principal thing among these is continuance in prayer; but one thing is required, that a man should have treasure in his soul, and the life which is the Lord in his mind—that whether he is working, or praying, or reading, he should have that possession which passes not away, which is the Holy Ghost. There are some who say thus—that the Lord requires of men only the fruits that are visible, and that it is for God to rectify the things that are hidden. That is not the case. As a man secures himself with regard to the outer man, so ought he to carry on strife and war in his thoughts. The Lord requires of thee to be angry with thyself, and to do battle with thy mind, and neither to consent nor to take pleasure in the thoughts of wickedness.

4. Nevertheless, to root out sin and the evil that is ever with us, this can only be accomplished by the divine power. It is not possible or within a man's competence to root out sin by his own power. To wrestle against it, to fight against it, to give and receive blows, is thine; to uproot is God's. If thou hadst been able to do it, what need was there of the coming of the Lord? As the eye cannot see without light, as a man cannot speak without a tongue, or hear without ears, or walk without feet, or work without hands, so he cannot be saved without Jesus, nor enter into the kingdom of heaven. If thou sayest, "In outward conduct, I do not commit fornication or adultery, I am not covetous; therefore I am righteous," thou art wrong in this, thinking that thou hast fulfilled all. Sin has not only three departments against which a man ought to ensure himself, but ten thousand. Arrogance, presumption, unbelief, hatred, envy, deceit, hypocrisy, whence are they? Oughtest thou not to wrestle and strive against these in the hidden places in thy thoughts? If there is a robber in the house, at once thou art distressed; he does not allow thee to be at ease; thou beginnest to strike back; blows are exchanged. So ought the soul to strike back, to resist, to repel force by force.

5. What follows? By resisting and taking trouble and pains, the will begins to get the upper hand. It falls; it recovers itself. Sin throws it again in ten, in twenty conflicts. It conquers the soul and throws it; then the soul after a time in one engagement conquers the sin. If the soul perseveres and in no direction flags, it begins to have the best of it, to see through the enemy, and to carry off the trophies of victory from sin. But if the man is strictly examined even at this point, sin still is too hard for him, until he comes to a perfect man, to the measure of his stature, and perfectly conquers death; for it is written The last enemy that shall be destroyed is death. Thus will they get the upper hand, and be the conquerors of the devil.

But if, as we observed before, a man should say, "I do not commit fornication or adultery; I am no money-lover; and that is enough," in this reckoning he has contended against three forces, but against twenty others that sin can employ upon the

soul he has not contended, and is therefore beaten. He ought to contend against them all, and to strive; for the mind, as I have said many times, is an even match for it, and possesses a power that is well balanced against sin, to withstand and repel its suggestions. 6. If you say that the opposing power is too strong, and that evil has complete sovereignty over man, you make God unrighteous when He condemns mankind for submitting to Satan, because Satan is so strong, and wields a power which compels submission. "Thou makest Satan greater and stronger than the soul, and then commandest me, 'Do not submit.' It is as though a young man should wrestle with a little child, and the child, when he is worsted, is condemned for getting worsted. This is a great injustice." I tell you then that the human mind is a good match for the enemy and evenly balanced against him; and a soul of that kind, when it seeks, finds help and succour, and redemption is vouchsafed to it. The contest and struggle is not an unequal one. Let us glorify the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost for ever. Amen.

HOMILY IV

Christians ought to accomplish their race in this world with heed and care, that they may gain heavenly praises from God and angels. 1. WE who wish to achieve the life of Christianity with any great thoroughness must before anything else cultivate with all our might that faculty of the soul which discerns and discriminates, in order that, having acquired a delicate sense of the difference between good and evil, and always distinguishing the things with which pure nature has been unnaturally adulterated, we may behave ourselves in a straightforward manner, without offence. By using this power of discernment as a kind of eye, we may keep free from any union or connexion with the suggestions of sin, and thus the heavenly gift may be vouchsafed to us by which we become worthy of the Lord.

Let us take an illustration from the visible world; for there is a likeness between the body and the soul, between the things of the body and the things of the soul, and between the objects of sense and those which are hidden. 2. The body has the eye for its guide. The eye, by seeing, guides the whole body straight. Imagine a man going through woody regions, full of thorns and miry places, where fire also breaks out, and there are swords stuck in the ground, and precipices and frequent waters are found there. The active, heedful, nimble traveller, using the guidance of his eye, passes those difficult places with great attention, gathering up his garment on every side with hands and feet, for fear it should be torn off him in the thickets and thorns, or spoiled by the mire, or cut by a sword. His eye guides the whole body. It is his light, to save him from tumbling down the precipices, or getting drowned in the waters, or injured by some other danger. The man who is thus active and wary, and goes along with all vigilance, wrapping his gown close, under the guidance of his eye, keeps himself from injury, and preserves the gown that clothes him from burning and tearing.

But if a man is idle, and slothful, and careless, and clumsy, and slack, as he passes through places like those, his garment floating about him this way and that is torn off upon the thickets and thorns, or burnt by the fire, because he does not resolutely keep it tight round him; or else it is reduced to tatters by the swords that are stuck by the wayside, or smirched by the mire—in one way or another he quickly ruins

his fine new garment, by his heedlessness, and slackness, and sloth; and if he does not attend properly and well to what his eye tells him, he will himself fall into some ravine, or be drowned in the waters.

3. In the same way the soul, which is clothed with the fair garment of the body for its vesture, possesses the faculty of discernment to direct the whole soul, together with the body, as it passes amidst the thickets and thorns of life, and the mud, and the fire, and the precipices, which are the lusts and pleasures and other wrong things of this world; and it ought to wrap itself, and the body its garment, closely in on every side with vigilance, and resolution, and earnestness, and heed, and keep itself from getting at all rent in the thickets and thorns of the world—cares, and businesses, and earthly distractions; and from being burned by the fire of lust. Thus clothed, it turns away the eye from seeing evil sights, turns away the ear from listening to slander, the tongue from speaking vanities, the hands and feet from bad pursuits. The soul has a will, by which to turn away and hinder the members of the body from base spectacles, and evil and shameful sounds, and indecent words, and worldly and evil pursuits. 4. It turns itself also from evil rovings, keeping the heart from letting the members of its thought rove in the world.

Thus striving, and earnestly endeavouring, and with great heed restraining the members of the body on every side from what is bad, it preserves that fair garment of the body unrent, unburned, and unstained, and it will itself be preserved by means of a knowing, discerning, discriminating will, and all by the power of the Lord, while with all its might it gathers itself in and turns away from all worldly lusts, and thus is helped by the Lord to be truly preserved from the disasters that have been spoken of. For when the Lord sees any one bravely turning his back on the pleasures and distractions of life, and material cares, and earthly ties, and the rovings of vain thoughts, He gives the help of His own grace, and maintains that soul unfallen, as it passes nobly through the present evil world; and so the soul wins heavenly praises from God and angels because it has preserved well the garment of its body and itself also, turning away, as far as lay in its power, from all the lusts of the world, and with His help has run nobly the race of this world’s course.

5. But if a man goes his way in this life with slackness and carelessness, taking no heed, and, to please himself, will not turn away from all the lust of the world, and will not seek the Lord, and Him only, with all desire, he is pierced on the thorns and thickets of this world, and the garment of the body is burned here and there by the fire of lust, and soiled by the mire of pleasures; and thus the soul is found without boldness in the day of judgment, not having succeeded in keeping its raiment unspotted, but having corrupted it with the deceits of this world; and for this reason it is rejected from the kingdom. What can God do with one who wilfully gives himself over to the world, and is deceived by its pleasures, or led

astray by material wanderings? The man to whom He gives help is the one who turns away from material pleasures and from his former habits, who drags his mind at all times to the Lord, whether it will or no, who denies himself and seeks the Lord only. This is the man whom He keeps under His care, who guards himself on every side from the snares and entanglements of the material world, who works out his own salvation with fear and trembling, who passes with all heed amidst the snares and entanglements and lusts of this world, and seeks the help of the Lord, and hopes by His mercy to be saved through grace.

6. Think; the five wise virgins, who had been watchful and alert, and had taken in the vessels of their heart—that which was no part of their own nature—the oil, which means the grace of the Spirit from above, were enabled to enter with the Bridegroom into the heavenly bridechamber; but the other, foolish five, who were content with their own nature, would not watch nor busy themselves to receive the oil of gladness in their vessels while they were still in the flesh, but sank as it were to sleep through carelessness, and slackness, and idleness, and ignorance, or fancied righteousness; so they were shut out of the bridechamber of the kingdom, being unable to give satisfaction to the heavenly Bridegroom. Held fast by the tie of the world, and by some earthly affection, they did not give their whole love or passionate devotion to the heavenly Bridegroom, and were not provided with the oil. Souls who seek the sanctification of the Spirit, which is outside of nature, fasten all their affection upon the Lord, and there they walk, and there they pray, and there they employ their thoughts, turning away from all else; for which cause they are privileged to receive the oil of heavenly grace, and succeed in coming through unfallen, giving perfect satisfaction to the spiritual Bridegroom; while souls that are content with what belongs to their own nature creep in thought upon earth; they employ their thoughts upon earth; their mind has its whole existence upon earth. In their own estimation they appear to belong to the Bridegroom, and to be adorned with the ordinances of the flesh; but they have not been born of the Spirit from above, and have not received the oil of gladness.

7. The five rational senses of the soul, if they receive grace from above and the sanctification of the Spirit, are really wise virgins, receiving the wisdom of the grace from above. But if they rest content with what is natural to them, they are found foolish, and shown to be children of the world. They have not put off the spirit of the world, although in their own estimation, because of some specious appearances and outward form, they take themselves for brides of the Bridegroom. As the souls which wholly and entirely cleave to the Lord are there in thought, and there pray, and there walk, and there long after the love of the Lord, so, on the other hand, those souls which are tied and bound in the love of the world, and are willing to spend their existence on the earth, walk there, think there, their mind passes its existence there. For this reason they are incapable of being converted to the good wisdom of the Spirit, being a thing foreign to our own nature—the

heavenly grace—which requires to be combined and compounded with our nature, if we are to enter with the Lord into the heavenly bridechamber of the kingdom, and to find eternal salvation.

8. One thing foreign to our nature, the disaster of the passions, we have received into ourselves through the first man's disobedience, and it has taken its place as almost a part of our nature by long custom and propensity; and this must be expelled again by that other thing foreign to our nature, the heavenly gift of the Spirit, that the original purity may be restored; and unless we receive now that love of the Spirit from heaven by much entreaty, and supplication, and faith, and prayer, and turning from the world, and unless our nature, which has been polluted by wickedness, cleaves to the love which is the Lord, and is sanctified by that love of the Spirit, and unless we persevere to the end unfallen, walking strictly in all His commandments, we cannot attain the heavenly kingdom.

9. I desire to say a word that is deep and subtile, to the best of my ability; listen to me, therefore, with intelligence. The infinite, inaccessible, uncreated God, through His infinite and inconceivable kindness, embodied Himself, and, if I may say so, diminished Himself from His inaccessible glory, to make it possible for Him to be united with His visible creatures, such as the souls of saints and angels, that they might be enabled to partake of the life of Godhead. For each of these, after its kind, is a body, be it angel, or soul, or devil. Subtile though they are, still in substance, character, and image according to the subtilty of their respective natures they are subtile bodies, even as this body of ours is in substance a gross body. The soul, moreover, which is so subtile, has gathered to itself the eye to see with, the ear to hear with; likewise the tongue to speak with, the hand, in fact the whole body and its members the soul has gathered to it and is blended with the same, and accomplishes by means of it all the offices of life.

10. In the same way, the infinite and inconceivable God in His kindness diminished Himself, and put on the members of this body, and gathered Himself in from the inaccessible glory; and through His clemency and love of man transforms and embodies Himself, and mixes with and assumes holy, well-pleasing, faithful souls, and becomes one Spirit with them, according to the saying of Paul, soul in soul, if I may put it so, substance in substance, that the soul may be enabled to live in newness, and to feel immortal life, and may become partaker of glory incorruptible—that is, if it be worthy and well-pleasing. If out of things that were not He hath made the visible creature to be, with such abundant diversity and variety, and before it came into existence it was not—if He willed, and easily made, of things that were not, substances solid and hard, like earth, mountains, trees—you see what hardness of nature is—and again waters intermediate, and commanded that birds should be produced from them—and again more subtle objects, fire, and winds, and things too subtle to be seen by the bodily eye; 11. how could the infinite and inexpress-

ible skill of the manifold wisdom of God create, out of things that were not, grosser, subtler, and still finer bodies, each in its own substance, by His will;

and how much more cannot He, who is as He will and what He will, through His unspeakable kindness and inconceivable goodness change and diminish and assimilate Himself, embodying Himself according to their capacity in holy and worthy faithful souls, that He, the invisible, might be seen by them, He, the impalpable, be felt, after the subtilty of the soul's nature—and that they might feel His sweetness, and enjoy in real experience the goodness of the light of that ineffable enjoyment? When He pleases, he becomes fire, which burns up every base passion that has been introduced into the soul; for our God is a consuming fire. When He pleases, He is rest unspeakable, unutterable, that the soul may rest in the Godhead's own rest; when He pleases, He is joy and peace, cherishing it and making much of it.

12. Indeed, if He should please to make Himself like to one of the creatures for the delectation and rejoicing of the intelligences among them, as for instance Jerusalem the city of light, or the heavenly mountain of Sion, He can do all at will, according as it is written, Ye are come to the Mount Sion, and to the city of the living God, the heavenly Jerusalem. All things are facile and easy to Him, and He transforms Himself into any shape He chooses for the benefit of faithful souls that are worthy of Him. Only let a man strive to be a friend of His and well pleasing to Him, and in real experience and feeling he shall truly see the good things of heaven, and the inexpressible delights and infinite riches of Godhead, which eye hath not seen, nor ear heard, neither have entered into the heart of man, even the Spirit of the Lord, making Himself for worthy souls their rest, their rejoicing, their delight, and their eternal life. For the Lord embodies Himself even in meat and drink, as it is written in the gospel, He that eateth this bread shall live for ever, to give the soul rest unutterable, and fill it with spiritual cheer; for He says, I am the bread of life, He embodies Himself in the drink of a spring of heaven, as He says, Whosoever drinketh of the water that I shall give him, it shall be in him a well of water springing up into eternal life, and We have all, it says, been made to drink the same drink.

13. To each of the holy fathers He appeared in the manner that pleased Him and was best for them—in one way to Abraham, in another to Isaac, another to Jacob, another to Noe, to Daniel, to David, to Solomon, to Esaias, and each of the holy prophets—in one way to Elias, in another to Moses. My belief is that Moses, every hour in the mountain, during the fast of forty days, was admitted to that spiritual table, and feasted at it and received enjoyment. To each of the saints He appeared as He pleased, to give them rest and salvation and lead them to the knowledge of God. Everything is easy to Him that He chooses. As He pleases, He diminishes Himself by some embodiment, and transforms Himself to come under the eyes of those who love Him, manifesting Himself to those who are worthy in an inaccessible

glory of light, according to His great and unspeakable love, and by His own power. The soul that has been privileged to receive with great desire, and waiting upon God, and faith, and love, that power from on high, the heavenly love of the Spirit, and has gained the heavenly fire of the life immortal, is verily disengaged from every worldly affection, and set at liberty from every bond of wickedness.

14. As iron, lead, gold, or silver, when cast into the fire, melts, and changes from its natural hardness to a soft consistency, and so long as it is in the fire continues to be molten and altered from that hard nature by the hot force of the fire, so the soul which has denied the world, and fixed its longing upon the Lord alone, in much searching, and pains, and conflict of soul, and maintains an uninterrupted waiting upon Him in hope and faith, and which has received that heavenly fire of the Godhead and of the love of the Spirit, this soul is then verily disengaged from all affection of the world, and set at liberty from all mischief of the passions, and casts everything out of itself, and is changed from the natural habit and hardness of sin, and considers all things indifferent in comparison with the heavenly Bridegroom whom it has received, at rest in His fervent and ineffable love.

15. I tell you, indeed, that even the much-loved brethren, whom such a soul has under its eye, if they hinder it from that love, it turns from them, in a sense. For that is its life and rest, the mystical, ineffable fellowship of the heavenly King. If the fellowship of an earthly affection severs from father, mother, brethren, and all things come to be outside in the estimation of such a pair, and though they still love them, they love them with a more outside love, while the man's whole attitude is determined by the relation to his spouse—For this cause, it says, shall a man leave his father and mother, and shall cleave unto his wife, and they twain shall be one flesh—if, I say, the fleshly love thus disengages from all other love, how much more shall those who have been allowed to enter in truth into the fellowship of that Holy Spirit, that heavenly and beloved Spirit, be disengaged from all worldly love, and everything else appear a matter of indifference, because they have been overcome by a heavenly longing, and are altogether in unison with the mood of it.

16. Well, my beloved brethren, when such good things are set before us, and such great promises have been made to us by the Lord, let us cast away from us all hindrances, renounce all love of the world, and give ourselves over to that one good thing with seeking and longing, that we may attain that unspeakable love of the Spirit concerning which St. Paul urged us to endeavour after it, saying, Follow after charity, that we may be changed from our hardness by the right hand of the Most High, and may come to spiritual tenderness and rest, wounded with the passionate affection of the Divine Spirit. The Lord is very kind to man, waiting in pity for our complete conversion to Himself and emancipation from all things contrary. Although we in our great ignorance and childishness and propensity to evil turn away from life, and set many a hindrance in our own way, not liking really

to repent, yet He is full of pity for us, and suffers long till we shall repent and come to Him, and be enlightened in our inward man, that our faces may not be ashamed in the day of judgment.

17. If it seems to us difficult, because the practice of virtue is hard, and still more because of the insidious counsel of the adversary, behold, He is pitiful and longsuffering, waiting for our conversion; and when we sin, He holds His hand, in expectation of our repentance; and when we fall, He is not ashamed to take us back, as the prophet says, Shall they fall, and not arise? shall he turn away, and not return? Only let us be on the watch, making sure of a good intention, and let us be converted straight and fair, seeking help from Him, and He is ready to save us. He is looking for our will to turn to Him with a fervent impulse, to the best of our power, and for faith and zeal that springs from a good purpose; the whole success of the endeavour is His own work in us. Let us then endeavour, beloved, like children of God, putting away all preoccupation, and carelessness, and sloth, to be courageous and ready to follow after Him. Let us not put off from day to day, without observing how sin is injuring us. We do not know when we are to depart out of the flesh. The promises made to Christians are great and unspeakable, so great, that all the glory and beauty of sky and earth, and all the other adornment and variety, the wealth and comeliness and delight, of things visible, bear no proportion to the faith and wealth of a single soul.

18. How can we then refuse to accept heartily such persuasions and promises of the Lord, and to yield ourselves over to Him, denying, as the Gospel says, all other things and our own souls also, and to love Him only and nothing else besides Him? But behold, in spite of all these things, and of the great glory that has been given, and of all the dispensations of the Lord from the times of patriarchs and prophets—what great promises have been made, what persuasions offered, what compassion of the Master shown to us from the beginning! and lastly, in His own sojourn here He displayed His inexpressible kindness towards us by His crucifixion, to convert us and bring us round to life—and we, we will not part with our own wills, and with the love of the world, and with our bad inclinations and customs. Thus we prove ourselves men of little faith, or of none; and yet for all this, He continues to be kind, invisibly protecting and cherishing, not giving us over, according to our iniquities, to the power of sin for ever, nor letting us perish by the deceitfulness of the world, but in His great kindness and longsuffering watching fixedly for the moment when we shall be converted to Him.

19. I dread lest some day the words of the apostle should be fulfilled in us, while we cling to our contemptuous ideas and follow out our inclinations, Or despisest thou the riches of His kindness and forbearance and longsuffering, not knowing that the kindness of God leadeth thee to repentance? But if to this longsuffering and kindness and forbearance we make no return but to add further sins, and through our

carelessness and contempt purchase to ourselves yet greater judgments, the saying will be fulfilled, But after thy hardness and impenitent heart treasurest up unto thyself wrath against the day of wrath and revelation of the righteous judgment of God. God has used great and indescribable goodness in relation to mankind, and longsuffering beyond expression, if only we are willing to recover ourselves, and endeavour to be wholly converted to Him, that we may find salvation.

20. If you wish to know the longsuffering of God and His great kindness, let us learn it from the inspired scriptures. Look at Israel, of whom are the fathers, to whom the promises were directed, of whom is Christ according to the flesh, to whom pertained the services and the covenant; how greatly they sinned, how often they turned out of the way, yet He did not altogether let them go, but from time to time He gave them over to chastisements for a season for their profit, desiring to soften the hardness of their heart through affliction; He converted them, encouraged them, sent prophets to them. How often they sinned and offended Him, and He was longsuffering with them, and when they converted, He received them back with joy, and when again they turned out of the way, He did not abandon them, but through the prophets recalled them to conversion; and when many times over they turned away and came back, He bore with them gently, and received them kindly back, until at last they were found in the great transgression of all, when they laid hands upon their own Master, whom the traditions of the holy fathers and prophets taught them to expect as their deliverer and saviour, king and prophet. When He came, they did not welcome Him, but on the contrary, after offering Him indignity after indignity, they at last punished Him with the cross of death; and in this great offence, this surpassing transgression, their sins abounded beyond measure and were filled up;

and so they were left for good and all, the Holy Spirit departing from thence when the veil of the temple was rent. And so their temple was given over to the heathen and destroyed and made desolate, according to that denuntiation of the Lord, There shall not be left one stone upon another here, that shall not be thrown down. Thus were they finally given over to the heathen, and were scattered over all the earth by the kings who then took them captive, and were forbidden ever to return to their own places.

21. In this manner, even now, with each one of us, like a kind, good God, He is longsuffering, seeing how often each one offends, and holds His peace, waiting till the man shall recover himself and turn from offending further, and welcoming the converted sinner with much love and joy. That is what He says, There is joy over one sinner that repenteth; and again, It is not the will of My Father that one of the least of these little ones should perish. But if a man, under this great kindness and longsuffering of God, who will not proceed to requital for every offence, secret or open, as it is committed, but sees and holds His peace, as waiting for the sinner’s

repentance—if, I say, the man so far despises that he adds sin to sin, and joins sloth to sloth, and piles offence upon offence, he fills the limits of his sins, and comes in the end to an offence of such a character that he can never get up from it again, but is crushed to pieces, and delivered over to the evil one to perish utterly.

22. Thus it was with Sodom. Many times sinning, without conversion, at length they offended by their wicked design upon the angels, desiring to commit a criminal outrage upon them, so that they could no longer repent, but were finally rejected. They filled up the limit of their sins, and exceeded it; and therefore they were consumed with fire by the divine vengeance. So it was in the days of Noah. Offending often without repenting, they reached sins of such enormity, that the whole earth was utterly corrupted. So with the Egyptians; they offended often, and sinned against God's people, and God was kind and would not inflict upon them such plagues as to destroy them utterly; but for their chastisement and conversion and repentance He brought upon them the stripes of those smaller plagues, bearing long with them, and waiting for them to repent. But they, sinning against God's people, and thinking better of it, and then changing their minds again and fixing themselves in the original unbelief of their evi purpose, and oppressing the people of God, at last, when God with many wonders brought the people out of Egypt by Moses, they committed the great offence of pursuing after God's people; for which the divine vengeance utterly destroyed and consumed them; and overwhelmed them in the waters, judging them unworthy even of this visible existence.

23. In like manner, as was said before, Israel, often sinning and offending, killing God's prophets and doing many other wicked things, while God held His peace and was patiently waiting for them to repent, ended by committing an offence for which they were crushed so that they could never rise again. They laid their own hands on the dignity of the Lord Himself. For this they were utterly abandoned and rejected. Prophecy, priesthood, the service, were taken from them and given to the believing Gentiles, as the Lord says, The kingdom shall be taken from you, and given to a nation bringing forth the fruits thereof. Till then, God forbore and was patient with them, and forsook them not, in compassion for them; but when they filled up the limit of their sins, and overflowed it, laying hands upon the dignity of their Lord, they were entirely deserted by God.

24. We have treated of these things at some length, beloved, proving from the ideas of scripture that we ought to make a quick conversion, and hasten to the Lord, who in His kindness waits for us to break off entirely from all wickedness and evil propensity, and who welcomes us on our conversion with much joy, and not to let our contempt increase from day to day, and our offences be added and multiplied upon us, and thus we bring the wrath of God upon ourselves. Let us earnestly endeavour to come to Him with a truly converted heart, not despairing of salvation; for that of itself is a wrong thing and an iniquity, when the remembrance

of sins takes such possession that it leads a man to despair, and to slackness and recklessness and sloth, that he may not be converted and come to the Lord and find salvation, when the great kindness of the Lord is over all the race of men.

25. If it seems to us hard and impossible to be converted from such a multitude of sins, because we are in their possession—a thought which, as I said, is a device of wickedness and a hindrance to our salvation—let us remember and consider how our Lord, when in His goodness He sojourned here, made the blind to recover their sight, healed the palsied, cured all manner of disease, raised the dead when they were already in decay and disintegration, gave back hearing to the deaf, cast out a legion of devils from a single man, and restored him to his senses, though he was so far gone in madness. How much rather will He not convert a soul which returns to Him, seeking mercy from Him, and in need of His succour, and bring it into a happy release from passions, and the settled state of all virtue, and renewal of the mind, and change it to health and mental sight and thoughts of peace from the blindness and deafness and deadness of unbelief and ignorance and unconcern, bringing it to the sobriety of virtue and to purity of heart? He who created the body, made the soul also; and as in His sojourn on earth, when men came to Him seeking help and healing from Him, He granted ungrudgingly in His kindness according as their needs were, like a good physician, the only true physician, so is it with spiritual things.

26. If He was moved to such compassion over bodies that were to be dissolved and die again, and did with eager kindness for each applicant the thing that he sought, how much more when an immortal, imperishable, incorruptible soul, labouring under the disease of ignorance, wickedness, unbelief, unconcern, and all the other maladies of sin, comes nevertheless to the Lord, and seeks His help, and fixes its eyes upon His mercy, and desires to receive of Him the grace of the Spirit for its deliverance and salvation and riddance of all wickedness, and all passion, will He not grant more speedily and more readily His healing deliverance, according to His own word, How much more shall your heavenly Father avenge those that cry unto Him day and night? And He adds, Yea, I say unto you, He will avenge them speedily; and in another place He exhorts, Ask, and it shall be given unto you, for every one that asketh, receiveth, and he that seeketh, findeth, and to him that knocketh it shall be opened; and at the close He adds, How much more shall your heavenly Father give the Holy Spirit to them that ask Him. Verily I say unto you, though he will not rise and give him because he is his friend, yet because of his importunity he will rise and give him as much as he needeth.

27. With importunity then, without ceasing, without fainting, He has admonished us in all these passages to ask for the succour of His grace. It was for the sake of sinners that He came, that He might convert them to Himself, and heal those that believe Him. Only let us to the best of our power withdraw ourselves from evil

preoccupations, and hate bad pursuits and the deceits of the world, and turn our backs upon wicked and vain thoughts, and ever cleave to Him with all our might, and He readily gives us His help. To this purpose He is merciful, and quickening, curing the maladies that were incurable, working deliverance for those who call upon Him and turn to Him, departing to the best of their ability in will and intention from all worldly affection, and forcing their mind away from the earth, and fastening it upon Him with seeking and longing. To such a soul His help is vouchsafed, the soul that counts all things else unnecessary, and rests upon nothing in the world, but looks to find rest and rejoicing in the repose of His loving kindness, and thus through such a faith attaining the heavenly gift, gaining satisfaction for its desire in full assurance through grace, thenceforward serving the Holy Ghost agreeably and consistently, and daily advancing in that which is good, and abiding in the way of righteousness; and having persevered to the end inflexible and uncomplying towards the side of evil, without grieving grace in anything, it is granted eternal salvation with all the saints, as having lived in the world like a partner and a comrade of theirs, in imitation of them. Amen.

HOMILY V

A great difference between Christians and the men of this world. Those who have the spirit of the world are in heart and mind bound in earthly bonds, but the others long after the love of the heavenly Father, having Him only before their eyes with much desire. I. THE world of Christians is one thing—their way of living, their mind, and speech, and action, is one—and the way of living, and mind and speech and action of the men of this world is another. Those are one thing, and these another, and the difference between them is great. The inhabitants of the earth, the children of this age, are like corn put in the sieve of this earth, sifted by restless thoughts of this world, and by the ceaseless tossing of earthly businesses and desires and of tangled material notions, while Satan waves their souls about, as he sifts in this sieve of earthly businesses the whole sinful race of man, ever since Adam fell by transgressing the commandment and came under the power of the prince of wickedness. From the time when he gained this power, he does nothing but sift with thoughts of deceit and agitation all the sons of this age, and dash them on the sieve of the earth.

2. As the corn in the sieve is knocked by the man who sifts, and constantly shaken and turned in it, so the prince of wickedness holds all men by means of earthly affairs, and through these he shakes them, and agitates them, and tosses them, and knocks them on vain lines of thought, and base desires, and earthly ties of the world, constantly taking captive and agitating and alluring all the sinful race of Adam; as the Lord forewarned the apostles how the wicked one would rise up against them: Satan hath desired to have you that he may sift you as wheat; but I have prayed My Father that your faith fail not. The word spoken to Cain by the Creator, that sentence pronounced upon him with an outward meaning, Groaning and trembling and tossed shall thou be upon the earth, is a type and likeness of what all sinners undergo in secret. After falling from the commandment and entering the sinful state, the race of Adam has acquired that likeness in secret; it is tossed about with shifting thoughts of fear and terror and every kind of commotion; the prince of this world keeps each soul on the waves of all sorts and varieties of pleasure and lust, unless it be begotten of God; as corn is turned incessantly in the sieve, he keeps

men’s thoughts rocking about in various directions, and shakes and entices them all by worldly lusts, and pleasures of the flesh, and fears, and commotions.

3. The Lord showed that those who follow the deceits and desires of the wicked one bear the likeness of Cain’s wickedness, when He reproved them and said, The lusts of your father ye will do: he was a murderer from the beginning and abode not in the truth. So that the whole sinful race of Adam has acquired that condemnation in secret, Groaning and trembling shall ye be, and shaken in the sieve of the earth, by Satan sifting you. For as from one Adam all the race of men was spread over the earth, so one form of evil passion sank into the sinful race of men, and the prince of evil suffices to sift them all with shifting, material, vain, troublesome thoughts. As one wind is enough to shake and agitate all the plants and seeds, or as one darkness of the night is spread over all the inhabited earth, so the prince of wickedness, who is himself the spiritual darkness of sin and death, and a wild though hidden wind, rocks the whole race of men upon earth, and carries them about with restless thoughts, and entices the hearts of men with the lusts of the world, and fills every soul with the darkness of ignorance, blindness and forgetfulness, save those which have been begotten from above, and have been translated in disposition and mind to another world, according as it is said, But our citizenship is in heaven.

4. This constitutes the difference between true Christians and the rest of mankind, and the distance between the two is great, as we said before. The Christian mind and way of thinking is always in the heavenly frame; they behold as in a mirror the good things of eternity, by reason of their partaking and having the Holy Ghost, by being born of God from above, and being privileged to be children of God in truth and efficacy, and by having arrived, through many conflicts and labours spread over a long time, at a fixed and settled condition of freedom from disturbance and of rest, no longer sifted and wave-tossed by unquiet and vain thoughts. By this they are greater and better than the world, because their mind and the frame of their soul is in the peace of Christ and the love of the Spirit. It was of such that the Lord spoke when He said that they had passed from death unto life. Not in a form or in outward figures lies the distinguishing mark of Christians. Most men think that the difference which distinguishes themselves from the world consists in a form and in figures; and lo! in mind and frame they are like the world, undergoing the same shaking, and inconstancy of thoughts, and unbelief, and confusion, and helter-skelter as all other men. In outward form and appearance they differ from the world, and in a few points of religious ordinance; but in heart and mind they are bound with earthly bonds, never having acquired rest from God and the peace of the heavenly Spirit in their heart, because they never sought it from God, nor believed that He would vouchsafe these things to them.

5. For it is in the renewing of the mind, and the peace of the thoughts, and the love and heavenly passion for the Lord, that the new creation of Christians distinguishes

them from all the men of the world. This was the purpose of the Lord's coming, to vouchsafe these spiritual blessings to those who truly believe in Him. Christians have a glory and a beauty and a heavenly wealth which is beyond words, and it is won with pains, and sweat, and trials, and many conflicts, and all by the grace of God.

If the sight of an earthly king is an object of desire to all men, so that every one who sojourns in the capital desires to catch even a glimpse of his beauty, the magnificence of his apparel, the glory of his purple, the beauty of his various pearls, the comeliness of his diadem, the impressive retinue of dignities attending him—except that spiritual men think nothing of all this, because they have had experience of another glory, which is heavenly and out of the body, and have been smitten with another beauty unspeakable, and have an interest in another wealth, and have felt in the inward man and are partakers of another Spirit—when the men of this world, who have the spirit of the world, are so keenly desirous to set eyes, if no more, on the earthly king with all his comeliness and glory—because in proportion as his share of visible advantages excels that of other men, so even to have set eyes on him is a distinction and an object of desire to them all, and each man inwardly says, "I wish that some one would give me that glory, and comeliness, and magnificence," ascribing happiness to that man, like himself, earthly, of like passions, and subject to death, though an object of desire for his temporal comeliness and glory—6.

if, I say, carnal men thus desire the glory of the earthly king, how much more are those upon whom has dropped that dewdrop of the Spirit of the life of the Godhead, and has smitten their heart with a divine passion for Christ the heavenly King, bound fast to that beauty, to the unspeakable glory, the immortal comeliness, the unimaginable wealth of Christ, the true eternal King, with desire and longing after whom they are carried away captive, and have their whole being directed towards Him, and desire to obtain those unspeakable blessings, which by the Spirit they see in a mirror; for whose sake they think nothing of all the beauties and comelinesses and glories and honours and wealth of kings and princes upon earth, because they are smitten with a divine beauty, and the life of immortality in heaven has dropped upon their souls? Therefore their longing is towards that love of the heavenly King, and having Him only before their eyes with great desire, they detach themselves for His sake from all worldly affection, and withdraw from every earthly tie, that they may be free always to cherish in their hearts that one longing, and to mix nothing else with it.

Very few, however, are they who supply a good beginning with a good end, and come through to the end without falling, with no love but one, for God only, and detached from all else. Many are pricked at heart, and many become partakers of heavenly grace, and are smitten with divine passion; but because of the conflicts and struggles and labours and divers temptations of the devil to be borne on the

way, they do not hold out, but are occupied with divers and sundry worldly desires, because every one has some worldly thing that he chooses to love, and has not detached his affections all round, and so they have stopped short, and have been plunged in the deeps of the world, through the feebleness and slackness and cowardice of their own wills, or through some worldly affection. For those who wish really to come through to the end in good living must not willingly admit and combine any other love or affection with that heavenly one, for fear of being hindered from spiritual things, and turning backward, and at last being exiled from life. Great and unspeakable and inestimable are the promises made by God; and in proportion to them great faith and hope and labours and conflicts are required, and much trial. The blessings for which a seeker of the kingdom of heaven hopes are no trifle. Thou desirest to reign with Christ through ages without end;

wilt thou not readily welcome the conflicts and labours and temptations of this short span of life, even unto death? The Lord cries, If any man will come after Me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross daily rejoicing and follow Me; and again, If any man hate not father, mother, wife, children, brethren, sisters, yea and his own life also, he cannot be My disciple. But most men wish to attain the kingdom, and would like to inherit eternal life, but do not refuse to live to their own wills and to follow them out. Not denying themselves, they wish to inherit eternal life; and this is impossible.

The Lord’s saying is true. The men who come through without falling are those who according to the Lord’s commandment have wholly denied themselves, and have abhorred all the desires, and entanglements, and excitements, and pleasures, and businesses of the world, and who keep Him only before their eyes, and desire to do His commandments, so that each man by his own will turns away, even from a kingdom, and positively would not wish to have it, or to love anything along with that love, by being pleased with any pleasures or desires of this world, instead of keeping his whole love, to the utmost of his will and choice, fixed upon the Lord.

A single example will shew you all that I mean. Sometimes a man passes judgment on another. He knows that what he is inclined to do is wrong, but because he loves the thing, and will not deny it, he is overcome. To begin with, inwardly, in his heart, there is war, and conflict, weighing and balancing; the love of God and the love of the world are in the scales; and then the man comes forth, and passes judgment upon his brother, perhaps even to fighting and blows, saying within himself, “Let me speak; let me say it; nay, let me not say it,” because, while remembering God, he yet seeks to obtain his own glory, and will not deny himself, but if the love of the world for a moment outweighs the other and dips the scale in his heart, at once the bad word springs to his lips. Then the mind from within, like one who aims a missile, uses the tongue to shoot his neighbour, discharging the volley of unseemly words at his discretion, in the desire to gain his own glory. Then this shooting with

unseemly words goes on and on, until the sin is diffused through other members, and sometimes it comes to blows and wounds, body and members against body and members, and sometimes the bad desire issues even in death and murder. See the origin and the outcome of the love of worldly glory, when it has once turned the scale in the balance of the heart in the way of self-will. The man would not deny himself, and fixed his affection on a worldly thing, and all those wrong deeds were a result.

Think in this way, I pray you, of every form of sin and of every immoral practice, which spring from the intrigues of evil, gaining over the will of the mind to worldly desires and to the deceit and pleasure of the flesh. In this way every bad deed comes about, adultery and theft, covetousness and drunkenness, love of money and vain glory, envy and self-assertion, and every other bad practice that you can name. Sometimes actions that appear good are performed for the sake of the glory and praise of men; and with God these are on the same footing as injustice and theft or any other sin. God says, He hath scattered the bones of men-pleasers. So the evil one likes to be served by things that appear good. He is versatile and cunning in the lusts of the world. By means of some earthly and carnal affection, by which a man in his natural will is bound, sin entices him, until it becomes to him a fetter and a chain and a heavy weight, sinking and stifling him in the world of wickedness, and not allowing him to come to the surface and get to God. Whatever a man has loved in the world, weighs down his mind, and holds it down, and will not let him come up.

In this balance, with its bias to the scale of evil, all mankind hangs and is tested, Christians and all, whether dwelling in cities, or in mountains, or in monasteries, or in fields, or in deserts; because the natural will of man entices him to set his affection on something, and that affection is somewhere or other tied, and is not wholly towards God. A man has set his affection, say, on property, another on gold and silver, another on the wisdom of the eloquence of the world for the sake of glory from men; another has loved power, another glory and honours among men, another wrath and anger—for yielding quickly to it is loving it—another unseasonable conversations, another jealousy; another amuses himself and seeks pleasure all day long; another deceives himself with idle thoughts; another loves to be a teacher of the law for the glory of men; another finds pleasure in sloth and heedlessness; another is absorbed in dress and clothes; another gives himself to earthly cares; another loves sleep and jesting and low talk. Whether it be a little thing of the world or a great that ties him, the man is kept down by it, and not allowed to rise. Whatever passion a man does not bravely war against, is an object of his affection; and it holds him fast, and weighs him down, and becomes to him a hindrance and a fetter, preventing his mind from going up to God and pleasing Him, and from serving Him only and thereby proving fit for the kingdom and obtaining eternal life.

The soul whose movement is truly towards the Lord, compels its affection wholly to Him, and in will and intention binds itself with all its power to Him only, and from that quarter gains the help of grace, and denies itself, and refuses to follow the desires of its own mind, because the mind deals deceitfully with us through the evil that is present with us and entices us; but surrenders itself entirely to the word of the Lord, and detaches itself from every external bond, as far as lies in the power of the will, and gives itself altogether to the Lord, and in this way will be enabled to pass without difficulty through conflicts and troubles and afflictions. Where the affection is engaged, from that quarter comes help or hindrance. If a man loves something of the world, that thing becomes to him a burden and bonds to drag him downward, not suffering him to go upwards and Godwards. If he loves the Lord and His commandments, from thence comes his help, and from thence he is buoyed up, and all the precepts of the Lord become easy to him, because his love for Him completely saves him; and it weights his scale towards the good, or rather buoys him up and makes every battle and every affliction light, and through the power of God it cuts through the world and through the powers of evil which in the world lay traps for the soul, and which use all kinds of desires to bind the soul in the depths of the world. In this way the man is disentangled from them through his personal faith and much earnestness and through the help that comes from above, and is accounted worthy of the eternal kingdom where his affection was set, and having truly loved that kingdom with his personal will, and having received help of the Lord, he does not fail of eternal life.

In order to see by plain illustrations how many men are ruined by their own wills, and are drowned in the sea, and are carried off into captivity, imagine a house on fire, and one man, wishing to save himself, as soon as he is aware of the fire, flees out of it naked, leaving everything to its fate, and only caring to make sure of his own life is saved. Another, wishing to take some of the furniture out of the house, or other articles, goes inside to get them, and just as he takes them, the fire masters the house, and the man is caught within and burned. You see that attaching himself by his personal will to some temporal object he perishes in the fire. Or at sea, people are caught in a storm of waves and shipwrecked. One strips himself naked, and plunges into the depth of the waters, caring only to save himself; and so, though buffeted by the billows, he emerges to the top of them, because there is nothing about him to break up, and thus manages to get through the bitter sea, and purchases his own life. Another, desirous of saving some of his clothes, fancies that he can dive and get through with what he has taken and all, and the very things that he got hold of weigh him down, and sink him in the depth of the sea, and for a trifling gain he loses himself, unable to secure his own life.

You see how his personal will causes his death. Or suppose a rumour comes of the irruption of savage tribes. One man, the moment he hears of it, makes off, without wasting time, and gets away with nothing but his bare self. Another, disbelieving

that the enemy are coming, or setting his heart on some of his possessions and anxious to take them with him, is slow to flee, and the foes come and catch him, and carry him captive into the enemy country, and there make a slave of him. You see how his personal will is the cause of slackness, and want of energy, and attachment to some object or another, by which he is taken away into captivity. In like manner, those who do not follow the commandments of the Lord, and will not deny themselves and set their affection on the Lord alone, but choose to be bound with earthly bonds, these, when the eternal fire comes, being tied and bound with the love of the world, will find themselves burned, and sunk under the bitter sea of wickedness, and carried captive by the savage captors who are the spirits of wickedness, and are lost.

If you please to learn from the holy inspired scripture how straight a perfected love to the Lord can go, look at Job, how he divested himself, so to speak, of all that he possessed—children, property, cattle, servants, and all that he had—how he stripped them all off and escaped, and saved himself, even letting go his bodily clothing and abandoning it to Satan, never blaspheming either in word or in his heart, nor uttering anything with his lips before the Lord, but on the contrary blessed the Lord and said, The Lord gave, and the Lord hath taken away; as it seemed good to the Lord, so hath He done; blessed be the name of the Lord. Although he was reputed to have great possessions, the testing which he received from the Lord showed plainly that he had none but God. In like manner Abraham, being bidden by the Lord to leave his country and his kindred and his father's house, immediately stripped himself, so to speak, of all—fatherland, kinsfolk, parents—and followed the word of the Lord; then, many trials and temptations befalling him in the meanwhile, his wife taken from him, living in a strange land, subjected to unjust treatment, he was proved by all these things to love God only above everything. At last, when by promise, after an interval of many years, he had gotten an only much-desired son, he was asked to offer this son in sacrifice with his own hands, and readily stripped himself of himself and denied himself, proving by the sacrifice of his only begotten that there was nothing that he loved besides God: for if he readily parted with his son, how much more, if he had been bidden to relinquish all his other possessions, or to distribute them at one stroke to the poor, would he not readily and promptly have done it!

You see the straight character of a whole-hearted and perfected love to the Lord; and those who wish to be fellow-heirs of these men must love nothing besides God, in order that, when trial comes, they may be found serviceable and true, keeping their love to the Lord unimpaired. Such can go through their conflict to the end—who have always heartily loved God and God only, and have loosed themselves from all love of the world. But few, and very few, are found who have taken up a love like this, renouncing all the pleasures and desires of the world, and enduring patiently the assaults and temptations of the evil one. If many in crossing the rivers

are sucked under by the waters, are there not some who pass over the turbulent streams of the world with its manifold desires, and of the various temptations of the spirits of wickedness? Many ships on the sea are covered by the waves and founder; but are there not some that get across, and travel over the waves, and reach the haven of peace? There is need therefore of much faith, and patience, and conflict, and endurance, and labour, and hunger and thirst for what is good, and keenness, and importunity, and discretion, and understanding at all times; for most men wish to obtain the kingdom without trouble, or pains, or sweat, and that is a thing impossible.

As in the world men go to some rich person, to work at harvest or something else, in order to gain what they need for their sustenance, and some of them are sluggish and idle, not working hard or labouring as they ought, and these, who have not toiled at all nor exerted themselves for the rich man's house, wish to receive equal pay with those who have manfully and vigorously exerted themselves with all their might, as if they too had done their work; so when we read in scripture how some righteous man pleased God, how he became a friend and companion of God, and how all the fathers became friends and heirs of God, what afflictions they endured, how much they suffered for God's sake, how they played the man and contended, we call them blessed, and wish to obtain equal gifts and dignities with them, and covet earnestly those splendid endowments, without observing their pains and struggles and afflictions and sufferings, and earnestly wish to receive honours and dignities like those which they have from God, but their labours and pains and struggles we will not accept. But I tell you, that everyone covets and desires this—harlots and publicans and unrighteous men and all—easily and without labours or struggles to gain a kingdom.

But this is the reason why temptations lie along the road, and many trials and afflictions, and struggles, and exhausting labours, to prove, who have really loved the Lord and Him only, with all their will and all their might, even to death, and have held nothing else desirable along with love to Him. Justly therefore they enter into the kingdom of heaven, having denied themselves according to the Lord's word, and having loved the Lord, and Him alone, more than their own breath; and their surpassing love shall be requited with surpassing gifts of heaven. In those afflictions and sufferings, in that patience and faith, are hidden the promises, and the glory, and the restitution of the good things of heaven, as the fruit is in the seed when it is sown in the earth, or in the tree when a graft is inserted into it and plastered with some degrading rotten stuff. Then they were proved to have in them the comeliness and the glory and the abounding fruit which clothes them; as the apostle says, Through much tribulation we may enter into the kingdom of heaven, and the Lord, In your patience possess ye your souls, and again, In the world ye shall have tribulation.

There is need of pains, and diligence, and watchfulness, and great heed, and of vigour and importunity in prayer to the Lord, in order to pass through the traps of earthly desire, and the snares of pleasure, and the pitfalls of the world, and to escape the assaults of evil spirits, and to know well by what watchfulness and alertness of faith and love the saints came to possess within their souls, even here, the heavenly treasure, that is, the power of the Spirit, which is the earnest of the kingdom.

The blessed apostle Paul, discoursing of this heavenly treasure of the grace of the Spirit, and declaring the exceeding greatness of that tribulation, and at the same indicating what each of us ought to strive to attain in this life, says, We know that if our earthly house of this tabernacle be dissolved, we have a building of God, a house not made with hands, eternal in the heavens. We ought all, therefore, to strive and endeavour by every kind of virtue, and to believe that we shall gain possession of that house, even here. For if the house of our body is dissolved, we have no other house for the soul to turn into. If, it says, being clothed, we shall not be found naked—naked, that is, of the communion and inblending of the Holy Ghost, in which alone the faithful soul can find rest. For this reason, Christians who are Christians in truth and efficacy are confident and glad at departure from the flesh, because they have that house made without hands, which house is the power of the Spirit dwelling in them. Therefore, even if the house of the body is dissolved, they are in no fear, because they have the heavenly house of the Spirit and that incorruptible glory, which glory in the resurrection day shall build up and glorify the house of the body as well, as the apostle tells us; He that raised up Christ from the dead shall quicken also your mortal bodies through His Spirit that dwelleth in you, and again, That the life also of Jesus might be made manifest in our mortal flesh, and That mortality, it says, may be swallowed up of life.

8. Let us then strive by faith and virtuous living to gain here that clothing, that when we put off the body we may not be found naked, and there be nothing in that day to glorify our flesh. For in proportion as any one has been permitted to become through faith and diligence a partaker of the Holy Ghost, his body also shall be glorified in that day. What the soul has now stored up within, shall then be revealed and displayed outwardly in the body. As trees that have got over the winter, when warmed by the unseen influence of sun and winds, put forth from within and shoot out their clothing of leaves, and as at that season flowers of the grass come forth from within the bosom of the earth, and the earth is covered and dressed, and the grass is like those lilies of which the Lord said that not even Solomon in all his glory was arrayed like one of them, for these are all parables and types and figures of Christians at the resurrection.—9. so to all God-loving souls, to true Christians, there comes a first month, a Xanthicus, which is called April. It is the day of resurrection; and by the power of the Sun of Righteousness the glory of the Holy Ghost comes out from within, decking and covering the bodies of the

saints—the glory which they had before, but hidden within in their souls. What a man has now, the same then comes forth externally in the body.

This month, it says, shall be the first month of the year; this brings forth joy for all the creation; this dresses the naked trees, opening the earth; this brings forth joy for all living things; this displays mirth for all; this for Christians is Xanthicus, the first month, which is the season of resurrection, in which their bodies shall be glorified through the unspeakable light which even now is in them—that is the power of the Holy Ghost—and which shall then be to them raiment, meat, drink, gladness, joy, peace, robe, eternal life; for all beauty of brightness and of heavenly splendour will then come to them from that Spirit of the Godhead which they were privileged even now to receive.

10. How then ought every one of us to believe, and to strive, and to be diligent in all virtuous living, and with much hope and patience to look for the privilege of receiving now that power from heaven, and the glory of the Holy Ghost inwardly in the soul, in order that then, when our bodies are dissolved, we may have what shall clothe and quicken us! If so be, it says, that being clothed we shall not be found naked, and He shall quicken our mortal bodies by His Spirit that dwelleth in us. The blessed Moses showed in a type, through the glory of the Spirit which was set upon his countenance, upon which no man was able to look steadfastly, how at the resurrection of the just the bodies of those that are worthy shall be glorified, with a glory which even now the souls of holy and faithful people are privileged to have within, upon the inner man. For we all, it says, with open face, that is to say, in the inward man, reflecting as in a glass the glory of the Lord, are changed into the same image from glory to glory. In like manner, for forty days and forty nights, as it is written, he did neither eat bread nor drink water. It was not possible for the nature of the body to live so long without bread, unless he partook of some other spiritual food; of which food the souls of the saints even now invisibly partake by gift of the Spirit.

11. In two ways, therefore, the blessed Moses showed what glory of light and what immaterial dainties of the Spirit true Christians shall have at the resurrection, which even now are vouchsafed to them in a hidden manner, and therefore shall then be manifested also upon their bodies. The glory which the saints now have in their souls, the same, as we said before, shall cover and clothe their naked bodies, and catch them into heaven; and thenceforward we shall rest, in body and soul, in the kingdom with the Lord for ever. When God created Adam, He did not provide him with bodily wings, like the birds, but He had designed for him the wings of the Holy Ghost, those wings which He purposes to give him at the resurrection, to lift him up and catch him away whithersoever the Spirit pleases—which holy souls even now are privileged to have, and fly up in mind to the heavenly frame of thought. For Christians have a different world of their own, another table,

other raiment, another sort of enjoyment, other fellowship, another frame of mind; for which reason they are superior to other men. The power of these things it is their privilege to have now within them in their souls, through the Holy Ghost; therefore at the resurrection their bodies also will be permitted to share those eternal blessings of the Spirit, and will be mixed with that glory, which their souls in this life had known by experience.

12. Every one of us therefore ought to strive, and take pains, and be diligent in all virtues, and to believe, and to seek from the Lord that the inward man may be made partaker of that glory here and now, and that the soul may have fellowship in that sanctity of the Spirit, in order that we may be cleansed from the defilements of wickedness and may have at the resurrection wherewithal to clothe our bodies as they rise naked, and to robe their uncomeliness, and quicken them, and refresh them for ever in the kingdom of heaven. For Christ will come down from heaven, and raise up all the tribes of Adam, those who from the beginning have fallen asleep, according to the holy scriptures, and will set them all in two divisions, and those who bear His own sign, that is the seal of the Spirit, He will call to Him as His very own and set them on His right hand; for My sheep, He says, hear My voice, and I know Mine own and am known of Mine. Then shall the bodies of these be arrayed with divine glory from their good works, and shall be full of the glory of the Spirit, which they had in their souls even here; and thus being glorified in the divine light, and caught up into heaven to meet the Lord in the air, as it is written, we shall ever be with the Lord, rejoicing with Him to ages without end. Amen.

HOMILY VI

Those who desire to please God, ought to offer their prayers in peace and quietness, in gentleness and wisdom, and not to give scandal to others by the use of loud outcries. The Homily also contains two questions, whether the thrones and crowns are actual created things, and concerning the twelve thrones of Israel. 1. THOSE who draw near to the Lord ought to make their prayers in quietness and peace and great composure, and to fix their minds upon the Lord not with unseemly and confused outcries, but with effort of the heart and vigilant thoughts. If some one suffering from a malady needs to be cauterized or to undergo a surgical operation, one man will bear the pain of it with courage and patience, self-possessed, and making no noise or disturbance, while others undergoing the same infliction give way under the fire or the knife to unseemly outcries, and yet the pain of the man who calls out is exactly the same as that of the man who does not—of him who makes a disturbance as of him who makes none. So are there some who under affliction and travail of the soul submit to it with dignity and make no disturbance, controlling themselves by mental reflexion, while others under the same affliction lose their power of endurance, and make their prayers with disorderly noise, so as to give offence to those who hear them. There are others again who are under no real concern, but for ostentation or singularity make use of undisciplined outcries, as if by these they could please God.

2. A servant of God ought not thus to lose self-control, but to continue in all meekness and wisdom, as the prophet said, Unto whom shall I look but unto him that is meek and quiet, and that trembleth at My words? And in the cases of Moses and Elias we find that in the appearances vouchsafed to them, although there was a great ministry of trumpets and powers before the majesty of the Lord, yet the presence of the Lord was distinguished amongst and from them all, and was manifested in peace and quietness and repose. Lo, it says, a humble still small voice, and the Lord was in it. This shows that the Lord’s rest is in peace and composure. Whatever foundation a man lays, however he starts, he will continue in the same line to the last. If he begins praying with a loud voice and noisy behaviour, he maintains to the last the same usage. Since the Lord is a lover of men, it happens that He gives succour even to such an one; so they, through the encouragement

of grace, use the same ways to the last. Nevertheless we see that this is the part of the uninstructed, because they give offence to others, and at the same time are themselves in disorder at their prayers.

3. The true foundation of prayer is this, to concentrate attention, and to pray in great quietness and peace, so as to give no offence to those outside. Such a man, if he receives the grace of God upon his prayer, and continues to the last in his quietness, will edify other people more. For God is not the God of confusion, but of peace. Those who pray noisily are like the man who shouts to keep the rowers in time; they cannot pray everywhere, either in churches, or in villages; perhaps only in the deserts can they do it as they like. But those who pray quietly edify everybody everywhere. A man's whole labour should be employed upon his thoughts; he must cut away the bush of evil thoughts which besets him, and urge himself to God, and not let his thoughts carry him where they like, but collect them when they wander in any direction, distinguishing natural thoughts from bad ones. Being under sin, the soul comes near to being like a great wood upon a hill, or the reeds in the river, or thickets of thorns and bushes. Those who wish to pass through the place, have to stretch out their hands, and with force and laborious effort to shove aside the bushes that beset them. So do the thoughts that come from the adverse power beset the soul like bushes. Much diligence and application of mind, therefore, is required, in order to distinguish the thoughts which are not our own, but suggested by the adverse power.

4. One man, trusting to his own abilities, thinks to fell the hills round him by himself; another, governing his mind with composure and discernment, without great trouble makes more of his work than the other. Thus there are some who at prayer make use of unseemly outcries, as if they relied upon their muscular strength, not knowing how their thoughts deceive them, and fancying that they can achieve a perfect success by their own power. Others there are who pay attention to their thoughts, and exercise all their labour within. These by their understanding and discernment are enabled to reach success, and to shake off the insurrection of the thoughts and to walk after the will of the Lord. And we find in the apostle that he calls the person who edifies others greater than he who does not. He says, He that speaketh with tongues edifieth himself, but he that prophesieth edifieth the church. Greater is he that prophesieth than he that speaketh with tongues. Every one, therefore, will choose to edify others, and thus will have the kingdom of heaven vouchsafed to him.

5. Question. Some people tell us that the thrones and crowns are actual creatures, not spiritual things. How ought we to understand them? Answer. The throne of the Godhead is our mind, and again, the throne of our mind is the Godhead and the Spirit. In like manner Satan also and the powers and rulers of darkness have, ever since the transgression of the commandment, seated themselves in the heart and

mind and body of Adam, as their own throne. That was why the Lord came, and took His body of the Virgin. For if He had willed to come down in His uncovered Godhead, who would have been able to bear it? So He spoke to men through the instrument of the body. By this means he put down the spirits of wickedness, which had their seat in the body, from these thrones of mind and thought, wherein they dwelt, and the Lord cleansed the conscience, and made Himself a throne of the mind, the thoughts, and the body.

6. Question. What then is the meaning of the text, Ye shall sit upon twelve thrones, judging the twelve tribes of Israel? Answer. We find that this came to pass upon earth, when the Lord had been taken up into heaven. For He sent the Comforter Spirit upon the twelve apostles, and that holy power which came and tabernacled and seated itself in the throne of their minds. When the bystanders said, These men are full of new wine, Peter began at once to judge them, saying concerning Jesus, “A Man mighty in words and signs ye crucified, hanging Him on a tree; and behold, He there did wondrous things, rending the graves of stone, and raising the dead. For it is written, In the last days I will pour out of My Spirit upon all flesh, and your sons and your daughters shall prophesy.” Many, therefore, came to repentance under Peter’s instruction, so that a new world, elect of God, came into being.

7. Do you see how the beginning of judgment appeared? A new world appeared there. Authority was given them here to sit and judge even in this world. Not but that they are to sit and give judgment hereafter, at the advent of the Lord, at the resurrection of the dead. But it came to pass here also, when the Holy Ghost seated Himself on the thrones of their minds. The diadems which Christians receive in that age are not creatures. Those who say so, say amiss. The Spirit uses them as a suggestive figure. What does the apostle Paul say concerning the heavenly Jerusalem? This is the mother of us all, in whose confession we agree. As for the garment which Christians wear, it is evidently the Spirit Himself that clothes them, in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Ghost for ever. Amen.

HOMILY VII

Concerning the loving kindness of Christ towards men. The Homily also contains certain questions and answers. 1. IMAGINE a man to go into a royal palace, and to see the portraits and works of art there, treasures kept in one place, other things in another. Imagine him to sit down to table with the king, and to have delicious meats and drinks set before him, and to be in every way refreshed with the contemplation of such beautiful things; and after that, to be hurried off, and found carried away to noisome places. Or imagine a maiden fairer, wiser, and wealthier than all others, to take for her husband a poor, lowly, ugly man, clothed in tatters; to take the filthy garments from him, and clothe him with the robes of a king, and set a diadem on his head, and enter into union with him. There comes a moment when that poor man begins to be frightened, and to say, "Am I, who am wretched and poor and mean and lowly, to have such a wife given to me?" This is what God has done to poor wretched man. He has given him to taste of another world, of other delicious food; He has shown him glories and royal beauties unspeakable and heavenly; and so the man, comparing those spiritual things with the things of this world, casts all away, and whether king, or princes, or wise men meet his eye, he turns his gaze to the heavenly treasure. For since God is love, man has received the heavenly and divine fire of Christ, and is at rest, and rejoices, and is there fast bound.

2. Question. Is Satan in the same place as God, either in the air, or in men? Answer. The sun yonder is but a creature. When it shines upon miry places, what harm does it take? How much more can the Divine Being be in the same place as Satan without being sullied or polluted? Evil, however, is darkened and blinded, and cannot see the purity and fineness of God. If any one says that Satan has his own proper place, and God His, he makes God to be circumscribed with reference to the place where the wicked one dwells. How then can we say that the good is not circumscribed or comprehended, and that all things are contained within it, and yet that the good is not polluted by the evil? What then? Because sky, and sun, and mountains are in God, and have their consistency through Him, are they then God? Created things are established in their own order, and the Creator, who is present with them all, is God.

3. Question. When sin is transformed into an angel of light, and comes to look like grace, how is a man to detect the wiles of the devil, and how shall he welcome and discern the things of grace? Answer. The things of grace are attended by joy, peace, love, and truth. Truth itself compels man to seek truth. But the forms of sin are disordered, and have nothing of love or joy towards God. Endive looks like lettuce; but one is sweet, and the other, for all its likeness, is bitter. Even in the realm of grace itself, there is what looks like truth, and there is the substance of truth itself. The ray of the sun is one thing, and the orb itself is another, and the ray does not give shine in the same sense in which the light stored up in the orb does. A lamp is lighted in the house: the ray of it which beams all round is one thing and the light in the lamp itself is another, brighter and clearer. In like manner there are things of grace, which when a man sees them at a distance, as spectacles to be looked at, give him joy even as spectacles; but he becomes another man when the power of God enters into him, and occupies his heart and his members, and makes his mind captive to the love of God. When they seized Peter and cast him into prison, an angel of the Lord came, when he was shut in, and broke his chains, and brought him out; and he, like one in a trance, thought he saw a vision.

4. Question. And how comes it that people who are under the influence of grace ever fall? Answer. Even pure intelligences in their own nature are liable to slip and fall. A man begins to be lifted up, to censure, to say, “Thou art a sinner,” while he considers himself righteous. Do you not know what St. Paul says, There was given unto me a thorn in the flesh, the messenger of Satan to buffet me, lest I should be exalted above measure? Even a pure nature is liable to be exalted above measure. 5. Question. Can a man, by means of light, see his own soul? There are some people who do away with revelation, and affirm that it is knowledge and sense which give vision. Answer. Sense differs from vision, and vision from enlightenment; and the man who has enlightenment is greater than the man who has only sense. His mind is enlightened, inasmuch as he has received a greater portion than the man who has but sense, as is shown by his seeing within himself visions which he cannot doubt. But revelation is a further thing. Great things, and mysteries of God, are the subjects of revelation to the soul.

6. Question. Does one by revelation and the divine light see the soul? Answer. As these eyes of ours see the sun, so those who are enlightened see the image of the soul; but not many Christians have this sight. 7. Question. Has the soul any form? Answer. It has an image or form in the same way as an angel has. As the angels have an image or form, and as the outward man has his image, so the inner man has an image like an angel’s, and a form like that of the outward man. 8. Question. Is the mind one thing and the soul another? Answer. As the members of the body, being many, are called one man, so the soul has many members, mind, conscience, will, thoughts accusing and excusing, but all these are dependent upon one factor. They are members of the soul, and the soul is one, the inward man. But as the

outward eyes discover at a distance the thorns, precipices, and pitfalls, and give warning beforehand, so the mind, when it is at all alert, discovers beforehand the crafts and devices of the adverse power, and secures the soul in advance. It is in fact the eye of the soul. Let us ascribe glory to the Father, Son, and Holy Ghost for ever and ever. Amen.

HOMILY VIII

Concerning things which befall Christians at prayer, and concerning the measures of perfection—whether it is possible for Christians to reach the perfect measure.
1. A MAN goes in to bend the knee, and his heart is filled with the divine influence, and his soul rejoices with the Lord, like bride with bridegroom, according to that word of the prophet Esaias which says, As the bridegroom rejoiceth over the bride, so shall the Lord rejoice over thee; and it comes to pass that being all day engaged he gives himself to prayer for an hour, and the inward man is rapt in prayer into the unfathomable deep of that other world in great sweetness, so that his whole mind is up aloft, rapt away thither, and estranged from things below. For the time being forgetfulness comes into him with regard to the interests of the earthly mind, because his thoughts are filled and taken captive to divine and heavenly things, to things infinite and past comprehension, to wonderful things which no human lips can express, so that for that hour he prays and says, “Would God that my soul might pass along with my prayer!”

2. Question. Can any one enter into these things at all times? Answer. Grace is constantly present, and is rooted in us, and worked into us like leaven, from our earliest years, until the thing thus present becomes fixed in a man like a natural endowment, as if it were one substance with him. But, for the man’s own good, it manages him in many different ways, after its own pleasure. Sometimes the fire flames out and kindles more vehemently; at other times more gently and mildly. The light that it gives kindles up at times and shines with unusual brightness; at others it abates and burns low. The lamp is always burning and shining, but when it is specially trimmed, it kindles up with intoxication of the love of God; and then again by God’s dispensation it gives in, and though the light is always there, it is comparatively dull.

3. To some, however, the sign of the cross has appeared in light and fastened itself upon the inward man. At another time a man at his prayers has fallen into a kind of trance, and found himself standing in the altar-space in church, and three loaves were offered to such an one, leavened with oil, and the more he ate of them, the more they increased and grew. At another time there was brought as it were a

shining garment, such as there is none on earth in the course of this world, nor is it possible for human hands to make the like; for as when the Lord went up into the mountain with Peter and John, He changed the fashion of His raiment and made it to flash with light, so was it with this garment, and the man who was clothed with it wondered and was amazed. Another while, the light shining in the heart disclosed the inner, deeper, hidden light, so that the man, swallowed up in the sweetness of the contemplation, was no longer master of himself, but was like a fool or a barbarian to this world by reason of the surpassing love and sweetness, by reason of the hidden mysteries; so that the man for that season was set at liberty, and came to perfect measures, and was pure and free from sin; yet afterwards grace retreated, and the veil of the adverse power came; notwithstanding, grace still shews itself in part, and he stands on the first and lowest step of perfection.

4. There are twelve steps, we might say, which a man has to pass before he reaches perfection. For a season that measure has been attained, and perfection entered upon; and then grace gives in, and he comes down by one step, and stands on the eleventh. Here and there one man rich in grace has stood always, night and day, in perfect measures, at liberty and in purity, always captive and aloft. Well now, if the man to whom those marvellous things were shewn, of which he has had actual experience, were to have them always present with him, he would be unable to undertake the dispensation of the word and the burden of it, nor could he endure to listen to, or take any interest in, any ordinary thing, concerning himself, or concerning the morrow, but only to sit in a corner, aloft and intoxicated. So the perfect measure has not been given, in order that he may be free to take an interest in his brethren, and in the ministry of the word. Nevertheless the middle wall of partition has been broken through and death is overcome.

5. The case stands thus, as if some foggy power hangs over and forms a light screen, like a dense air, though the lamp is burning and shining all the while, even as a veil hangs over yonder light. So this man confesses that he is not perfect or altogether free from sin. He says that the middle wall of partition has been broken through and shattered, and yet at some point not wholly broken, nor at all times. There are moments when grace kindles up and comforts and refreshes more fully; there are moments when it retreats and clouds over, according as grace itself manages for the man’s advantage. But who is there that has come to the perfect measure at particular seasons, and has tasted and had direct experience of that world? A perfect Christian man, one completely free, I have not yet seen. Although one and another is at rest in grace, and enters into mysteries and revelations and into much sweetness of grace, still sin is yet present within. By reason of the exceeding grace and of the light that is in them, men consider themselves free and perfect; but inexperience deceives them. They are under the influence of grace, but I have never yet seen a man that is free. I myself at times have in part come to that measure, and I have learned to know that it does not constitute a perfect man.

6. Question. Tell us, if thou wilt, what measures thou art in? Answer. After the sign of the cross, grace now acts thus. It calms all the members and the heart, so that the soul, for much joy, appears like an innocent child, and the man no longer condemns Greek or Jew, sinner or worldling. The inner man regards all men with a pure eye, and the man rejoices over all the world, and desires that all should worship and love, Greeks and Jews. At another moment, like the king's son, he is as bold in the Son of God as in a father, and doors are opened to him, and he enters within to many mansions and the further he goes in, doors are again opened in progression, a hundred mansions leading to a hundred beyond, and he is rich, and the richer he is, other new wonders are again disclosed to him, and he is entrusted, as a son and an heir, with things that cannot be told by mankind or put into syllables by mouth and tongue. Glory to God. Amen.

HOMILY IX

That the promises and prophecies of God are accomplished through manifold trial and temptation, and that those who cleave to God alone are delivered from the temptation of the evil one. 1. THE spiritual influence of God's grace within the soul works with great patience, wisdom, and mysterious management of the mind, while the man for long times and seasons contends in much endurance; and then the work of grace is proved to be perfect in him, his free will and choice being proved by much trial to be well-pleasing to the Spirit, and the man having displayed thoroughness and perseverance for a good length of time. We will illustrate this law of action from plain examples in the inspired scriptures. 2. What I mean is well exhibited in Joseph. What times and seasons it took to accomplish the predestined will of God concerning him, and to fulfil his visions. By what pains and afflictions and distresses he was first proved, and endured them all nobly, and was found in them all a thorough and faithful servant of God, and then became a king of Egypt, and nurtured his family, and the prophecy of things unseen was accomplished, and the will of God received its predicted end after long time and much management.

3. So with David. God anointed him king by the prophet Samuel, and when he was anointed, he fled from Saul, who pursued him to destroy him. Where then was God's anointing? Where was the promise, so far as the immediate future was concerned? After his anointing, he was grievously afflicted, wandering in desert places, and destitute even of bread, and taking refuge among the heathen because of Saul's designs against him. Such afflictions encompassed the man whom God had anointed to be king. Then after long trial, and affliction, and temptation, and patience, having once for all believed God, and assuring himself, "What God did for me by the prophet's anointing, and what God said should come to pass concerning me, must without doubt come to pass, even though long patience be required," at length the will of God was done, and David reigned after all his trials. Then the word of God was manifested, and the anointing at the hands of the prophet was shewn to be sure and true.

4. So with Moses. God having foreknown and predestined him to be the ruler and deliverer of the people, made him to become the son of Pharaoh's daughter, and he

grew up to kingly fortune and splendour and luxury, being learned in all the wisdom of the Egyptians; and when he reached man's estate, and was become great, he refused all those things, choosing rather the suffering affliction and the reproaches of the Christ, as the apostle says, than to enjoy the pleasures of sin for a season. He became a fugitive from Egypt; and how long did that son of a king, who was bred up to such enjoyment and royal luxury, spend in the labours of a shepherd! Then at length, being approved to God and found faithful through much patience, because he had endured many temptations, he became the deliverer, the ruler, the king of Israel, and was addressed by God as a God to Pharaoh. Through him God smote Egypt with plagues, and displayed through him great wonders upon Pharaoh, and finally drowned the Egyptians in the sea. See, after what length of time the will and purpose of God was declared, and after how many trials and afflictions it was fulfilled.

5. So again with Abraham. How long beforehand God promised to bestow on him a son, and yet gave him none there and then, but for how many intervening years trials and temptations befell him! But Abraham patiently endured all that came upon him, and was fully persuaded by faith that He who had promised, and could not lie, would fulfil His own word, and so being found faithful he obtained his promise. 6. In like manner Noah, being commanded in his five-hundredth year by God to prepare the ark, and warned that He would bring a flood upon the world, which was not brought until his six-hundredth year, waited patiently for a hundred years, nothing doubting whether God would do what He said or not, but being once for all fully persuaded by faith that what God had spoken must assuredly come to pass. So, being found approved by resolution and faith and endurance and much patience, he alone with his house was saved, having kept the commandment in purity.

7. We have alleged these scriptural grounds to show that God's grace in man, and the gift of the Holy Ghost, which is vouchsafed to a faithful soul, proceeds with much contention, with much endurance and longsuffering, and temptations and trials, the man's free will being tried by all manner of afflictions. And when it does not grieve the Spirit in anything, but is agreeable to grace through all commandments, then it is permitted to obtain freedom from passions, and receives the fulfilment of the Spirit's adoption, spoken of in a mystery, and of the spiritual riches, and of the intelligence which is not of this world, whereof true Christians are made partakers. For this reason they are for all purposes superior to all the men of prudence, intelligence, and wisdom, who have the spirit of the world. 8. For such an one judgeth all men, as it is written. He knows each man, from whence he speaks, and where he stands, and what measures he is in; but not a man of those that have the spirit of the world is able to know and judge him, but only he that has the like heavenly Spirit of the Godhead knows his like, as the apostle says: Comparing spiritual things with spiritual; but the natural man receiveth not the things

of the Spirit, for they are foolishness unto him: but he that is spiritual judgeth all men, yet he himself is judged by none. Such an one looks upon all things that the world holds glorious, its riches, its luxury, and all its enjoyments—yea, and even its knowledge—and all things belonging to this age, as loathsome and hateful.

9. As one that is possessed and burning with a fever loathes and rejects the sweetest food or drink that you offer him, because he burns with the fever and is vehemently exercised by it, so those who burn with the heavenly, sacred, solemn longing of the Spirit, and are smitten in soul with love of the love of God, and are vehemently exercised by the divine and heavenly fire which the Lord came to send upon the earth, and desire that it should speedily be kindled, and are aflame with the heavenly longing for Christ, these, as we said before, consider all the glorious and precious things of this age contemptible and hateful by reason of the fire of the love of Christ, which holds them fast and inflames them and burns them with a Godward disposition and with the heavenly good things of love; from which love nothing of all that are in heaven and earth and under the earth shall be able to separate them, as the apostle Paul testified, saying, Who shall separate us from the love of Christ? and what follows.

10. But it is not possible that any one should obtain the possession of his own soul, and of the heavenly love of the Spirit, unless he makes himself a stranger to all the things of this age, and gives himself up to seeking the love of Christ, and his mind stands clear of all material cares and earthly distractions, in order that he may be wholly occupied with the one aim, directing these things by all the commandments, in order that his whole care and seeking, and the engrossment and business of his soul, may be about the search for the immaterial substance, how the soul should be adorned with the commandments of the virtues, and with the heavenly adornment of the Spirit, and with the fellowship of the purity and sanctification of Christ—so that having renounced all, and having cut himself free all round from the hindrances of earth and of material things, and set himself clear of fleshly love, whether it be the affection of parents or of kindred, the man may not permit his mind to be busied or distracted with any other thing, such as power, glory, honours, or fleshly friendships of the world, or any other earthly thoughts, but his mind may wholly and entirely take upon itself care and pains for the seeking of the immaterial substance of the soul, and may wholly and entirely endure in expectancy and waiting for the coming of the Spirit; as the Lord says, In your patience possess ye your souls, and again, Seek the kingdom and all these things shall be added unto you.

11. So may it be, that one who thus strives, and at all times takes heed to himself, whether in prayer, or in obedience, or in any kind of work done according to God, should be able to escape the darkness of wicked devils. The mind that is never off the search of itself and the quest of the Lord avails to gain possession of its

own soul—the soul that was in the perdition of the passions—by always bringing itself into captivity to the Lord with main force and earnestness, and by cleaving to Him only, as it is said, Bringing into captivity every thought to the obedience of Christ; that by means of such striving and longing and seeking the mind may attain to become with the Lord one Spirit of the gift and grace of Christ, resting in the vessel of the soul, which has prepared herself for every good work, and which does no despite unto the Spirit of the Lord by its own selfwill, and by the wanderings of this world, its glories, powers, self-determinations, or fleshly indulgences, and the companionships and society of evil men.

12. Lovely it is, when the soul, devoting herself wholly to the Lord, and cleaving to Him only, and dwelling mindfully in His commandments, and worthily honouring the Spirit of Christ which has come upon her and overshadowed her, is permitted to be one Spirit and one composition with Him, as the apostle says, He that is joined unto the Lord is one Spirit. But if a man gives himself away to cares, or glory, or power, or human honours, and seeks after these things, and his soul is mixed up and enters into composition with earthly considerations, or is bound and held by anything belonging to this age, and if such a soul longs to transfer itself and escape and get away from the darkness of passions, in which it is held by the evil powers, it cannot do so, because it loves and does the will of darkness, and does not perfectly hate the practices of wickedness.

13. Let us therefore prepare ourselves to travel to the Lord with an undivided will and purpose, and to become followers of Christ, to accomplish whatever He wills, and to think upon His commandments to do them. Let us sever ourselves altogether from the love of the world, and attach our souls to Him only, and keep in mind Him only as our business and care and quest. If we have to be somewhat busied also in body, with the business laid upon us, and with obedience for God’s sake, let not the mind be parted from its love and quest and longing after the Lord; so that striving in such a mind, and journeying along the way of righteousness with an upright intention, and always taking heed to ourselves, we may obtain the promise of His Spirit, and may through grace be delivered from the perdition of the darkness of the passions, by which the soul is exercised, that we may be made meet for the eternal kingdom, and permitted to enjoy all eternity with Christ, glorifying the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit for ever. Amen.

HOMILY X

By lowliness of mind and earnestness the gifts of the Divine grace are preserved, but by pride and sloth they are destroyed. 1. SOULS that love truth and God, that long with much hope and faith to put on Christ completely, do not need so much to be put in remembrance by others, nor do they endure, even for a while, to be deprived of the heavenly desire and of passionate affection to the Lord; but being wholly and entirely nailed to the cross of Christ, they perceive in themselves day by day a sense of spiritual advance towards the spiritual Bridegroom. Being smitten with the heavenly longing, and hungering for the righteousness of the virtues, they have a great and insatiable desire for the shining forth of the Spirit. Even if they are privileged through their faith to receive the knowledge of Divine mysteries, or are made partakers of the gladness of heavenly grace, they put no trust in themselves, thinking themselves to be somewhat, but the more they are permitted to receive spiritual gifts, the more insatiable they are of the heavenly longing, and the more they seek on with diligence. The more they perceive in themselves a spiritual advance, the more hungry and thirsty they are for the participation and increase of grace; and the richer they spiritually are, the more do they esteem themselves to be poor, being insatiable in the spiritual longing for the heavenly Bridegroom, as the scripture says, They that eat Me shall yet be hungry, and they that drink Me shall yet be thirsty.

2. Such souls, which have the love of the Lord ardently and insatiably, are meet for eternal life; for which reason deliverance from the passions is vouchsafed to them, and they obtain perfectly the shining forth and participation of the unspeakable and mystic fellowship of the Holy Ghost, in the fulness of grace. But as many souls as are feeble and slack, not seeking to receive here on earth, while they are still in the flesh, through patience and longsuffering, sanctification of heart, not in part, but perfectly, and have never hoped to partake in the Paraclete Spirit in perfection with all conscious satisfaction and assurance, and have never expected to be delivered through the Spirit from the passions of evil; or having at one time received the grace of God, have been deceived by sin and have given themselves over to some form of carelessness and remissness; 3. these, as having received the grace of the Spirit, and possessing some comfort of grace in rest and aspiration

and spiritual sweetness, presume upon this, and are lifted up, and grow careless, without contrition of heart, and without humility of mind, neither reaching the perfect measure of freedom from passion, nor waiting to be perfectly filled with grace in all diligence and faith, but they felt assured, and took their repose, and remained satisfied with their scanty comfort of grace, the result of which advance to such souls was pride rather than humility, and they are at length stripped of whatever grace was vouchsafed to them, because of their careless contempt, and because of the vain arrogance of their self-conceit.

4. The soul that really loves God and Christ, though it may do ten thousand righteousnesses, esteems itself as having wrought nothing, by reason of its insatiable aspiration after God. Though it should exhaust the body with fastings, with watchings, its attitude towards the virtues is as if it had not yet even begun to labour for them. Though divers gifts of the Spirit, or revelations and heavenly mysteries, should be vouchsafed to it, it feels in itself to have acquired nothing at all, by reason of its unlimited and insatiable love to the Lord. All day long, hungering and thirsting through faith and love, in persevering prayer, it continues to be insatiable for the mysteries of grace, and for the accomplishment of every virtue. It is smitten with passionate love of the heavenly Spirit, continually stirring up within itself through grace an ardent aspiration for the heavenly Bridegroom, desiring to be perfectly admitted to the mystical, ineffable fellowship with Him in sanctification of the Spirit. The face of the soul is unveiled, and it gazes upon the heavenly Bridegroom face to face in a spiritual light that cannot be described, mingling with Him in all fulness of assurance, being conformed to His death, ever looking with great desire to die for Christ, and trusting with assurance to receive by the Spirit a perfect deliverance from sin and from the darkness of the passions; in order that having been cleansed by the Spirit, sanctified in soul and body, it may be permitted to become a clean vessel to receive the heavenly unction and to entertain the true King, even Christ; and then it is made meet for eternal life, being henceforward a clean dwelling-place of the Holy Ghost.

5. For a soul to reach these measures, however, does not come all at once, or without trial. Through many labours and struggles, and long time, and earnestness, with trial and manifold temptations, it gains the spiritual increase and advance, even to the perfect measure of freedom from passion, in order that willingly and bravely enduring every temptation with which it is plied by evil, it may then be privileged to obtain the great honours, and spiritual gifts, and heavenly riches, and thus become an inheritor of the heavenly kingdom in Christ Jesus our Lord, to whom be glory and might for ever. Amen.

HOMILY XI

That the power of the Holy Ghost in man's heart is like fire; and what things we need, in order to distinguish the thoughts that spring up in the heart; and concerning the dead serpent fixed by Moses at the top of the pole, which was a type of Christ. The Homily contains two dialogues, one between Christ and the evil one, Satan; the other between sinners and the same. 1. THAT heavenly fire of the Godhead, which Christians receive in their hearts now in this present world, that same fire which now ministers inwardly in the heart becomes outward when the body is dissolved, and recomposes the members, and causes a resurrection of the members that had been dissolved. As the fire that ministered on the altar at Jerusalem lay buried in a pit during the time of the captivity, and the selfsame fire, when peace came and the captives returned home, was renewed, as it were, and ministered in its accustomed manner, so now the heavenly fire works upon this body that is so near us, which after its dissolution turns to mire, and renews it, and raises up the bodies that had decayed. The inward fire that now dwells in the heart becomes then external, and causes a resurrection of the body.

2. The fire in the furnace under Nabuchodonosor was no divine fire, but a creature; but the Three Children, because of their righteousness, while they were in the visible fire, had in their hearts the divine and heavenly fire ministering within their thoughts and exerting its energy in them. That very fire showed itself outside them. It stood between them and the visible fire, and restrained it, that it should not burn the righteous, nor do them any manner of hurt. In like manner, when the mind of Israel and their thoughts were bent upon departing far from the living God and turning to idolatry, Aaron was compelled to tell them to bring their golden vessels and ornaments. Then the gold and the vessels, which they cast into the fire, became an idol, and the fire, as it were, copied their intention. That was a wonderful thing. They, secretly, in purpose and thought, determined upon idolatry, and the fire accordingly fashioned the vessels thrown upon it into an idol, and then they committed idolatry openly. As, then, the Three Children, having thoughts of righteousness, received in themselves the fire of God, and worshipped the Lord in truth, so now faithful souls receive that divine and heavenly fire, in this world, in secret; and that fire forms a heavenly image upon their humanity. 3.

As the fire formed the golden vessels, and they became an idol, so does the Lord, who copies the intentions of faithful and good souls, and forms an image even now in the soul according to their desire, and at the resurrection it appears external to them, and glorifies their bodies within and without. But as the bodies of some are at this time decayed for a season, and dead, and dissolved, so also are their thoughts decayed by the action of Satan, and are dead to the life indeed, and buried in mire and earth; for their soul is perished. As, therefore, the Israelites cast the golden vessels into the fire, and they became an idol, so now the man has given over his pure and good thoughts to evil, and they have been buried in the mire of sin, and are become an idol. And what shall a man do to discover them, and discern them, and cast them out of his own fire? Here the soul has need of a divine lamp, even of the Holy Ghost, who sets in order the darkened house. It needs the bright sun of righteousness, which enlightens and rises upon the heart, as an instrument to win the battle.

4. That woman who lost the piece of silver, first lighted the lamp, and then set the house in order, and thus, the house being set in order and the lamp lit, the piece of silver was found, buried in dirt and filth and earth. So now the soul cannot of itself find its own thoughts, and disengage them; but when the divine lamp is lit, it lights up the darkened house, and then the soul beholds its thoughts, how they lie buried in the filth and mire of sin. The sun rises, and then the soul beholds its loss, and begins to recall the thoughts that were mingled among the dirt and the uncleanness. For indeed the soul lost her image when she transgressed the commandment.

5. Suppose there is a king, and he has goods and servants under him to minister to him, and he happens to be taken by his enemies and carried captive. When he is taken and removed from his country, his ministers and servants cannot but follow after him. Thus Adam was created pure by God for His service, and these creatures were given him to minister to his wants. He was appointed lord and king of all creatures. But when the evil word came to him, and conversed with him, he first received it by the outward hearing, then it penetrated through his heart, and took possession of all his being. When he was thus seized, creation, which served him and ministered to him, was seized with him. Through him death reigned over every soul, and defaced every image of Adam in consequence of his disobedience, so that men were turned and came to the worship of devils. Lo, the fruits of the earth, which were created good by God, are offered to the devils—bread, and wine, and oil; and they set animals upon their altars; yea, they sacrificed their sons and their daughters unto devils.

6. At this point comes He in person, who fashioned body and soul, and undoes the whole business of the wicked one, and his works accomplished in men’s thoughts, and renews and forms a heavenly image, and makes a new thing of the soul, that

Adam may again be king over death and lord of the creatures. In the shadow of the law, Moses was called the Saviour of Israel, because he brought them out of Egypt. So now the true Redeemer, Christ, goes through into the hidden places of the soul, and brings it out of dark Egypt, and the heavy yoke, and the bitter bondage. He commands us, therefore, to come out of the world, and to become poor of all visible things, and to have no earthly care, but night and day to stand at the door, and wait for the time when the Lord shall open the closed hearts, and shall pour upon us the gift of the Spirit.

7. He told us therefore to leave gold, silver, kinsfolk, to sell that which we have and distribute to the poor, and to treasure it up and seek it in heaven. For where thy treasure is, there will thy heart be also. The Lord knew that in this quarter Satan prevails over the thoughts, to drag them down to anxiety for material, earthly things. For this reason God, in providential care for thy soul, told thee to renounce all, in order that even against thy will thou mightest seek the heavenly riches, and keep thy heart Godwards; for even if thou shouldest wish to return to the creaturely things, thou findest nothing visible in thy possession. Wiliest thou, nillest thou, thou art compelled to send thy mind to heaven, where thou hast treasured these things and laid them up; for where thy treasure is, there will thy heart be also.

8. In the law God commanded Moses to make a serpent of brass, and lift it up, and fix it upon the top of a pole, and as many as were stung by the serpents, when they fixed their attention upon the brazen serpent, obtained healing. This was done by way of a dispensation, in order that those who were held by earthly cares, and the worship of idols, and the pleasures of Satan, and all manner of ungodliness, might by this means to some extent look upward to things above, and gaining a respite from things below, might give heed to higher things, and again proceed from these to that which is highest; and thus advancing little by little to the higher and loftier kind, might learn to know that there is a Most Highest surpassing all the creation. So likewise He commanded thee also to make thyself poor, and to sell all and give to the poor, in order that after that, even if thou shouldest wish to sink down upon the earth, it might be impossible. Searching into thy heart, thou beginnest to commune with thy thoughts, “Inasmuch as we have nothing upon earth, let us be getting heavenwards, where our treasure is, where we have set up a business.” Thy mind begins to uplift an eye to the height, to seek the things above, and in so doing to make progress.

9. What, however, is the dead serpent? The serpent fixed upon the top of the pole healed those that were stung. The dead serpent overcame the live ones. Thus it is a figure of the body of the Lord. The body which He took of the ever Virgin Mary, He offered it up upon the cross, and hung it there, and fastened it upon the tree; and the dead body overcame and slew the live serpent creeping in the heart. Here was a great marvel, how the dead serpent slew the live one; but as Moses

made a new thing, when he made a likeness of the live serpent, so also the Lord made a new thing from the Virgin Mary, and put this on, instead of bringing with Him a body from heaven. The heavenly Spirit entered in and wrought in Adam, and brought him into combination with the Godhead, and put on human flesh, and fashioned it in the womb. As no serpent of brass was ever commanded by the Lord to be made in the world until Moses, so a new and sinless body was never seen in the world until the Lord. For when the first Adam transgressed the commandment, death reigned over his children without exception. So a dead body overcame the live serpent.

10. This wonderful thing is to the Jews a stumbling-block, and to the Greeks foolishness. But what says the apostle? But we preach Jesus Christ, and Him crucified, to the Jews a stumbling-block, and to the Greeks foolishness, but to us that are saved Christ the power of God and the wisdom of God. In the dead body is life. Here is redemption; here is light. Here the Lord comes to death, and discourses with him, and bids him bring the souls out of hell and death, and give them back to Him. Behold then, death, troubled at these things, goes in to his ministers, and gathers together all his powers; and the prince of wickedness produces the bond-deeds, and says, “See, these obeyed my words; see how men worshipped us. But God, who is a just judge, displays His justice here also, and says to him, “Adam obeyed thee, and thou didst take possession of all the hearts of him. Humanity obeyed thee. What is My body doing here? This is without sin. That body of the first Adam was under obligation to thee, and thou hast a right to keep the bond-deeds of it; but to Me all bear witness that I never sinned. I owe thee nothing, and all bear witness that I am the Son of God. Above the heavens came a voice and bore witness upon the earth, This is My beloved Son; hear Him. John witnesses, Behold, the Lamb of God, which taketh away the sin of the world;

and the scripture again, Who did no sin, neither was guile found in Him; and, The prince of this world cometh, and hath nothing in Me. And thou thyself, O Satan, bearest witness to Me, saying, I know Thee, who Thou art, the Son of God; and again, What have we to do with Thee, Thou Jesus of Nazareth? art Thou come to torment us before the time? There are three that bear witness to Me—He that is above the heavens sends forth a voice; they that are on earth; and thou thyself. Therefore I purchase the body that was sold to thee through the first Adam; I cancel thy bonds. I paid the debts of Adam, when I was crucified and descended into hell; and I command thee, O hell and darkness and death, bring out the imprisoned souls of Adam. Thus the evil powers, stricken with terror, give back the imprisoned Adam.

11. But when you hear that at that time the Lord delivered the souls from hell and darkness, and went down to hell, and did a glorious work, do not imagine that these things are so very far from your own soul. Man is capable of admitting and receiv-

ing the evil one. Death keeps fast hold of the souls of Adam, and the thoughts of the soul lie imprisoned in the darkness. When you hear of sepulchres, do not think only of visible ones; your own heart is a sepulchre and a tomb. When the prince of wickedness and his angels burrow there, and make paths and thoroughfares there, on which the powers of Satan walk into your mind and thoughts, are you not a hell, a tomb, a sepulchre, a dead man towards God? There it was that Satan coined reprobate silver. In this soul he sowed seeds of bitterness. It is leavened with old leaven; a fountain of mire springs there. Well, then, the Lord comes into souls that seek after Him, into the deep of the heart-hell, and there lays His command upon death, saying, "Bring out the imprisoned souls that are seeking after Me, which thou detainest by force." So He breaks through the heavy stones that lie on the soul, opens the sepulchres, raises up the man that is dead indeed, brings out of the dark jail the imprisoned soul.

12. Just as if a man were bound hand and foot with chains, and some one came and loosed his bands, and let him walk free without interference, so the Lord looses from its bonds the soul that is bound with the chains of death, and lets it go, and sets the mind free to walk at ease and unhindered into God's air. Suppose a man were in the middle of a river in full flood, and overwhelmed by the water lay lifeless, drowned, with dreadful monsters all round him. If another man, who is not used to swimming, should wish to save the one who fell in, he too is lost, and is drowned with him. Clearly there is need of a skilled swimmer, an expert, to go out into the depth of the water of the gulf, and dive, and bring up the drowned man there among the monsters. The water itself, when it sees a man skilled and knowing how to navigate it, helps such a man, and bears him up to the surface. The soul, in the same way, has been plunged and drowned in the abyss of darkness and the deep of death, and is dead and parted from God among dreadful monsters; and who is able to go down into those secret chambers and the depths of hell and death, except that expert Workman who fashioned the body? In His own person He enters into two quarters, into the depth of hell, and into the deep gulf of the heart, where the soul with its thoughts is held fast by death, and brings up out of the darksome hole the Adam that lay dead. And death itself, through practice, becomes an assistance to man, like the water to the swimmer.

13. What difficulty is there to God in entering into death, or into the deep gulf of the heart either, and calling up the dead Adam from thence? In the natural world there are houses and tenements where mankind dwell, and there are places where wild beasts dwell, lions, or dragons, or other venomous beasts. If the sun, which is but a creature, enters in every direction, through windows, through doors, and into the dens of lions, and into the holes of serpents, and comes out again without taking any harm, how much more does the God and Lord of all enter into the holes and dwelling-places where death pitched his tent, and into souls, and rescue Adam from thence without being injured by death? The rain, too, comes down from heaven,

and reaches down into the lower parts of the earth, and there moistens and renews the dried roots, and makes there a new growth.

14. One man maintains conflict and hardship and war against Satan. This man's heart is contrite; he is in care and mourning and tears. Such an one has come to stand in two separate realms. If, then, in this state of things he perseveres, the Lord is with him for the battle, and protects him; for he seeks in earnest, and knocks at the door till He opens to him. Again, if you see here a good brother, it is grace which has established him. But the man without foundation has no such fear of God. His heart is not contrite. He is in no fear, nor does he secure his heart and members, not to walk disorderly. This man's soul is altogether free, for he has not yet entered into conflict. There is then a difference between the man in conflict and hardship, and the man who does not know what battle is. Even the seeds, when cast into the ground, undergo hardship with the frosts, with the winter, with the coldness of the air, and in due season the growth is quickened.

15. It sometimes happens that Satan talks in the heart, "See how many wrong things thou hast done! See how many follies thy soul is filled with, and thou art weighed down with sins, that thou canst not be saved." This he does, to reduce thee to despair, and to make thee think that thy repentance is not acceptable. For since by the transgression wickedness entered in, it talks with the soul every hour, like man with man. Answer him then thou, "I have the testimonies of the Lord in writing, that say, I desire not the death of the sinner, but his repentance, and that he should turn from his wickedness and live." It was for this that He came down, to save sinners, to raise the dead, to quicken lost lives, to give light to those in darkness. In truth He came, and called us to the adoption of sons, to a holy city which is ever at peace, to the life that never dies, to glory incorruptible. Only let us put a good finish to our beginning. Let us abide in poverty, in the condition of strangers, in suffering affliction, in petition to God, knocking importunately at the door. Near as the body is to the soul, the Lord is nearer, to come and open the locked doors of the heart, and to bestow on us the riches of heaven. He is good and kind to man, and His promises cannot lie, if only we continue seeking Him to the end. Glory be to the compassions of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Ghost for ever. Amen.

HOMILY XII

Concerning the state of Adam before he transgressed God's commandment, and after he had lost both his own image and the heavenly. The Homily contains some very profitable questions. I. ADAM, on transgressing the commandment, suffered a twofold disaster. He lost the pure and lovely possession of his nature, which was after the image and likeness of God; and he lost also that very image in which was laid up for him according to promise all the heavenly inheritance. Suppose there were a coin, bearing the image of the king, and it were stamped afresh with a wrong stamp; the gold is lost, and the image is of no value. Such was the disaster which befell Adam. Great riches and a great inheritance had been prepared for him. Suppose there were a great estate, and it had many sources of revenue in it; here a flourishing vineyard, there fruitful fields, there flocks and herds, there gold and silver; so valuable was the estate before the disobedience, the estate consisting in Adam's own vessel. But when he entertained evil intentions and thoughts, he was lost from God.

2. We do not say, however, that everything was lost, and destroyed, and died. He died from, God, but to his own nature he lives. For behold, the whole world walks the earth, and does its business. But God's eye sees their mind and their imaginations, and as it were looks round them and past them, and makes no communion with them, because nothing that they think is well-pleasing to God. If there are houses of promiscuous reception and of ill-fame, and places where disorders and debaucheries are carried on godly people, as they pass, loathe them, and seeing refuse to see, for these things are to them dead. So God casts an eye upon those who have revolted from His word and from His commandment, but His eye passes on from them, and makes no communion there, nor can the Lord find a resting-place in their thoughts. 3. Question. How can any one be poor in spirit, especially when he is inwardly conscious that he is a changed man, and has made progress, and has come to a knowledge and understanding which he did not possess before?

Answer. Until a man acquires these things and makes progress, he is not poor in spirit, but has some opinion of himself; but when he comes to this understanding and point of progress, grace itself teaches him to be poor in spirit, which means that

a man being righteous and chosen of God does not esteem himself to be anything, but holds his soul in abasement and disregard, as if he knew nothing and had nothing, though he knows and has. This is a fixed thing, like a law of nature, in the mind of men. Do you not see how our forefather Abraham, elect as he was, described himself as dust and ashes, and David, anointed to be king, had God with him, and yet what does he say? I am a worm and no man, a very scorn of men, and the outcast of the people.

4. Those therefore who desire to be fellow-heirs with these, and fellow-citizens of the heavenly city, and to be glorified with them, ought to have this humility of mind, and not to think themselves to be anything, but to keep the heart contrite. Though grace works after a different manner in each individual Christian, and has a diversity of members, yet all are of one city, of the same mind, of the same tongue, recognising one another. As there are many members in the body, but one soul is in them all and moves them, so one Spirit works differently in all, but they are of one city, and of one way. All the righteous have gone the straight and narrow way, being persecuted, tormented, reviled, living in goatskins, in dens, in caves of the earth. The apostles likewise say, Even unto this hour we both hunger and thirst, and are naked, and reviled, and have no certain dwelling-place. Some of them were beheaded, some crucified, others afflicted in various ways. And the Lord of prophets and apostles Himself, how did He fare, as if He had forgotten His divine glory? He was made an example for us; He wore in mockery a crown of thorns upon His head; He submitted to spittings, buffets, and the cross.

5. If God so fared on earth, thou oughtest also to copy Him. The apostles and the prophets fared thus, and we, if we would be built upon the foundation of the Lord and of the apostles, ought to copy them. The apostle says by the Holy Spirit, Be ye imitators of me, as I am of Christ. But if thou lovest the glories of men, and desirest to be worshipped, and seekest repose, thou art turned out of the way. It behoves thee to be crucified with the Crucified, to suffer with Him that suffered, that so thou mayest be glorified with Him that is glorified. The bride must needs suffer with the Bridegroom, and so become partner and fellow heir with Christ. It is not feasible, without sufferings, and without the rough, straight, narrow way, to enter into the city of the saints, and be at rest, and reign with the King to ages without end.

6. Question. You said that Adam lost both his own image and the heavenly one. If then he partook of the heavenly image, had he the Holy Ghost? Answer. So long as the Word of God was with him, and the commandment, everything was his. The Word Himself was to him an inheritance; He was his clothing, and a glory that was his defence; He was his instruction. He suggested to him to give all things names: “Call this heaven, this sun, this moon, this earth, this a bird, this a beast, this a tree;” as he was taught, so he named them. 7. Question. Had he

the experience and fellowship of the Spirit? Answer. The Word Himself being with him was everything to him, whether knowledge, or experience, or inheritance, or instruction. What does John say of the Word? In the beginning was the Word. You see that the Word was everything. If there was also an outward glory with him, let us take no offence at it; for it says that they were naked, and that they did not look at each other; and after transgressing the commandment they saw that they were naked, and were ashamed.

8. Question. Then before this, were they clothed with the glory of God for a cloak? Answer. As in the case of the prophets, the Spirit wrought in them and taught them, and was within them, and appeared to them outwardly, so with Adam. The Spirit, when it pleased Him, was with him, and taught him, and suggested, "Speak thus," and he said it. For the Word was all things to him, and so long as he abode in the commandment he was a friend of God. And yet why should we be surprised if in spite of such conditions of existence he transgressed the commandment? Those who have been filled with the Holy Ghost still have the thoughts of nature, and have the will to comply with them. Thus Adam, though present with God in paradise, transgressed of himself by his own will, and obeyed the evil side. Still, even after the transgression, he had knowledge.

9. Question. What kind of knowledge? Answer. When a robber is brought into court, and the trial begins, and the magistrate says to him, "When you were doing these wrong things, did you not know that you would be liable to be taken and put to death?" He has not the face to say "No." He knew, and when punishment ensues, he remembers and confesses all. And does not the whoremonger know that he is doing wrong? And the man who is stealing, does he not know that it is a sin? Thus, even without the scriptures, do not men know from natural reasoning that there is a God? They cannot say in that day, "We did not know that Thou, God, art." He says to them, "Did ye not know the thunders and lightnings from heaven, that there is a God who governs the creation?" Why then did the devils cry out, Thou art the Son of God; why art Thou come to torment us before the time? Even now at the shrines of martyrs they say, "You burn me, you burn me." They did not, then, know the tree of the knowledge of good and evil. The transgression of Adam conveyed the knowledge.

10. Every one begins to ask, what state Adam was in, and what happened to him. Adam himself received the knowledge of good and evil. We hear from the scriptures that he was in a state of honour and purity, and on transgressing the commandment he was cast out of paradise, and God was wroth with him. So he learns what things are good for him; and having learnt what things are evil he secures himself, that he may not sin any more and fall into the condemnation of death. Now we know that the whole creation of God is governed by God. He it was that made heaven and earth, animals, creeping things, beasts. We see them all, but do not know the

number of them. What man is there that knows? God only, who is in all things, even in the unborn offspring of the animals. Does He not know the things that are under the earth, and that are above the heavens?

11. Let us then leave these things, and rather seek, like good men of business, to gain possession of a heavenly inheritance and the things that are profitable to our souls. Let us learn to gain possessions which will stay by us. If you, who are but human, begin to search the thoughts of God, and to say, "I have found out something, and comprehend it," the human mind will be found surpassing the thoughts of God. But in this you are much mistaken; and the more you desire to search and get to the bottom, the more you get out of your depth, and fail to comprehend anything. Those visitations of His which happen to you—what He works day by day in you, and how—these are beyond expression or comprehension; you can do nothing but receive them with thankfulness, and believe. Have you been able to take cognisance of your own soul from the time when you were born till now? If so, declare to me the thoughts that spring up in you from dawn to dusk. Tell me the cogitations of three days. Nay, you cannot. If then you could not comprehend the thoughts of your own soul, how can you find out the thoughts and mind of God?

12. Nay, eat as much bread as you find, and leave the wide earth to pursue its way; go to the brink of the river, and drink as much as you need, and pass on, and seek not to know whence it comes, or how it flows. Do your best to have your foot cured, or the disease of your eye, that you may see the light of the sun, but do not enquire how much light the sun has, or how high it rises. The animal which is profitable for your use, that take: why do you go off to the hills and try to discover how many wild asses and other beasts dwell there? The babe, when it comes to its mother's breast, takes the milk and thrives; it does not search for the root and well-spring from which it flows so. It sucks the milk, and empties the whole measure; and another hour passes—the breast fills up. The babe knows nothing of it, nor the mother either, although the supply proceeds from all her members. If then, you seek the Lord in the depth, there you find Him. If you seek in the water, you find Him there, doing wonders. If you seek Him in the den, there you find Him between two lions, guarding the righteous Daniel. If you seek Him in fire, there you find Him, succouring His servants. If you seek Him in the mountain, there you find Him with Elias and Moses. He is everywhere—beneath the earth, and above the heavens, and within us as well. He is everywhere. So too your own soul is near you, and within you, and without you; for wherever you please, in countries far away, there your mind is, whether westward or eastward, or in the skies; there it is found.

13. Let us then seek above all things to have the brand and seal of the Lord upon us; because in the day of judgment, when the severity of God is shewn, and all the

tribes of the earth, even all Adam, are gathered together, when the good Shepherd calls His own flock, all those who have the brand recognise their own Shepherd, and the Shepherd takes knowledge of those who have His own seal, and gathers them together from all the nations. Those that are His hear His voice, and go behind Him. The world is divided into two parts, and one flock is dark, which goes into eternal fire, and one is full of light, which is led up to the heavenly rest. What we now make our own, within our souls, the same then shines and is manifested, and clothes our bodies with glory.

14. As in the season of the month of Xanthicus, the roots buried in the earth put forth their own fruits, and their own blossoms and beauties, and bear fruit, and the good roots are manifested, and those that have thorns are made manifest, so in that day each one makes evident by his own body what he has done. The good things and the bad are alike manifested. There lies all the judgment and the retribution. There is another food besides this visible food. When Moses went up into the mount, he fasted forty days. He went up a man and no more; he came down possessed of God. Now see; we behold in ourselves that if the body is not supported by victuals, in a few days it is worn out; yet when Moses had fasted for forty days, he came down more full of vigour than all of them. It was because he was fed by God, and his body was provided with another and a heavenly food. The Word of God was made food to him, and he had a glory in his countenance. What happened to him was an example. That glory now shines inwardly in the hearts of Christians; at the resurrection, their bodies are covered, as they rise, with another, a divine, raiment, and are fed with a heavenly meat.

15. Question. What is meant by a woman praying with her head uncovered? Answer. Because in the apostles' time they wore their hair loose for a covering. For this reason the Lord and the apostles came into the world of creation, and taught it sobriety. The woman, however, stands as a type of the church. Whereas in the visible world the women at that time wore their hair undone for a covering, the church clothes and wraps her children in divine and glorified garments. And in the old days of the church of Israel the congregation was one, and it was covered by the Spirit, and they were clothed with the Spirit for a glory, although they themselves did not correspond with it. Well, the word "church" is used of the individual soul, as well as of many; for the soul gathers together all her faculties and is thus a church to God. For the soul was fitted for communion with the heavenly Bridegroom, and mingles with the heavenly One. This is observed both of the many and of the one. Thus the prophet says of Jerusalem, I found thee desolate and naked, and I clothed thee, and so forth, as if he spoke of a single person.

16. Question. What does it mean when Martha said to the Lord about Mary, "I am hard at work about many things, while she sits beside Thee"? Answer. What Mary might well have said to Martha, the Lord, anticipating her, replied—that she had

left everything to sit at the Lord's feet, and bless God all day long. You see, her sitting was for love's sake. But that God's word may be made clearer, listen to this. If any one loves Jesus, and attends to Him in earnest, and not in a casual way, but in love abides by Him, God is already devising to make some return to that soul for its love, although the man does not know what he is to receive, or what portion God is about to give to the soul. When Mary loved Him, and sat at His feet, the gift that was added to her was no casual gift; He gave her a certain hidden virtue from His own substance. The very words which God spoke in peace to Mary were so many spirits, and a power; and these words entering into her heart were made a soul to her soul and a spirit to her spirit, and a divine power was filled into her heart. Where that power shall lodge, it cannot but abide permanently, as a possession not to be taken away. For this reason the Lord, who knew what He gave her, said Mary hath chosen the good part. But after a time the things which Martha had done so eagerly in the way of service brought her to that gift of grace. She too received divine power in her soul.

17. What is there to be surprised at if those who came to the Lord, and were personally attached to Him, received His power, when the apostles spoke the word, and the Holy Ghost fell on those who believed? Cornelius received power from the word which he heard; how much more, when the Lord spoke the word to Mary, or to Zacchæus, or to the sinful woman who let her hair down and wiped the Lord's feet, or to the woman of Samaria, or to the robber, did power go out, and the Holy Ghost was mingled with their souls? And still those who love God, and leave all things, and persevere in prayer, are taught in secret things that they knew not. The truth itself is manifested to them, according to their choice, and teaches them, I am the truth. The apostles themselves, before the crucifixion, by continuing with the Lord, saw great signs—how the lepers were cleansed and the dead raised up, and knew not how divine power goes up and down and ministers in the heart, and that they should be spiritually born again, and mingled with the heavenly soul, and become a new creation. Because of the signs which He did, they loved the Lord. But the Lord said to them, "Why marvel ye at the signs? I give unto you a great inheritance, which the whole world hath not."

18. His words seemed strange to them, until He rose from the dead, and carried up His body on our behalf above the heavens; and then the Paraclete Spirit entered into their souls and was mingled with them, and the Truth in person manifests itself in faithful souls, and the heavenly Man comes to be with the man that thou art, and becomes one communion with thee. As many as give themselves to serve, and eagerly do all things out of zeal and faith and the love of God, that very service after a time brings them into the knowledge of the truth itself. The Lord is manifested to their souls, and teaches them the ways of the Holy Ghost. Glory and worship to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Ghost, for ever. Amen.

HOMILY XIII

What fruit God expects from Christians. 1. ALL things that are seen were created by God, and He gave them to men for refreshment and enjoyment, and He gave them also a law of righteousness. But from the time of Christ's coming God seeks other fruit, and another righteousness, purity of the heart, a good conscience, kind words, holy and good thoughts, and all the discipline of the saints. The Lord says, "Except your righteousness exceed that of the scribes and Pharisees, ye cannot enter into the kingdom of heaven. In the law it is written, Thou shalt not commit fornication; but I say unto you, Thou shalt not desire, neither shalt thou be angry." He who wishes to be a friend of God, and a brother and son of Christ, must do something more than other men, that is, to consecrate heart and mind themselves, and to stretch up his thoughts towards God. In this way God secretly gives life and help to the heart, and entrusts Himself to it. When a man gives God his secret things, that is, his mind and thoughts, not occupying himself elsewhere, nor wandering away, but putting constraint upon himself, then the Lord deems him worthy of mysteries, in greater sanctity and purity, and gives him heavenly food and spiritual drink.

2. A man who is possessed of much substance, and has both servants and children, gives a different kind of food to the servants from what he gives to his own born children, because the children are their father's heirs, and eat with him, being made like to their father. Even so Christ, the true Master of the house, who created all things Himself, nourishes the evil and the unthankful, but the children whom He has begotten of His own substance, to whom He has imparted of His grace, in whom the Lord is formed, these He provides beyond others with special refreshment and diet and meat and drink. Going up and down with Jesus their Father, they receive the gift of Himself, as the Lord says, He that eateth My flesh and drinketh My blood dwelleth in Me, and I in him, and he shall not see death. Those who possess the true inheritance have been begotten as sons of a heavenly Father, and pass their time in their Father's house, as the Lord says, The servant abideth not in the house, but the son abideth for ever.

3. If we then desire to be born of the heavenly Father, we ought to do something that exceeds the rest of mankind—diligence, effort, zeal, love, a good conversation, to be in faith and fear, as desiring to attain good things of such magnitude, and to inherit God. The Lord, it says, is the portion of mine inheritance and of my cup. Thus the Lord, beholding our good purpose and our endurance, performs His mercy, and cleanses us from the defilement of sin, and from the eternal fire that is in us, and makes us meet for the kingdom. Glory to His tender compassion and to the good pleasure shewn of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost. Amen.

HOMILY XIV

Those who give their thoughts and their mind to God do so in the hope that the eyes of their heart may be enlightened, and God vouchsafes to them mysteries in the greatest sanctity and purity, and imparts to them of His grace. What we who desire to attain the good things of heaven ought to do. Then the apostles and the prophets are compared to the sun's rays coming in at a window. The Homily also teaches what is Satan's "Earth," and what that of the angels, and that both are intangible and invisible. 1. ALL works visibly done in the world are done in hope, with a view to partaking of the results of the labour. If it were not for the assurance of enjoyment from the toil, no advantage would be gained. The husbandman sows in hope of fruits, and is supported under his labours by the expectation. He that plougheth, the apostle says, plougheth in hope. He that takes a wife, does it in hope of having heirs. The merchant commits himself to the sea and the risk of death for the sake of gain. So also in the Kingdom of Heaven a man gives himself up in hope that the eyes of his heart may be enlightened, withdrawing from the affairs of this life, and keeping himself free for prayers and supplications, looking for the Lord, when He shall come and manifest Himself to him, and shall cleanse him from the sin that dwells in him.

2. He puts no confidence, however, in his labours and manner of life, until he obtains the things hoped for, until the Lord comes and dwells in him in the full experience and energy of the Spirit. And when he tastes the goodness of the Lord, and delights in the fruits of the Spirit, and the veil of darkness is taken away, and the light of Christ shines upon him and works in him in joy unspeakable, then is he fully satisfied, having the Lord with him in great affection, as the merchant in the illustration rejoices when he has gained. But he still has conflict and fear from the robber spirits of wickedness, lest he should grow slack and lose his labour, before he is accepted in the kingdom of heaven, in the Jerusalem which is above. 3. Let us then beseech God that He would put off from us the old man, and put on us the heavenly Christ, here and now, so that being in gladness, and thus being led by Him, we shall be in great tranquillity. The Lord, who desires to fill us with the taste of the kingdom, says, Without Me ye can do nothing.

And yet He knew how to enlighten many by means of the apostles. They were but creatures, but they nourished their fellow servants. Thoughts that were dead and corrupted they quickened and restored to life by their good conversation and instruction. It is possible for one creature to nourish and quicken another. The clouds, the rain and the sun, when so commanded, quicken the seeds of wheat or barley, though they are only creatures. Like light which comes in through a window, while the sun sends out his beams upon all the world, so the prophets were the lights of their own house of Israel, and no more; but the apostles were suns, shooting out their beams into all the quarters of the world. 4. Well, there is an "earth," on which the beasts dwell; and there is an "earth" in the air, in which the birds walk and live. If the birds wish to stand or walk on land, there are fowlers to catch them. The fishes too have an "earth," which is the water of the sea. Wherever anything is born, on land or in the air, there it has its existence, its sustenance, and its pleasure. In the same way there is a Satanic "earth" and home, where the powers of darkness and the spirits of wickedness live and walk and take their pleasure; and there is a luminous "earth" of the Godhead, where the camps of angels and of holy spirits walk and take pleasure. That darksome earth cannot be seen with the eyes of this body, nor be felt; neither is the luminous earth of the Godhead felt, or seen by the fleshly eyes. But to those who are spiritual both are discernible to the heart's eye, that Satanic earth of darkness and the luminous earth of the Godhead.

5. The fable of those without says that there are mountains, which are fiery, because there is fire in them, and there are there animals like sheep. Those who hunt them make iron wheels, and cast hooks and throw them into the fire, because those animals have fire for their meat, and fire for their drink, their pleasure, their increase, and their life. Fire is everything to them. If you bring them out into another air, they die. When their coats are dirtied, they are not washed in water, but in the fire, and they get cleaner and whiter. Christians in like manner have that heavenly fire for their meat. That is their pleasure. That cleanses, and washes, and sanctifies their heart. That brings them to increase. That is their air and their life. If they go out of it, they are destroyed by the evil spirit, as the animals in the fable die when they leave the fire, as the fish when they leave the waters. As fourfooted beasts cast into the sea are drowned, as birds walking on the ground are taken by the fowlers, so the soul which will not stay in that "earth" is stifled and perishes. If it has not that divine fire for meat and drink and raiment, and cleansing of heart and sanctification of soul, it is taken by the evil spirits and demolished. But as for us, let us enquire in earnest whether we have been sown in that unseen "earth," and engrafted in the heavenly vine. Glory be to, His mercies. Amen.

HOMILY XV

This Homily teaches at large how the soul ought to behave herself in holiness and chastity and purity towards her Spouse Christ Jesus, the Saviour of the World. It contains also certain discussions full of great instruction, viz., whether at the resurrection all the members are raised up, and a great many more concerning Evil, and Grace, and Free Will, and the dignity of human nature. 1. A VERY wealthy man, a glorious king, sets his heart, it may be, on a poor woman, who possesses nothing but her own person. He becomes her lover, and desires to take her to live with him as his spouse. Then, if she shows all benevolence to her husband, retaining also her love to him, lo! that poor needy woman, who possessed nothing, finds herself mistress of all that belongs to her husband. If, on the other hand, she should act contrary to duty and obligation, and should behave improperly in her husband's house, she is then cast out with disgrace and contumely, putting her two hands upon her head, as is said figuratively in the law of Moses concerning a wife who is disorderly and of no advantage to her husband. Then sorrow and great mourning become hers, while she reflects what wealth she is fallen from, and what glory has passed away from her, dishonoured as she is because of her folly.

2. In like manner a soul which Christ the heavenly Bridegroom has espoused for mystical divine fellowship with Himself, and which has tasted of the heavenly riches, ought with great diligence sincerely to please Christ, her heavenly Wooer, and dutifully and properly to fulfil the service of the Spirit entrusted to her, to please God in all things, and to grieve the Spirit in nothing, and duly to preserve the modesty and love towards him in which beauty lies, and to behave herself well in the house of the heavenly King in all benevolence for the grace given to her. Behold, a soul like this is made mistress of all the good things of the Lord, and even the glorious body of His Godhead becomes hers. But if she fail, and act contrary to duty in her service, and do not the things that please Him, and follow not His will, nor co-operate with the grace of the Spirit which is with her, then she is deprived of her honours with disgrace and indignity, and banished from life, as being unprofitable and unfit for the fellowship of the heavenly King. Then over that soul there is woe and lamentation and weeping among all holy spirits unseen. Angels, powers, apostles, prophets, martyrs weep over her.

3. For as there is joy in heaven, the Lord tells us, over one sinner that repenteth, so is there great woe and weeping in heaven over one soul that falls away from the eternal life. As on earth, when a rich man dies, he is accompanied out of life with music and dirge and wailing by his own brethren and kinsfolk and friends and acquaintances, so over that soul all the saints mourn with dirges and sad music. The Bible says the same thing elsewhere in figurative language. The pine is fallen, it says, mourn, ye cedars. For as Israel, when he was thought to please the Lord—though he never pleased Him as he ought—had a pillar of cloud to overshadow him, and a pillar of fire to give him shine; saw the sea divide before him, water clear proceeding out of the rock; but when their mind and intention turned from God, then they were delivered to serpents, or to their enemies, being led away in sore captivities and tormented with bitter bondage. This the Spirit mystically declared in the prophet Ezekiel also, saying of such a soul, as of Jerusalem, I found thee naked in the wilderness, and I washed thee from the water of thine uncleanness, and I clothed thee with raiment, and put bracelets upon thy hands, and chains about thy neck, and earrings in thine ears, and thou becamest renowned among all the heathen. Fine flour and oil and honey didst thou eat, and after all thou didst forget My benefits, and wentest after thy lovers, and didst commit fornication with shame.

4. So likewise the Spirit utters warning to the soul which through grace knows God, which after being cleansed from its former sins and adorned with the ornaments of the Holy Ghost, and after partaking of the divine and heavenly food, does not behave dutifully with much discretion, and does not properly preserve benevolence and love for Christ the heavenly Bridegroom, and so is rejected and put away from the life of which at one time it was a partaker. For Satan can raise and exalt himself even against those who have reached such measures as these; even against those who have known God in grace and power, sin still lifts itself up and strives to overthrow them. We must therefore strive, and watch over ourselves intelligently, to work out our own salvation with fear and trembling, as it is written. As many as are made partakers of the Spirit of Christ, see that you do not behave contemptuously in anything, small or great, and do no despite to the grace of the Spirit, that you may not be excluded from the life of which you have already been made partakers.

5. I will repeat this in a. different character. If a servant comes into a palace, to be employed upon the vessels used there, he takes of what belongs to the king—he himself has nothing to bring—and ministers to the king with the king’s own vessels. Here he needs much intelligence and judgment, that he may make no mistake in serving, by bringing one dish to the royal table when he should bring another, but should serve the courses, first and last, in the right succession. If through ignorance and want of judgment he does not serve the king in the right order, it is as much as his place and life are worth. In like manner a soul which is

serving God in grace and the Spirit requires much discretion and knowledge, that it may commit no fault with the vessels of God, that is, in the service of the Spirit, by not keeping its own will in harmony with grace. It is possible in the service of the Spirit, performed secretly by the inner man, for the soul to serve the Lord in vessels of its own, that is, with its own spirit; but God cannot be served without God's vessels, that is, without grace, so as to please Him in all His will.

6. And when grace is received, there is then great need of intelligence and discretion—which themselves are given by God to the soul that seeks them from Him—in order to serve Him acceptably in the Spirit which is received, and not to be surprised into a mistake by sin, led astray by ignorance and presumption and carelessness, and acting contrary to what the Lord's will demands; because punishment and death and mourning will be to such a soul. The holy apostle says, Lest, when I have preached to others, I myself should be a castaway. You see what fear he had, though he was God's apostle. Let us then beseech God that we, as many as have obtained the grace of God, may minister the service of the Spirit according to His will, in more than an ordinary way, and may keep no company with the notion of contempt, in order that thus we may live in a manner pleasing to Him, and may serve Him with spiritual service according to His will, and having done this may inherit eternal life.

7. Some one is compassed with infirmity. It happens that some of his members are sound, his eyesight perhaps, or something else, but the rest of his members are disabled. So it is in the spiritual world. A man may perhaps be sound in three members of his spirit, but he is not perfect or that. You see how many stages and measures of the Spirit there are, how the mischief is strained out and refined off bit by bit, and not all at once. The Lord's whole providence and government, the rising of the sun, and everything that He has created, are for the sake of the kingdom, which the elect are to inherit, for the constitution of the kingdom of peace and concord. 8. Christians therefore ought to strive continually, and never to pass judgment on anyone—no, not upon the harlot on the street, or upon open sinners and disorderly persons—but to regard all men with singleness of intention and purity of eye, so that it may become like a fixed law of nature to despise no one, to judge no one, to abhor no one, to make no distinctions between them. If you see a man with one eye, be not divided in your heart, but look upon him as if he were whole. If a man is maimed of one hand, see him as not maimed, the lame as straight, the palsied as whole. This is purity of heart, when you see sinners or sick people, to have compassion on them and be tenderhearted towards them. It happens sometimes that the saints of the Lord sit in theatres and behold the deceit of the world. According to the inner man they are conversing with God, while according to the outer man they appear to men as contemplating what goes on in the world.

9. Worldly people are under one influence from the spirit of error, to mind earthly things; Christians have another purpose, another mind; they are of another world, another city. The Spirit of God has fellowship with their souls, and they tread down the adversary. It is written, The last enemy that is destroyed is death. The godly are masters of all things; but those who are slack in faith and sinners are the slaves of all, and the fire burns them, and the stone and the sword slay them, and in the end devils have dominion over them. 10. Question. In the resurrection do all the members rise again?

Answer. To God all things are easy; and He has so promised, though to human frailty and thought it appears impossible. For as God took of the dust and the earth, and constituted the body as a different kind of thing, not at all resembling the earth, and made many sorts of elements in it, such as hair, and skin, and bones, and sinews; or as a needle thrown into the fire changes its colour and is converted into fire, although the nature of iron is not taken away, but still subsists; so in the resurrection all the members, are raised up, and not a hair perishes, as it is written, and all become light-like, all are plunged in light and fire, and changed, and yet are not, as some say, resolved and turned into fire, with nothing of their natural substance left. Peter is Peter, and Paul is Paul, and Philip is Philip. Each one remains in his own nature and personality, though filled with the Spirit. If you say that the nature is resolved, then Peter and Paul are no more, and God is everywhere and in all directions, and neither those who go away into hell are conscious of their punishment, nor are those who go into the kingdom conscious of the benefit, II. Suppose there were a garden, planted with all sorts of fruit-trees, and there were in it pear, or apple, and vine, with fruit and leaves; and suppose the garden and all the trees and their leaves were changed and altered into another nature, and the former ones became light-like; so men are altered at the resurrection, and their members become holy and light-like.

12. The men of God, then, ought to prepare themselves for conflict and combat. As a brave young man bears the blows that fall on him, and the wrestling match, and hits back, so Christians ought to put up with afflictions without and wars within, in order that, though belaboured, they may conquer by endurance. That is the Christian’s road. Where the Holy Ghost is, there follow, like a shadow, persecution and wrestling. You see the prophets, how they were persecuted by their countrymen from first to last, while the Holy Ghost worked upon them. You see how the Lord, who is the Way and the Truth, was persecuted, not by another nation, but by His own. By His own race of Israel He was persecuted and crucified. So was it with the apostles. The Paraclete Spirit removed from the quarter whence the cross came, and passed to the Christians. No Jew was persecuted; Christians were the only martyrs. For this reason they ought not to be surprised. The truth must needs be persecuted.

13. Question. Some say that evil enters from without, and that if a man pleases, he does not admit it, but sends it off. Answer. As the serpent spoke to Eve, and because of her compliance gained admission within, so to this day sin, which is without, gains admission through man's compliance. Sin has power and liberty to enter into the heart. For our thoughts are not external to us, but from within, out of the heart. The apostle says, I will that the men pray, without wrath and evil disputations. For there are thoughts proceeding out of the heart, as the Gospel says. Go to prayer, and observe thy heart and mind, and determine to send up thy prayer to God pure, and look well there, whether there be nothing to hinder it, whether the prayer be pure, whether thy mind is wholly occupied with the Lord, as the husbandman's with his husbandry, the married man's with his wife, the merchant's with his merchandise; or whether thou bendest thy knees to prayer, while others pluck thy thoughts asunder.

14. But you say that the Lord came and condemned sin by the cross, and that it is now within no longer. Suppose a soldier puts up his chariot at some one's house, he is free when he pleases to go in and out of that house. So sin is free to make its arguments heard in the heart. It is written, Satan entered into the heart of Judas. But if you say that by Christ's coming sin was condemned, and that after baptism evil is no more at liberty to argue in the heart, do you not know that from the advent of the Lord to this day all that have been baptized have had bad thoughts at times? Have not some of them turned to vainglory, or to fornication, or to gluttony? All the worldly people dwelling within the pale of the church, are their hearts spotless and pure? Or do we find that many sins are committed after baptism, and that many live in sin? So even after baptism the thief is free to enter, and to do what he likes.

15. It is written, Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart. But thou sayest, "I do love; and I have the Holy Spirit." Hast thou constant remembrance, and passionate affection, and burning ardour for the Lord? Art thou fast bound that way day and night? If thou hast a love like that, thou art pure; but if not, then search thou still, whether, if earthly business or foul and evil thoughts come thy way, thou hast no inclination to them, or whether thy soul is always drawn to love and longing after God. The thoughts of the world drag the mind down to earthly and corruptible things, and do not suffer it to love God or to remember the Lord. And oftentimes, on the other hand, the unlearned man goes to prayer, and bends the knee, and his mind enters into rest, and deep as he may dig and get below, the wall of evil that withstands him breaks down, and he enters into vision and wisdom, where potentates and wise men and orators cannot penetrate to understand and know the delicacy of his mind, since he is engrossed in divine mysteries. One who is inexperienced in judging of hearts does not know how to value them, for lack of experience. Well, Christians abhor the glorious things of the earth, and account them but dung in comparison with the magnificence of those things—a magnificence which works effectually in them.

16. Question. Is it possible for a man who has a gift of grace to fall? Answer. If he gets careless, he falls. The adversaries never are idle or shirk battle. How much more then ought you never to cease from the quest of God? For great is your loss if you are careless, although you may think yourself to be exercised in the very mystery of grace. 17. Question. Does grace remain after a man has fallen? Answer. It is God's desire to bring the man back to life, and He disposes him to weep his way back and to repent. If it does remain, it is for the purpose of making you a surer workman in repenting of those things by which you formerly did amiss. 18. Question. Are those who are perfect liable to difficulty or warfare, or are they wholly free from anxiety?

Answer. The adversary never ceases from warring. Satan is merciless in his hatred of men; therefore he never shirks from warring against every man. But he is not seen to set upon all to the same degree. Governors of provinces and counts at court pay tribute to the emperor; but the man in that position has such confidence in his wealth of gold and silver that he meets his taxes out of superfluous income, and feels no loss. A man who gives alms never feels it a loss, and in the same way Satan considers these things no part of his serious business. But take a poor man, destitute even of daily food; he is beaten and tortured, because he cannot pay the tax; he spends his time in being scraped and harried, and cannot die; while another man is commanded to lose his head, and perishes at a moment's notice. So it is among Christians. There are some who are vigorously warred upon and scraped by sin; and yet they become the firmer and wiser for the wars, despising the power of the adversary, and they are in no peril in that quarter, because they are unfallen and assured of their own salvation, because they have often practised in the war with evil, and have gained experience. Having God with them, they are led and are at rest. 19. Others, however, who have not yet had practice, if they fall into a single difficulty, and war is stirred against them, sink at once into destruction and perdition.

Like travellers in a city intending to see their dear ones and acquaintances, who meet many people in the market-places, but are not stopped by them, because their aim is to find their friends, and when they knock at the door outside and call, their dear ones open to them with joy; but if they loiter in the market-places, and are deluded or detained by those who encounter them, the door is shut, and no one opens to them; so those who press forward to reach our Master, Christ the true Beloved, ought to look down upon all others and take no notice of them. Counts and governors, who have entrance into the palace to the king, are in much fear, how they shall present their accounts, and lest for some mistake in answering for themselves they should be brought to trial and to punishment; but simple country folk, who have never set eyes on a prince, pass their days without anxiety. That is the way with this world beneath the sky, from kings down to the poor. Knowing nothing of the glory of Christ, they care only about matters of this life. Not readily

does any one bethink him of the day of judgment. But those who in thought enter in before Christ's judgment seat, where His throne is, and pass their lives in His presence, are in fear and trembling continually, to make no mistake concerning His holy commandments.

20. When the rich men of the earth have brought much fruit into their garners, they set to work again every day to get more, in order to have plenty, and not run short. If they presume upon the wealth laid up in the garners, and take things easily and add no more, but use up what they have stored already, they soon sink into want and poverty. So they have to labour and add, enlarging their intake, that they may not get behindhand. In Christianity, to taste of the grace of God is like that. Taste, it says, and see how gracious the Lord is. This tasting is an effectual power of the Spirit in full certainty, ministering in the heart. As many as are the sons of light, and of the ministry of the New Covenant in the Holy Ghost, these have nothing to learn from men; they are taught of God. Grace itself writes upon their hearts the laws of the Spirit. They ought not therefore to rest their assurance only upon the scriptures that are written in ink; the grace of God writes the laws of the Spirit and the mysteries of heaven upon the tables of the heart as well. For the heart governs and reigns over the whole bodily organism; and when grace possesses the ranges of the heart, it reigns over all the members and the thoughts. For there, in the heart, is the mind, and all the faculties of the soul, and its expectation; therefore grace penetrates also to all the members of the body.

21. On the other hand, as many as are sons of darkness, sin reigns over their heart, and penetrates to all their members, for out of their hearts proceed evil thoughts, and thus diffused puts the man in darkness. Those who say that evil is not born and bred in man, may have no anxiety about to-morrow, nor any desire either. For a certain length of time, evil ceases to cause trouble in them by suggesting some object of desire, so that a man will affirm on oath, "Such a passion no longer assails me." After a short while he is consumed with the desire, so that he is found guilty of perjury into the bargain. As water runs through a pipe, so does sin through the heart and thoughts. As many as will not have this notion, are refuted and mocked by sin itself, even if sin did not wish to triumph; for evil endeavours to escape notice and to be hidden in the mind of man.

22. If a man loves God, then God also mingles His love with him. Once trusted by man, He adds to him the trust of heaven, and the man becomes a twofold being. Whatever part of yourself you offer to Him, He mingles with your soul a like part of His own, that all that you do may be purely done, and your love pure and your prayer pure. Great is the dignity of man. See how mighty are the heaven and the earth, the sun and the moon; but the Lord was not pleased to rest in them, but in man only. Man, therefore, is of more value than all created things—I may venture to say, not only than visible creatures, but invisible likewise, even than the

ministering spirits. It was not of Michael and Gabriel, the archangels, that He said, Let us make them after Our image and likeness, but about the spiritual substance of man, I mean his immortal soul. For it is written, The angels of the Lord encamp round about them that fear Him.

The material creatures are bound by an unchangeable kind of nature. 23. Heaven was once established for good and all—the sun, the moon, the earth—and the Lord had no pleasure in them, though they cannot alter from what they were created, neither have they any will. But you are for this reason after the image and likeness of God, because, as God is His own Master, and does what pleases Him—and, if He pleases, has power to send the righteous to hell and sinners into the kingdom, but He does not choose to do so, nor does He admit the thought, for the Lord is a righteous judge—so are you your own master, and if you choose to perish, you are of alterable nature. If you choose to blaspheme, to concoct poisons, to murder somebody, no one opposes or hinders you. If a man chooses, he is subject to God, and walks in the way of righteousness, and restrains his desires. This mind of ours is evenly balanced, having power to subdue by resolute thoughts the impulses and shameful desires of evil.

24. If in a great house, where there are things of gold and silver, and garments of various kinds, and money, young men and women who live there suppress their own minds, though nature, by reason of indwelling sin, covets them all, and because of the human fear of their masters they check the impulses of desire, how much more, where the fear of God is, ought a man to fight and counteract the indwelling evil. God has enjoined on thee what thou canst do. The nature of irrational animals is tied. The serpent’s nature is bitter and venomous; therefore all serpents are such. The wolf is habitually ravenous; all wolves are of the same nature. The lamb’s gentleness makes it a prey; all lambs are of the same nature. The dove is guileless and harmless; all doves are of the same nature. But man is not like that. One man is like a ravening wolf; another, like the lamb, is a prey. Both are of the stock of mankind. 25. One man is not satisfied with his own wife, but goes a-whoring, while another does not so much as suffer a desire to rise in his heart. One man plunders his neighbour’s goods; another, in piety towards God, gives away his own. You see how alterable this nature is. You find it inclining to evil, you find it inclining again to good. In both cases it is in a position to assent to such action as it likes.

Nature, then, is susceptible both of good and evil, either of divine grace or of the contrary power, but is under no compulsion. Adam himself to begin with, being in a state of purity, was sovereign of his own thoughts; but from the time that he transgressed the commandment, mountains grievous to be borne lie on his mind, and the thoughts of evil mingling with it are all made his own, and yet not one of them is his own, because they are under the dominion of evil.

26. You ought then to seek for a lamp to be lighted, that you may find pure thoughts. Those are the natural thoughts, which God made. People brought up at sea learn to swim, and when waves and billows rise, they are not surprised at it; but those who are not used to these things, when even a little sea comes up, take fright and go under. So it is with Christians. As the mind of a child of three cannot take in or understand the mind of a grownup reasoner, because there is a great difference of age between them, so Christians contemplate the world like infant children, with their eyes fixed upon the measure of grace. They are strangers to this age. Their city and their rest is elsewhere. Christians have the comfort of the Spirit, tears, and mourning, and sighing; and even the tears are an enjoyment to them. They have fear also, in the midst of joy and rejoicing, and thus are they like men carrying their blood in their hands, having no confidence in themselves, or thinking themselves to be anything, but despised and rejected above all men.

27. Suppose there were a king, who entrusted his treasure to some poor man. The man who received the charge of it does not hold it for his own, but always acknowledges his poverty, not daring to squander out of another's treasure. He bears continually in mind, not only that the treasure is another's, but "it was a mighty king who entrusted me with it, and whenever he pleases he takes it away from me." So ought those who have the grace of God to esteem themselves, to be humble-minded and to acknowledge their poverty. As the poor man who received the charge of the treasure from the king, if he presumes upon the treasure that is another's, and is proud as of wealth of his own, and his heart conceives arrogance, the king takes away his treasure, and the man who had it in charge is left poor as he was before; so if those who have grace presume, and their hearts are puffed up, the Lord takes His grace from them, and they are left such as they were before receiving the grace from the Lord.

28. There are many, who, in spite of grace being with them, are cheated by sin without observing it. Suppose there is a maid in a house, and also a young man; and she is wheedled into consenting to him, and falls, and loses her character. So the dreadful serpent of sin is always with the soul, tickling and enticing it; and if it consents, the incorporeal soul enters into connexion with the incorporeal evil of that spirit. Spirit enters into connexion with spirit, and he who gives consent commits adultery in his heart, admitting the suggestion of the wicked one. This then is the measure of your conflict, not to commit this crime in your thoughts, but to resist with your mind, and do battle and conflict within, and not to comply, and to take no pleasure in the thought of what is wrong; and if the Lord finds in you this preparation, at the last day He takes you to Himself in His kingdom.

29. For there are things which the Lord so orders that He may not leave Himself without testimony of His divine grace and calling; and there are others which He orders in the way of permission, that a man may be proved and exercised, that his

self-determination may be made plain. Those in afflictions and temptations, if they endure, do not fail of the kingdom of heaven; therefore Christians in circumstances of distress are not vexed or grieved. If they are tried by poverty or suffering, they ought not to be surprised, but rather to take pleasure in poverty and reckon it as wealth, and fasting as feasting, and dishonour and obscurity as glory. On the other hand, if they should fall into circumstances which in this life are glorious, which incline them to worldly ease, or wealth, or glory, or luxury, they ought not to take pleasure in these things, but to shun them as they would shun fire.

30. In the world around us, if a very small nation is stirred to war against the emperor, he is at no pains to go to the front in person, but sends soldiers with their officers, and they carry on the war. But if the nation in motion against him is a very great one, powerful enough to ravage his empire, the emperor himself is compelled to take the field, with those in the palace and in his camps, and to join in battle. Consider then your own dignity. God set Himself in motion, in company with His camp—I mean the angels and holy spirits—and came to your protection in person, to deliver you from death. Take good care of yourself, then, and bethink yourself what a provision has been made for you. We use an illustration from this life, being still in it. Suppose there were an emperor, and he were to find a man in want and suffering, and were not ashamed of him, but treated his wounds with healing medicines, and brought him into his palace, and clothed him with the purple and the diadem, and made him partaker of the royal table; even so Christ the heavenly King came to suffering man and healed him, and made him partaker of the royal table, and this without putting constraint upon his will, but by persuasion He sets him in such honour.

31. It is written in the gospel that the Lord sent His servants, calling those who were willing, and declaring to them that dinner was ready; but those who had been called excused themselves, alleging, one, “I have bought some yoke of oxen,” another, “I have betrothed to myself a wife.” You see that the entertainer was ready, but the people invited refused. They alone were answerable for it. So great is the dignity of Christians. Consider how the Lord has prepared for them the kingdom, and calls them to enter in, and they will not. As for the gift which they are to inherit, one might say, if every one from the creation of Adam to the end of the world strove against Satan and endured afflictions, he would do nothing great in comparison with the glory which he is to inherit; for he will reign to ages without end with Christ. Glory to Him Who so loved a soul like this, for giving Himself and His grace and entrusting the soul therewith! Glory to His greatness!

32. According to all appearances, all we brethren who sit here have but one image and the one character of Adam. Well, have we in secret also, in the things within, one purpose among us all, and one heart? Are we all one, good and godly? Or are there some of us who have fellowship with Christ and His angels, and others with

Satan and the devils? And yet we all sit together appearing like one man; every one of us bears the same character of Adam. You see how different the invisible substance, the inward man, is from the outward, when we all look like one man, and yet some are with Christ and the angels, and some with Satan and the unclean spirits. The heart contains an unfathomable depth. In it are reception-rooms, and bedchambers, doors, and porches, and many offices and passages. In it is the workshop of righteousness or of unrighteousness. In it is death; in it is life. In it is the good traffic, and the contrary.

33. Suppose there were a very great palace, and this were deserted, and became full of every evil smell, and of many dead bodies. Well, the heart is Christ's palace, and it is full of all uncleanness, and of crowds of many wicked spirits. It must be refounded and rebuilt, and its store-chambers and bedrooms put in order; for there Christ the King, with the angels and holy spirits, comes to rest, and to dwell, and to walk in it, and to set His kingdom. I tell you, it is like a ship furnished with plenty of tackle, where the captain disposes of all, and sets them their tasks, finding fault with some, and showing others their way about. The heart has a captain in the mind, the conscience, which is ever judging us, thoughts accusing or else excusing one another. 34. You see that conscience will not slubber over such thoughts, which comply with sin, but at once judges them. It tells no lies. It attests what it must say before God in the day of judgment, as though judging us continually. Suppose there be a chariot and reins; the animals and all the apparatus are under one driver; so when he pleases, he is carried along by the chariot at a great rate, and when he pleases, he stops it. Whichever way he pleases to turn it, there it goes along with him. The whole chariot is in the driver's power. In like manner the heart contains many natural faculties bound up with it, and it is the mind and conscience which chides and guides the heart, and calls from sleep the natural faculties that spring in the heart. The soul has many members, though it is but one.

35. From the time that Adam transgressed the commandment, the serpent entered in and made himself master of the house, and became like a second soul beside the soul. For the Lord says, Whoso denieth not himself, and hateth not his own soul, is not My disciple, and, He that loveth his soul shall lose it. Sin entering into the soul has become like a member of it, and is united with the bodily man, and therefore many unclean thoughts spring up in the heart. He who does the wishes of his soul, does the wishes of evil, because it is entwined and mingled with the soul. He who brings his soul into subjection, and is angry with himself and with the desires that beset him, is like one who subdues an enemy's city. This man is permitted to come to good measures of the Spirit, and is rewarded through the power of God with the pure man, and is made greater than himself; for such an one is deified, and made a son of God, receiving the heavenly stamp upon his soul. For His elect are anointed with the oil of consecration, and are made men of rank and kings.

36. Such is the nature that men have. In the depth of wickedness and the bondage of sin, a man is at liberty to turn to what is good. A man bound over to the Holy Spirit, and inebriated with heavenly things, has power to turn to evil. A woman clothed in rags, famished, and dirty all over, is with much labour brought to royal rank, and arrayed in purple and crown, and made a king's bride. She remembers her former filthy condition, and is half-minded to go back to her old state; but she will not deliberately return to her former shame, for that would be folly. Yet even those who have tasted of the grace of God, and are partakers of the Spirit, if they do not take heed to themselves, are extinguished, and become worse than they were before, when they were in the world. Not that God is liable to change, or impotent, or that the Spirit is Himself quenched; but men do not correspond to grace, and for this reason miscarry, and fall into a thousand evils. For those who have tasted of that gift have both things present with them, joy and comfort, fear and trembling, gladness and mourning. They mourn for themselves and for all Adam, since mankind is all one, and the tears of such persons are bread, and their mourning sweetness and refreshment.

37. If you see a man proud and puffed up because he has a share of grace, this man, even if he should work miracles and raise the dead, but does not hold his soul worthless and contemptible, and continue poor in spirit and an object of abhorrence to himself, is cheated by sin without knowing it. Even if he works signs you cannot believe him, for the sign of Christianity is this, to be approved of God while earnestly shunning the notice of men, and even if a man has the entire treasures of the King, to conceal them, and to say continually, "It is not mine; another has put this treasure in my charge. I am a poor man, and when He pleases, He takes it from me." If any one says, "I am rich; I have enough. I have gained; I need nothing more," he is no Christian; he is a vessel of error and of the devil. The enjoyment of God is insatiable. The more any one tastes and eats of Him, the more he hungers. Such men's ardour and passion for God is beyond restraint, and the more they endeavour to get on and make progress, the more they esteem themselves poor, as those that are in need and have nothing. This is what they say: "I am not fit for this sun to shine upon me." This is the sign of Christianity, this humility. 38. But if a man says, "I am satisfied and filled," he is a deceiver and a liar.

As the body of the Lord was glorified, when He went up into the mountain, and was transfigured into the divine glory and into the infinite light, so are the bodies of the saints glorified and shine like lightning. The glory that was within Christ was outspread upon His body and shone; and in like manner in the saints, the power of Christ within them shall in that day be poured outwardly upon their bodies. For even now they partake of His substance and nature in their minds; for it is written, He that sanctifieth and they that are sanctified are of one, and, The glory which Thou hast given Me, I have given them. As many lamps are lighted from one flame, the bodies of the saints, being members of Christ, must needs be what Christ is,

and nothing else. 39. Question. What advantage have Christians over the first Adam? for he was immortal and incorruptible, both in body and in soul, whereas Christians die and come to corruption.

Answer. The real death is within, in the heart, and is concealed, and it is the inner man that perishes. So if any one has passed from death unto life in that hidden region, he does indeed live for ever, and never dies. Although the bodies of such men are dissolved for a season, they are raised again in glory, for they are hallowed. So we call the death of Christians sleep and repose. If the man were immortal, and his body exempt from corruption, the whole world, beholding the strange fact that Christian men's bodies were incorruptible, would come over to the good by a kind of compulsion, not by a voluntary decision. 40. In order that the freedom of will which God gave man at the beginning might once for all be shewn and might abide, providence orders these matters, and bodily dissolution takes place, that it may be at the man's discretion to turn to the good or to the bad. For even one who is perfect in evil, deep in sin, making himself a tool of the devil, by whom he is completely mastered, is not bound by any necessity. He is at liberty to become a chosen vessel, a vessel of life. In like manner on the other side those who are drunk with the Godhead, although filled full with the Holy Ghost and under His dominion, are not held by any necessity, but have their free choice to turn and do what they please in the present world.

41. Question. Is it by degrees that evil is diminished and rooted out, and a man advances in grace? or is evil rooted out at once, when he receives a visitation? Answer. As the unborn babe in his mother's womb is not at once fashioned into a man, but the image is formed by degrees and born, and even then is not fullgrown, but takes many years to develope, and become a man; and again, as the seeds of barley or of wheat do not root the moment they are put in the ground, but storm and wind pass over them, and then in due time the ears form; and the man who plants a pear tree does not at once partake of the fruit; so likewise in spiritual things, where there is so much wisdom and delicacy employed, it is only little by little that a man grows and comes to a perfect man, to the measure of the stature, not, as some say, "Off with one coat, and on with another."

42. He who wishes to be a learned man goes and learns his letters. When he has got to the top there, off he goes to the Latin school, and is at the very bottom. When he gets to be top there too, off he goes again to the advanced school, and is once more at the bottom, a freshman. Then, when he becomes a "scholasticus," he is a freshman among the pleaders, and last of them all. When he once more rises to the top, he is then made a governor, and when he reaches the position of chief magistrate, he takes to him the aid of the assessor. Well, if the world of sense has such a series of promotions, how much more have the heavenly mysteries their promotions, and increase the number of grades, and then, through much practice

and many a testing, the man who gets through is made perfect. Christians who have truly tasted of grace, and have the sign of the cross upon their mind and heart, these, from the king to the beggar, consider all things but dung and ill savour; and these are able to know that the whole world of earth, and the treasures of the emperor, and his riches, and his glory, and the discourses of wisdom are but a vain show, having no solid basis, but passing away; and whatever there is under the heaven, to them is easily contemned.

43. Why so? Because the things above the heavens are so strange and wonderful, which are not to be found in kings' treasures, nor in wisdom of words, nor in worldly glory, and dignities, and wealth—such wealth they possess, who have the Lord and Creator of all things in their inmost man, a possession which does not pass away, but abides. Christians know the soul to be precious beyond all created things; for man alone was made after the image and likeness of God. Behold the heaven, how vast it is, and the earth; and the creatures in them are valuable, and their bodies are great; but man is valuable above all those bodies, inasmuch as the Lord was well pleased in him alone. The whales of the sea also, and the mountains, and the beasts, in outward appearance are greater than man. Behold then thy dignity, and of how great value thou art, that God hath made thee above angels, because for thy help and deliverance He came upon earth Himself in person.

44. God and His angels came for thy salvation. The King, the King's Son, held council with His Father, and the Word was sent, and put on the garment of flesh, and concealed His own Godhead, that like might be saved by like, and laid down His life upon the cross. So great is the love of God towards man. The Immortal chose to be crucified for thee. Consider then how God loved the world, because He gave His only begotten Son for them. How shall He not with Him freely give us all things? In another place it says, Verily I say unto you that He shall make him ruler over all His goods. Elsewhere it shews the angels as ministers of the saints. When Elias was in the mountain, and the foreigners came against him, the young servant said, "There are many Coming against us, and we are by ourselves." Then Elias answered, "Do you not see camps and multitudes of angels with us round about succouring us?" You see that the Master and the multitudes of the angels are with His servants. How great then is the soul, and how much valued by God, that God and the angels seek after it for fellowship with themselves and for a kingdom! And Satan and his powers seek after it for their own party.

45. For as in the natural world kings are not waited upon by boorish people, but by those who are good-looking and well-educated, so in the heavenly palace those who wait upon the heavenly King are the blameless, the irreproachable, the pure in heart. As in the palace good-looking maidens, that have no kind of blemish, the handsomest, go into the society of kings, so in the spiritual order, it is the souls that are adorned with all good manners which have the society of the heavenly

King. In visible things, where a prince goes to stay, if it should happen that that house contains anything that is not clean, it is put to rights, and much cleaning takes place, and sweet odours are poured out; how much more does the house of the soul, in which the Lord rests, require cleaning, that He may be able to enter in and rest there, who is without spot or blemish! In such a heart God and the whole church of heaven rests.

46. In the natural world, if a father enjoys possessions, and has diadems and precious stones, he hides these in storehouses, and they are treasured up for his beloved son, and to him he gives them. So God has entrusted what He has gotten, with His own precious things, to the soul. In the natural order, if there is a war, and a king comes with his army to fight, and his side is inferior in numbers or in strength, immediately he sendeth an ambassage, desiring conditions of peace; but if it be a very great nation against an equal nation, and king against king—say the king of the Persians against the emperor of the Romans—the two kings have no choice but to move with all their forces. See then how great is thy dignity, that God has moved with His own forces—that is, with angels and spirits—to join issue with the adversary in order to deliver thee from death. God came for thy sake.

47. Suppose a king were to find a poor man who had leprosy all over his body, and were not ashamed of him, but applied remedies to his wounds, and healed his sores, and then took him to the royal table, and arrayed him in purple, and made him a king; that is what God did to the race of men. He washed their wounds, and healed them, and brought them into the heavenly bridechamber. Great then is the dignity of Christians, so great that there is nothing to compare with it. But if the Christian becomes high-minded and allows evil to steal over him, he is like a city without a wall, and the robbers come into it from any quarter they please, with nothing to hinder them, and lay it waste and set it on fire. Thus, whilst thou art taking things easily, and paying no heed to thyself, the spirits of wickedness come in upon thee, and destroy and lay waste thy mind, dissipating thy thoughts upon this present world.

48. Many people who are well informed about outward things, and pursue knowledge, and take pains about the correctness of their lives, consider that this constitutes perfection, not looking deep into their hearts, or seeing the bad things there which keep the soul in. According to the inner meaning of evil, it is a root in the members; the thief is in the house, that is, the opposing power. It is a defiant and an invisible force; and unless a man sets himself to combat sin, the inward evil gradually spreads, and by multiplying carries the man along into open sins, to commit them. Evil is continually gushing up like the eye of a well-spring. Be thou then busied upon stopping the streams of evil, lest thou shouldest fall into a thousand wrong things and be like one in stupor. Suppose there to be a nobleman living at ease in affluence, and the officers of the governor and those who serve

warrants arrest him, carrying him off to the governor, saying, “You are accused on a serious charge, and your head is in danger.” At the very tidings of such a fear, he loses all his ideas, and is like one in a stupor. 49. Conceive, then, that it is thus with the spirits of wickedness.

The world that you see round you, from the king to the beggar, are all in confusion and disorder and battle, and none of them knows the reason, or that it is the manifestation of the evil which crept in through Adam’s disobedience, the sting of death. For the sin which crept in, being a kind of invisible power of Satan, and a reality, implanted all evils. Without being detected it works upon the inner man and upon the mind, and contends with the thoughts; but men are not aware that they are doing these things at the instigation of an alien force. They think it all to be natural, and that they do these things of their own determination, while those who have the peace of Christ in their minds, and His enlightenment, know very well the source of these movements.

50. The world is subject to the lust of evil, and knows it not, and there is an unclean fire which kindles the heart, and so spreads into all the members, and disposes men to lasciviousness and a thousand wrong things. Those who let themselves be tickled and pleased with it commit the sin inwardly in the heart, and thus the evil gets room, and they fall into open impurity. Mark that the same is true of the love of money, and of vain glory, pride, envy, anger. A man is invited to a dinner, and many meats are offered him; sin suggests that he should taste them all, and so his soul is pleased and becomes overloaded. Lusts are intolerable mountains, among which are rivers of dragons and venomous beasts and serpents. As if a whale were to swallow up a man in its belly, so sin swallows up souls. They are burning flames of fire, and fiery darts of the wicked one. The apostle says, That ye may be able to quench the fiery darts of the wicked one. The evil got room, and has laid its foundations around the soul.

51. But the prudent, when the passions bestir themselves, will not comply, but are angry with the evil desires, and make themselves enemies to themselves. For Satan has a great wish to rest and stretch himself in the soul, and is annoyed and cramped when the soul will not comply with him. Some there are under the command of the divine power, who if they see a young man with a woman may perhaps think a little, but their mind is not defiled, nor do they inwardly commit sin; but it is not yet possible to be confident in such a case. There are others in whom the thing is at an end, quenched, and withered up; but these are the measures of the great ones. As men in the trade go down naked into the deep of the sea, into the watery death, to find there pearls that will do for a royal crown, and purple dye, so those who embrace the single life go naked out of the world, and go down into the deep of the sea of evil and into the gulf of darkness, and from those depths they take and

bring up precious stones suitable for the crown of Christ, for the heavenly church, for a new world, and a city of light, and a people of angels.

52. As in a net many kinds of fishes are included, and they cast back the worse kinds at once into the sea, so the net of grace is spread over all, and seeks satisfaction; but men will not consent, therefore they are thrown back again into the very pit of darkness. As much sand is washed away before the gold is found, and that in very small grains like millet, so out of many there are few found to be approved. Those who have the work of the kingdom are made manifest, and those who only dress up the word of it appear. Those who are seasoned with the heavenly salt appear, and those who speak out of the treasures of the Spirit. The vessels in which God is well pleased appear, and He gives them His own grace; while others with much patience receive the hallowing power, in divers manners, as the Lord wills. So he who speaks, unless he be guided by heavenly light and wisdom, cannot satisfy the mind of every one, since there are so many different purposes, some at war, and some at rest.

53. If a city has been laid waste, and one wishes to rebuild it, he at once demolishes completely the things that are ruinous and fallen, and so begins to dig and to lay, his foundations where he dug, and to carry up the building, though there is as yet no house; and he who wishes to make a pleasure garden in a waste, ill-smelling place begins first to clean it up, and to make a fence round it, and to prepare water-courses, and then he plants, and the plants grow, that thus after a long time the garden may bear fruit; so the purposes of men since the fall are dried up, laid waste, and thorny. God said to the man, Thorns and thistles shall the earth bring forth to thee. There is need, therefore, of much toil and labour, for a man to seek and lay up the foundation, till fire shall come into men’s hearts, and shall begin to clear off the thorns; and so they begin to be sanctified, glorifying the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost for ever. Amen.

HOMILY XVI

That spiritual persons are subject to temptations and to the adversities which spring from the first sin. 1. ALL spiritual substances, that is to say, of angels, and human souls, and devils, were made by the Creator innocent and perfectly simple. The fact that some of them turned to evil was an after-effect of their free will. It was by their own choice that they departed from the right way of thinking. If we say that they were so made by the Creator, we say that God is an unjust judge for sending Satan to the fire. There are certain heretics who say that matter is without beginning, and that matter is the root, and that the root is power, and an evenly matched power. To this you may fairly reply, "Which then is the conquering power? Certainly that of God. Then the vanquished is no longer a match, either in duration or in power." Those who say that evil is a substantive thing, know nothing. To God there is no substantive evil, according to His divine freedom from passion; but in us it works with full force and makes itself felt, suggesting all foul concupiscences. It is not mixed up with us, however, as some say, like the mixture of wine with water; it is as corn by itself and tares by themselves, though both in the same field; as in a house, the thief in one part, and the master in another.

2. Here is a well-spring running with clear water, and there is mud under it. When one stirs the mud, the whole well-spring is fouled. So the soul, when stirred, is fouled and mingled with evil, and Satan becomes one thing with the soul, both being spirits, in the act of fornication or of murder. For this reason, he that is joined to the harlot is one body. But at another moment the soul subsists by itself, penitent for what it has done, and weeps and prays, and remembers God. For if the soul were always plunged in evil, how could it act thus? since Satan is never willing that men should come to repentance, for he knows no compassion. The wife according to agreement with her husband becomes one with him, but at another moment they are parted; because it often happens that one of them dies and the other lives. Something of the same kind takes place in the fellowship of the Holy Ghost. They become one Spirit, for he that is joined to the Lord is one spirit. This takes place when the man is swallowed up in grace.

3. There are some, however, who have a taste of God, but are still subject to the influence of the enemy, and think it strange, in their lack of experience, that after the visitation of God they should still be subject to doubts about the mysteries of Christianity. Those who have grown old in them do not think it strange. As skilled husbandmen, from long experience, in a season of plenty are not entirely without care, but look forward to times of dearth and short supplies, and, on the other hand, when those times of dearth and short supplies overtake them, are not very despondent, in view of changes for the better, so in the spiritual realm, when the soul falls into divers temptations, it neither considers it strange, nor is despondent, because it knows that it is permitted on sufferance to be tested and disciplined by evil. On the other hand, when it is in much wealth and contentment it is not without care, but looks forward to the coming change.

The sun, which is a bodily and created thing, shines down into unsavoury places, where there are mud and impurities, without being injured or defiled; how much rather does the pure and holy Spirit keep company with the soul, when still subject to influence from the wicked one, without contracting anything from them. The light shineth in darkness, and the darkness comprehended it not. 4. When therefore a man is deep in, and is rich in grace, there is still a remnant of evil with him. He has a helper at hand to succour him. So when one is in adversities and in great billows of suffering, he ought not to despond; for if he does, sin thrives and makes more way in him. But when one has constant hope in God, the evil diminishes and dries out. That some are palsied or maimed, in fever or sickness, this is a consequence of sin. For sin is the root of all evils, and the passions caused by the desires of the soul and by evil thoughts are owing to it. If there is a running spring, and the places about it are moist and boggy, yet when the weather gets hot, the spring and the places near it dry up. So with God’s servants, upon whom grace abounds, this grace dries up the desire which comes from the wicked one, and that which comes from nature likewise; since now the men of God are greater than the first Adam.

5. God is infinite and incomprehensible. He shows Himself everywhere, in the mountains, and in the sea, and beneath the deep; yet not by change of place, like the angels who come down from heaven to the earth. He is in heaven, and He is here. But you will say to me, “How can God be in hell? or how can He be in the darkness, or in Satan, or in places that are unsavoury?” I answer that He is impassible and contains all things, for He is infinite, while Satan, being His creature, is tied. That which is good is not soiled, nor darkened. If you say that He does not contain all things, including hell and Satan, you make Him limited with regard to that place where the wicked one is, so that we have to look for another, above Him. God must be everywhere; but because of the mystery of the Godhead and the fineness in Him, the darkness, though contained in Him, comprehends Him

not; nor can the evil partake of His purity, even though it be in Him. To God there is no such thing as a substantive evil, since He is in nothing injured by it.

6. To us, however, evil is a reality, because it dwells and works in the heart, suggesting wicked and defiling thoughts, and not allowing us to pray purely, but bringing our mind into captivity to this world. It has clothed itself with our souls, and touched even our bones and members. As Satan therefore is in the air, and God is in no way injured by being there also, so sin is in the soul, and the grace of God is there likewise, without suffering any injury. As a servant near his master is always in fear because of being so near, and does nothing without him, so ought we to refer our thoughts to our Master, Christ, who knows the heart, and to disclose them to Him, and to have within the hope and confidence that "He is my glory, and He is my Father, and He is my riches." Thou oughtest continually to have in thy conscience care and fear. Even if a man has not the grace of God so firmly planted and fixed in him, that night and day the thing which hourly guides and wakens and directs him to good things is joined to his soul as by a natural bond, at least, let him see to it that he has this care, this fear, this labour, this contrition of heart continually fixed, as an unalterable fact of nature.

7. Like a bee secretly forming her comb in the hive, grace secretly forms in hearts the love of herself, and changes them from bitterness to sweetness, from roughness to smoothness. As a silversmith and engraver, engraving a plate, partly covers up the various little animals that he is cutting, but when he has finished, displays it flashing with the light, so the Lord, the true artificer, engraves our hearts, and silently makes them new, until they pass away from the body, and then the beauty of the soul is shown. Those who wish to construct bowls, and to depict animals upon them, first make their design in wax, and then cast them after the likeness, so that the work is finished in accordance with that design. So sin, though it is a spirit, has an image, and assumes many forms; and in the same manner the inner man is like one of these animals, with an image and a shape, for the inner man is a likeness of the outer. Great then is the vessel, and precious, since in it alone of all the creatures the Lord was well pleased. And the good thoughts of the soul are like precious stones and pearls, and the impure thoughts are filled with dead men's bones and all uncleanness and ill-savour.

8. Christians then are of another world, sons of the heavenly Adam, a new race, children of the Holy Ghost, shining brethren of Christ, like their Father, the heavenly shining Adam. Of that city, of that kindred, of that power, they are not of this world, but of another world. He Himself says, Ye are not of this world, even as I am not of this world. But as a merchant on a voyage of many stages, in the multiplication of his merchandise, sends to his friends to procure him houses, gardens, clothes that he requires, and when he sets out for home, brings with him great wealth, and his friends and kinsfolk welcome him with great rejoicing, so in spiri-

tual things, if any are making the heavenly wealth their merchandise, their fellow citizens, the spirits of saints and angels, are aware of it, and say with admiration, "Our brethren on the earth have come into great wealth." So they, having the Lord with them at their departure, come with mighty rejoicing to those above, and those who belong to the Lord receive them, having prepared for them there houses, and gardens, and clothes all bright and costly.

9. We need sobriety in all things, then, in order that the good things that we seem to have may not turn to our hurt. For those who are naturally kind, unless they secure themselves, are gradually drawn aside by their very kindness; and those who have wisdom are deceived by their wisdom. A man must be well tempered together in all directions, kindness with severity, wisdom with discretion, word with deed, in everything to trust in the Lord, not in himself. For virtue is seasoned with many different spices, as an article of necessary diet is seasoned with condiment of some kind—not with honey only, but with pepper sometimes—and so is found good for food. 10. Those who say that sin is not in man, are like people plunged under a deluge of many waters, who will not acknowledge it, but say, "We heard a sound of waters." Plunged under the depth of the waves of evil, they say that sin is not in their mind or thoughts. There is a difference between those who have a theory and talk, but are not seasoned with the salt of heaven—who discourse of a royal table, but have never eaten or enjoyed it—and a man who has had a sight of the king himself, to whom the treasures have been opened, and he has entered in, and inherited them, and eaten and drunk of the costly viands.

11. If a mother has an only son, very handsome, wise, adorned with all things good, upon whom she sets all her hopes, and it falls out that she buries him, then endless distress comes upon her, and mourning that cannot be comforted. So ought the mind, when the soul has died to God, to take up mourning and tears, endless distress, to have a contrite heart, to be in fear and care, and at the same time to have a hunger and thirst for what is good continually. Such an one passes into the hands of God's grace and of hope, and he no longer remains in that mourning, but rejoices as one that finds a treasure, and again trembles for fear he should lose it, for the thieves are coming. Like a man who has suffered many losses by thieves, and has got away from them with much difficulty, and after this has come into great affluence and a large fortune, and has no more dread of loss because of his abundant wealth; so spiritual men, after first passing through many temptations and dreadful places, and then filled with grace and replete with good things, are no longer in terror of those who would plunder them, since their wealth is not small; yet they fear, not with the beginner's fear of evil spirits, but with fear and care how to employ the spiritual gifts entrusted to them.

12. Such an one despises himself beyond all sinners, and holds this notion implanted in him as if by nature, and the farther he advances in the knowledge of

God, the more he considers himself an ignoramus, and the more he learns, the less he thinks he knows. It is grace which ministers this effect, and makes it like a part of nature in the soul. As a little child is carried by a strong young man, and he who carries it takes it about wherever he pleases, so the grace that works in the deep carries the soul, and lifts it up to the heavens, to the perfect world, to the everlasting rest. But even in grace there are measures and degrees of rank. The commander-in-chief, who has access to the king, differs from the captain. As a house that is filled with smoke discharges it also into the open air, so the evil compressed into the soul is discharged without and produces fruits. As those to whom is committed the government of a province or of the royal treasury are all the time in anxiety lest they should after all offend the king, so those who have been entrusted with a spiritual work are always in anxiety, and though they are at rest, are as if they had never found it. For the kingdom of darkness which had broken into the city of the soul, and the barbarous forces which keep possession of its ranges, are in course of expulsion from it. 13. Christ the King sends to avenge the city, and throws the usurpers into chains, and settles heavenly troops and an armament of holy spirits there, as in their own country; and then the sun shines in the heart, and its rays run through into all the members; and so a deep peace is the reigning power there.

But the man’s resolution in combat and strife, and his genuine worth, and his good-will towards God, are then shown when grace withdraws and he will still be brave and cry to God. You, when you hear that there are rivers of dragons, and mouths of lions, and the dark forces beneath the heaven, and fire that burns and crackles in the members, think nothing of it, not knowing that unless you receive the earnest of the Holy Spirit, they hold your soul as it departs from the body, and do not suffer you to rise to heaven. In like manner, when you hear of the dignity of the soul, how precious the intelligent substance is, you do not understand that it was not of angels, but of human nature, that He said, Let Us make after Our image and likeness, and that heaven and earth pass away, but that you were called to immortality, and adoption and brotherhood, and marriage with the King. In the world around us, all that belongs to the bridegroom is the bride’s; and all that belongs to the Lord, no matter what it is, He commits to you. He came to your aid in person, to call you up above; and you neither consider nor understand your dignity. Justly the inspired man mourns over your fall, saying, Man being in honour hath no understanding, but is compared unto the beasts without reason, and is made like unto them. Glory be to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Ghost, for ever. Amen.

HOMILY XVII

Concerning the spiritual unction of Christians, and their glory, and that without Christ it is impossible to be saved or to become a partaker of eternal life. 1. PERFECT Christians, who have been permitted to arrive at measures of perfection and to come very near the King, these are continually consecrated to the cross of Christ. As in the days of the prophets the unction was more precious than all things else, since unction made them kings and prophets, so now spiritual men, who are anointed with the heavenly unction, become Christs according to grace, so that they too are kings, and prophets of heavenly mysteries. These are sons, and lords, and gods, made prisoners and captives, plunged deep, crucified, consecrated. If the anointing of oil, which came from a material plant, a visible tree, had such force that those who were anointed received dignity beyond dispute—for it was a fixed rule, so that they were appointed kings; David, for instance, after being anointed, immediately fell into persecutions and was afflicted, and then after seven years became king—how much more do all who are anointed in mind and the inner man with the hallowing and cheering oil of gladness, the heavenly spiritual oil, receive the stamp of that kingdom of the imperishable and everlasting power, the earnest of the Spirit, the Holy Ghost the Comforter. He is called the Comforter, because He comforts and cheers those who are in afflictions.

2. These, being anointed from the tree of life, Jesus Christ, the heavenly plant, are privileged to come to measures of perfection, the measures of the kingdom and the adoption, truly sharers of the secrets of the heavenly King, having free access to the Almighty, entering into His palace, where the angels and the spirits of the saints are, even while they are still in this world. Although they have not yet received the perfect inheritance prepared for them in that age, they are sure, from the earnest which they have now received, as if already crowned and reigning; and being about to reign with Christ, they are not surprised at the abundance and freedom of the Spirit. Why? Because while still in the flesh they had that relish of sweetness, and that effectual working of power. 3. When a man is a friend of the emperor, employed about the palace, acquainted with his secrets, and seeing his purple, if that man is made emperor himself and crowned, he is not surprised or taken aback, since he has long been exercised in the secrets of the

palace. No boorish or uneducated person, or stranger to the secret, can go in and reign, but only those of experience and training. So Christians, who in that age are to reign, are not surprised, having already learned the secrets of grace. When man first transgressed the commandment, the devil covered the soul all over with a covering of darkness. Then grace comes, and wholly removes the veil, so that the soul, now cleared, and regaining its proper nature, created without blemish and clear, continually beholds clearly with its clear eyes the glory of the true light and the true sun of righteousness beaming in the heart itself.

4. As at the end of the world the firmament is removed and the righteous thenceforth live in the kingdom and the light and the glory, seeing nothing else but how Christ in glory is always on the right hand of the Father, so these men even now are caught away into that age, and are taken captive, and behold all the beauties and the wonders that are done there. On earth as we are, we have our citizenship in heaven, spending our time and activities in that world, so far as the mind and the inner man are concerned. As the visible eye, when clear, always clearly sees the sun, so the mind perfectly cleansed always sees the glory of the light of Christ, and is with the Lord night and day, in like manner as the Lord's body united with the Godhead is always with the Holy Ghost. Men do not, however, attain these measures in a moment, but with labour and pains and much contention. Some there are who have grace with them working and abiding, yet evil also is with them inwardly, and the two modes of citizenship, of light and of darkness, are at work upon the same heart.

5. But you will say to me, "What communion hath light with darkness? Where is the divine light darkened or troubled; and the undefiled and pure, where is it defiled?" It is written, The light shineth in darkness, and the darkness comprehended it not. We must not therefore think of these things under a single aspect and without dissection. So great is the repose of some men in God's grace that they become stronger than the evil that is with them, and having a gift of prayer and much repose in God, at another moment they are under the influence of evil thoughts, and are deceived by sin, though they are still in the grace of God. Light-minded people, who have not learned the business, when grace to some extent works upon them, imagine that there is no more such a thing as sin. But those who have discretion and are prudent dare not deny that even when we have the grace of God we are liable to the influence of foul and polluting thoughts.

6. We have often found among the brethren that they have found such gladness and grace that for five or six years, they say, concupiscence had withered away, and after this, when they supposed that they were free from it, the evil, which had been concealed, set upon them, and they were all on fire with concupiscence, so that they were surprised, and said, "After so long a time, whence did this evil rise against us?" No man of sound mind dares to say, "While grace is with me, I am

completely set free from sin." Both the two characters are at work upon the mind. People of no experience in these matters, when grace has had some little effect upon them, imagine that they have already conquered, and are perfect Christians. For my part, I say that the fact is this;—when the sun is in the sky, shining in a clear air, and clouds come about him and cover him, and make the air thick, and yet the sun, far within, is not robbed either of his light or of his proper being, so is it with those who are not completely cleansed. Being in the grace of God, and yet held by sin beneath the surface, they have the natural motions and their actual thoughts strong towards God, and yet are not entirely belonging to good. 7. And on the other hand some who under the surface are held by the good side, the side of grace, are still in bondage and subjection to bad thoughts and the side of evil.

It needs great discretion, therefore, to know by experience that this is the state of the case. I assure you that even the apostles, though they had the Comforter, were not entirely without anxiety. With joy and gladness they had fear and trembling, proceeding from grace itself, not from the side of evil; but the same grace secured them, that they might not swerve, though it were but a little. If a man throws a bit of a stone against a wall, it does not injure the wall or move it from its place. A dart flung at one who wears a breastplate hurts neither the iron nor the wearer's body; it strikes and bounds back. So even though a fragment of evil got near the apostles, it did not injure them, because they were clothed with the perfect power of Christ, and they, being themselves perfect, were at liberty to work their righteousnesses.

8. Since then some will have it that after grace the soul is without anxiety, God requires the will of the soul, even in the perfect, for the service of the Spirit, that they may act in agreement. The apostle says, Quench not the Spirit. Some among them were unwilling to be burdensome to others; some walked for themselves; others took from men of the world and distributed to the poor. This was a worthier part. Some who have grace care only about themselves, others endeavour to benefit their neighbour's souls also. These are far superior to the others. Some who have grace, for God's name's sake deliver up their bodies to mockeries and sufferings. These again are above those. Some in the pursuit of virtue are disposed to boast and to be honoured of men, saying that they are Christians and partake of the Holy Ghost. Others endeavour to hide themselves even from meeting men. These are much superior to those others. You see how even in perfection goodwill towards God completed by the natural will is found superior and in greater abundance.

If a man clothed in beggarly garments should see himself in a vision rich, and on waking from sleep should see himself again poor and naked, so those who utter a spiritual discourse seem to speak suitably enough, but if they have not the thing they discourse about verified in their mind by tasting and power and personal experience, they stand in a vain show. Or like a woman decked out in silks and arrayed in pearls, who offers herself in a place of ill fame, the heart of these men is a re-

sort of unclean spirits, while they set themselves up to discourse of righteousness, when they have never had a glimpse of the realities. 10. A fish cannot live out of the water; no one can walk without feet, or see light without eyes, or speak without a tongue, or hear without ears. So without the Lord Jesus, and the working of divine power, no one can know the mysteries and wisdom of God, or be rich and a Christian. The wise, the warriors, the brave men, the philosophers of God, are those who are led and shepherded in the inner man by the divine power. The philosophers of the Greeks learn to make speeches; others are rude in speech, but rejoicing and exulting in the grace of God, men of piety. Let us judge which are the better. The kingdom of God, it says, is not in word, but in deed and in power.

11. For a man to say, "This bread is made of corn," is easy enough. He should tell us how bread is prepared in detail, and baked. To talk of freedom from passions, and of perfection, is easy; but in experience to be brought to perfection is the lot of few. The gospel says in short compass, "Thou shalt not be angry; thou shalt not covet. If any man smite thee on the cheek, turn to him the other also. If any man judge to take away thy cloak, give him thy coat also." The apostle, tracing out how the work of cleansing should be done, little by little with patience and perseverance, teaches at large, first feeding with milk, like babes, then carrying on to growth and to full age. The gospel said that the garment was made of wool; the apostle declared in detail, how it is made.

12. So those who utter spiritual discourses, without tasting what they discourse of, are like a man who travels on a desert plain, assailed by burning heat, and being thirsty, draws a picture of a running stream of water, with a sketch of himself drinking, when all the while his lips are parched, and his tongue also, by the thirst that possesses him; or as if a man should discourse of honey, that it is sweet, though never having tasted it, he does not know the force of the sweetness. Such is the case with those who make discourse about perfection, and rejoicing, or freedom from passions, without having the effectual working and personal knowledge of them. The things are not all as they describe them. When a man of that kind is once permitted to find himself in the reality, he judges in his own mind: "I have not found it to be as I supposed. I discoursed in one way, and the Spirit works in another."

13. For Christianity is indeed meat and drink; and the more a man eats of it, the more his mind is allured by the sweetness, and is not to be restrained or satisfied, but asks for more, without ever being filled, and goes on eating. If a man is thirsty, and there is given him a pleasant draught, then, when he has begun to taste it, he gets the more eagerly close to the drink, more ardent for it than before. And indeed the tasting of the Spirit is well-nigh without a limit, so that it is really like the supposed case. And these are not mere words. This is the practical working of the Holy Ghost mysteriously ministering in the mind.

Some imagine that because they abstain from marriage and other visible things, they are already saints. That is not so. Evil still lives and lifts itself up in the mind and in the heart. The saint is one who is cleansed and sanctified in the inner man. For where truth raises its head, there error attacks, endeavouring to conceal and obscure it. 14. When the Jews possessed the priesthood, then those of that nation were persecuted and afflicted, because they stood firm in the truth, Eleazar and the Maccabees. Now that after the cross and the veil the Spirit has departed from them, the truth has been revealed here and works here. So those of this nation are persecuted in turn. The persecution and affliction which befell that nation was that the lovers of the truth might witness to it. For how shall the truth appear, unless it has adversaries who are false and oppose the truth? Even among the brethren there are some who endure sufferings and afflictions, and yet have need of much wariness, lest they fall. One of the brethren was once at prayer with a certain person, and was taken captive by divine power, and caught away, and saw the city of Jerusalem above, and shining figures, and infinite light, and heard a voice, saying, “This is the place of repose of the righteous;” and shortly after, he was puffed up, and imagined that what he had seen concerned himself, and after that, he was found to fall into the nethermost depths of sin, into a thousand evil things.

15. If one who had been inside and aloft fell thus, how can the ordinary man say, “By fasting, and making myself a stranger, and dispersing my property, I am a saint already”? Mere abstention from evil things is not perfection—only if thou hast entered into thy ruined mind, and hast slain the serpent that lies under the mind beneath the surface of the thoughts, and burrows into what we call the secret chambers and storehouses of the soul and murders thee—for the heart is a deep gulf—only, I say, if thou hast killed him, and cast out all the uncleanness that was in thee. All the philosophers, and the law, and the prophets, and the coming of the Saviour, have to do with purity. There is no man, Jew or Greek, that does not love purity, though they cannot be pure. We must go on seeking how and by what means the purity of the heart may be gained. Certainly no other way than through Him who was crucified for us. He is the way, the life, the truth, the door, the pearl, the living heavenly bread. Without that truth it is impossible to know truth, or to be saved. As therefore in regard to the outer man and visible affairs thou didst renounce all and hast distributed thy property, so in the matter of worldly wisdom, if thou hast knowledge and the force of words, thou oughtest to cast all away, and to esteem them as nothing, that so thou mayest be built up by the foolishness of preaching, which preaching is the true wisdom, which has not the pride of words, but has a power that works effectually by means of the holy cross. Glory be to the consubstantial Trinity for ever. Amen.

HOMILY XVIII

Concerning the Christians' treasure, which is Christ and the Holy Ghost, who practises them in various ways to come to perfection. 1. IF a man is very rich in this world, and possesses a hidden treasure, out of that treasure and wealth that he has he purchases whatever he has a mind to purchase. Whatever rare articles in the world he fancies, he readily amasses them, relying upon the treasure, because by means of it he easily procures any piece of property he fancies. In like manner those who seek at God's hand, and have found, and have the heavenly treasure of the Spirit, which is the Lord Himself shining in their hearts, accomplish every righteousness of virtues, and every acquisition of goodness commanded by the Lord, out of the treasure of Christ in them, and by means of it they amass a yet more abundant heavenly wealth. By means of that heavenly treasure they effect every virtue of righteousness, relying upon the multitude of the spiritual riches within them, and easily work every righteousness and commandment of the Lord by means of the invisible wealth of grace that is in them. The apostle says, Having this treasure in earthen vessels, that is, the treasure which it was granted to them in this life to possess within themselves, the sanctifying power of the Spirit; and again, Who was made to us wisdom from God, and righteousness, and sanctification, and redemption.

2. So one who has found and has within him this heavenly treasure of the Spirit, effects thereby every righteousness of commandments and every accomplishment of virtues unblameably and purely, without forcing and with ease. Let us therefore beseech God, and seek and beg of Him, to bestow on us the treasure of His Spirit, and that thus we may be able to walk in all His commandments unblameably and purely, and to fulfil all the righteousness of the Spirit purely and perfectly, by means of the heavenly treasure, which is Christ. For he that is poor and naked and needy and famished in the world can acquire nothing; his poverty restrains him; but the possessor of treasure, as I said, easily acquires such articles as he fancies, without painful effort. Thus the soul that is naked and destitute of the fellowship of the Spirit, and lies under the horrible poverty of sin, cannot, if it would, produce any of the fruits of the Spirit of righteousness in truth, before partaking of the Spirit.

3. Nevertheless, every one should force himself to ask of the Lord to be permitted to receive and find the heavenly treasure of the Spirit, so as to be able without difficulty and with readiness to do all the commandments of the Lord unblameably and purely, which before he could not succeed in doing, whatever force he might use. Poor and naked of the fellowship of the Spirit, how could he acquire such heavenly possessions, without any spiritual treasure or wealth? But the soul which has found the Lord, the true treasure, by seeking of the Spirit and faith and much patience, works out the fruits of the Spirit, as I said before, with ease; and all righteousness and commandments of the Lord, which the Spirit has commanded, she does, in herself, and by herself, purely, and perfectly, and unblameably. 4. Let us use another illustration. If there is a rich man, and he makes a costly repast, he spends out of his wealth and the treasure that he has, and is under no fear that he will run short of anything, being so rich; and so he entertains the guests whom he has invited at cost and with splendour, setting before them many different dishes of the latest fashion. The poor man, who has no such wealth, if he wishes to provide a repast for a few friends, has all to borrow, the very dishes, the drapery, and everything else; and then, after the invited guests have dined on a poor man’s dinner, when it is over, he gives back to each person that he had borrowed of, a silver dish, a piece of drapery, or whatever else it was, and so, when all is given back, he himself remains poor and naked, having no wealth of his own to entertain himself with.

5. In the same way, when those who are rich in the Holy Ghost, really having the heavenly wealth and the fellowship of the Spirit in themselves, speak to any the word of truth, when they impart spiritual discourses to any and desire to entertain souls, it is out of their own wealth and out of their own treasure, which they possess within themselves, that they speak, and out of this that they entertain the souls of the hearers of the spiritual discourse; and they have no fear lest they should run short, because they possess within themselves a heavenly treasure of goodness, upon which they draw to entertain those whom they are spiritually feasting. But one who is poor, and does not possess of the wealth of Christ, and has no spiritual wealth in his soul, yielding a stream of all goodness, both of words and of deeds, and of divine ideas, and of mysteries unspeakable, even if he wishes to speak a word of truth and to entertain some of his hearers, yet not possessing in himself the word of God in power and reality, but only repeating from memory, and borrowing words from various parts of the bible, or what he has heard from spiritual men, and relating and teaching this—see, he seems to entertain others, and others enjoy what he tells them, but after he has gone through it, each word goes back to the source from which it was taken, and he himself remains once more naked and poor, having no treasure of the Spirit for his own, upon which he draws to entertain others, not being himself first entertained, nor rejoicing in the Spirit.

6. For this reason we should first seek from God with labour of heart and in faith, that He would grant us to find His wealth, the true treasure of Christ, in our hearts, in the power and effectual working of the Spirit. In this way, first finding in ourselves the Lord to be our profit and salvation and eternal life, we may then profit others also, as is possible and attainable, drawing upon Christ, the treasure within, for all goodness of spiritual words, and setting forth mysteries of heaven. For thus it pleased the goodness of the Father to dwell in every one who believes and asks of Him. He that loveth Me, it says, shall be loved of My Father, and I will love him and will manifest Myself to him; and again, We will come, I and My Father, and will make Our abode with him. Thus the infinite kindness of the Father willed; thus the inconceivable love of Christ was pleased; thus the unspeakable goodness of the Spirit promised. Glory to the unspeakable compassion of the Holy Trinity.

7. For those to whom it has been given to become children of God, and to be born from above of the Spirit, who have within them Christ shining and refreshing them, are led in many different ways of the Spirit, and acted upon by grace invisibly in the heart, in spiritual rest. Let us employ figures of tangible enjoyments in the world, to signify in some measure the dealings of grace in the heart. There are times when they are as if entertained at a royal banquet, and rejoicing with joy and gladness inexpressible. At another moment they are like a bride reposing in communion with her bridegroom in a divine repose. Another time they become like angels without bodies, they are so light and unencumbered, body and all. Another time they are as if drunken with strong drink, being exhilarated and intoxicated with the Spirit, with the intoxication of divine and spiritual mysteries. 8. Another time they are as if in weeping and lamentation for the human race; and in supplication for the whole Adam they take up a mourning and a weeping, being consumed by the love of the Spirit towards mankind. At another they are fired by the Spirit with such rejoicing and love, that if it were possible they would take every man into their own hearts, without distinguishing between bad and good. Sometimes they are so humbled beneath all others in the humility of the Spirit, that they think themselves to be the last and least of all.

Sometimes the Spirit keeps them in such joy unspeakable that they are wearied out. Another time they are like a mighty man who has taken the king’s whole armour, and come down upon his enemies to battle, and fights against them powerfully, and has conquered; for, like him, the spiritual man takes the heavenly weapons of the Spirit, and comes down upon the enemies, and battles with them, and puts them under his feet. 9. At another time the soul reposes in a certain great quietness and calm and peace, with no sense of anything else but spiritual pleasure, and repose unspeakable, and well-being. At another, it is instructed by grace in a kind of unspeakable understanding and wisdom, and the knowledge of the unsearchable Spirit, in things which it is impossible to utter with tongue and speech. So various are the dealings of grace in them, and in so many ways does it lead the soul which

it refreshes according to the will of God, and exercises it in different manners, in order to restore it to the heavenly Father perfect and faultless and pure.

10. But the operations of the Spirit of which I have spoken belong to the great measures which are near perfection. For these various refreshings of grace, though they are expressed in different manners, are constantly brought to bear upon such people, one operation succeeding another. For when the soul arrives at the perfection of the Spirit, perfectly cleansed from passion, and united and mingled with the Spirit Paraclete by that unspeakable communion, and is permitted to become spirit itself in mixture with the Spirit, then it is made all light, all eye, all spirit, all joy, all rest, all gladness, all love, all compassion, all goodness and loving-kindness. As in the bottom of the sea a stone is encompassed on every side by water, so these men, mingled in every way with the Spirit, are made like Christ, having in themselves the virtues of the power of the Spirit unalterably, being faultless and spotless and pure within and without. 11. Restored by the Spirit, how can they produce outwardly the fruit of evil? At all times and in all circumstances the fruits of the Spirit shine forth in them.

Let us then beseech God, and believe in love and much hope, that He may give us the heavenly grace of the gift of the Spirit, that that Spirit Himself may govern us also, and guide us into all the will of God, and refresh us in all the variety of His refreshing, in order that through such governance and exercise of grace, and spiritual improvement, we may be allowed to attain the perfection of the fulness of Christ, as the apostle says, That ye may be filled with all the fulness of Christ, and again, Till we all come unto a perfect man, unto the measure of the stature of the fulness of Christ. The Lord has promised to bestow on all that believe in Him and ask in truth the mysteries of the unspeakable communion of the Spirit. Let us therefore devote ourselves entirely to the Lord, and hasten to obtain the good things we have spoken of. Dedicated in soul and body, and nailed to the cross of Christ, let us become fit for the eternal kingdom, glorifying the Father, and the Son, and the Holy Ghost, for ever. Amen.

HOMILY XIX

Christians who desire to make progress and to grow ought to force themselves to every good thing, so as to deliver themselves from indwelling sin, and to be filled with the Holy Ghost. 1. THE man who desires to come to the Lord, and to be found worthy of eternal life, and to become the dwelling-place of Christ, and to be filled with the Holy Ghost, that he may be able to produce the fruits of the Spirit, and perform the commandments of Christ purely and faultlessly, ought to begin by first believing the Lord steadfastly, and giving himself wholly to the words of His commandments, and renouncing the world altogether, that his whole mind may be occupied about nothing secular. And he should persevere continually in prayer, continually waiting in expectant faith for the visitation and succour of the Lord, keeping the aim of his mind always fixed upon this. Then he should force himself to every good work and to all the commandments of the Lord, because of sin that is present with him. For instance, let him force himself to humility of mind in sight of all men, and to consider himself less and worse than them, not seeking honour, or praise, or the glory of men, from anyone, as it is written in the gospel, but always having the Lord only before his eyes, and His commandments, desiring to please Him only in the meekness of the heart, as the Lord says, Learn of Me, because I am meek and lowly in heart, and ye shall find rest unto your souls.

2. In like manner let him accustom himself to be merciful, kind, compassionate, good, to the utmost of his power, as the Lord says, Be ye good and kind, even as your heavenly Father is pitiful; and again He says, If ye love Me, keep My commandments; and again, Be violent, for the violent take the kingdom of heaven by force, and, Strive to enter in by the strait gate. Above all things let him keep the humility and conduct of the Lord, and His meekness and behaviour, as his pattern, in all never-forgetful memory. Let him persevere in prayers, always beseeching and believing, that the Lord may come and dwell in him, and may perfect and strengthen him in all His commandments, and that the Lord Himself may become the dwelling-place of his soul, and thus one day, what he now does by force with a reluctant heart, he may do willingly, accustoming himself always to what is good, and being ever mindful of the Lord, and in much love waiting for Him in the Holy Spirit. Then the Lord, beholding such a purpose, and his good diligence, how he forces himself

to the remembrance of the Lord, and ever compels his heart, whether it will or no, to that which is good, and to humility and meekness and charity, and guides it to the best of his power by force, shows mercy upon him, and delivers him from his enemies and from indwelling sin, filling him with the Holy Ghost; and thus afterwards without force or labour he does all the commandments of the Lord in truth, or rather the Lord in him does His own commandments, and then he brings forth the fruits of the Spirit purely.

3. But before this, in coming to the Lord, a man must thus force himself to that which is good, even against the inclination of his heart, continually expecting His mercy with no doubtful faith, and force himself to charity, when he has no charity—force himself to meekness, when he has no meekness—force himself to pity, and to have a merciful heart—force himself to be looked down upon, and when he is looked down upon, to bear it patiently, and when he is made light of or put to shame, not to be angry, as it is said, Beloved, avenge not yourselves—to force himself to prayer, when he has not spiritual prayer; and thus God, beholding him thus striving, and compelling himself by force, in spite of an unwilling heart, gives him the true prayer of the Spirit, gives him true charity, meekness, bowels of mercies, true kindness, and in short fills him with the fruits of the Spirit.

4. But if a man forces himself only to prayer, when he has no prayer, that he may obtain the grace of prayer, but will not force himself to meekness and humility and charity and the rest of the Lord’s commandments, and takes no pains or trouble or striving to succeed in these, as far as purpose and freewill can go, sometimes a grace of prayer is given him, in part, with refreshment and gladness from the Spirit, according to his asking; but in character he is like what he was before. He has no meekness, because he did not seek it with pains, or prepare himself beforehand to become so. He has no humility, because he did not ask for it, or force himself to it. He has not charity towards all men, because he had no concern or striving about it in his asking for prayer; and in the accomplishment of his work, he has no faith and trust in God, because he did not know himself, did not discover that he was without it, or take trouble at any cost to himself, seeking from the Lord to obtain firm faith towards Him and a real trust.

5. For as everyone forces and compels himself to prayer in spite of the reluctance of the heart, so ought he to force himself likewise to trust, and so to humility, and so to charity, and so to meekness, sincerity and simplicity, and so unto all patience and longsuffering (according to that which is written) with joyfulness; and so to think little of himself, and to esteem himself poor and last; and so not to engage in conversation to no profit, but always to meditate and speak the things of God with mouth and heart; so also not to be angry or clamorous, according to that which is said, Let all bitterness, and anger, and clamour, be put away from you, with all malice;—to all the ways of the Lord, to all practice of virtue and of good and noble

living, to all behaviour of goodness, to all humility of meekness, not to be proud, high-minded, or puffed up, or to speak against any one.

6. To all these things must a man force himself, who desires to approve himself to Christ and to please Him in order that the Lord, seeing his earnestness and purpose in compelling himself thus to all goodness and simplicity, and kindness and humility, and charity and prayer, and driving himself to them by force, may give him His whole self—the Lord Himself in truth doing all these things purely in him without labour or forcing, which before he could not do even by force because of sin that was with him; and all the practices of virtue come to him like nature. For from that time onward, the Lord coming and dwelling in him, and he in Him, Himself performs in him His own commandments, without effort, filling him with the fruits of the Spirit. But if a man forces himself only to prayer, until he shall receive a gift of it from God, but does not in like manner force and compel and accustom himself to these other things, he cannot in truth perform them purely and faultlessly. He should prepare himself in this way to that which is good to the best of his power; for sometimes the divine grace comes to him while asking and praying. For God is good and kind, and to those who ask Him He gives what they ask. But if a man has not the things of which we have spoken, and has not accustomed or adapted himself to them beforehand, even if he receives grace, he will lose it, and falls by pride, or at least makes no progress or increase in the grace that came to him, since he does not give himself to the commandments of the Lord with a will. For the dwelling-place and repose of the Spirit is humility, charity and meekness, and the other commandments of the Lord.

7. One who wishes to please God in truth, and to receive from Him the heavenly grace of the Spirit, and to increase and be perfected in the Holy Ghost, ought, therefore, to force himself to all the commandments of God, and to subdue his heart, however unwilling it may be, according to the saying, Therefore hold I straight all Thy commandments, and all false ways I utterly abhor. As a man forces and compels himself to perseverance in prayer, until he has succeeded in this, so in like manner, if he only will, he forces and compels himself to all the practices of virtue, and forms a good habit, and thus always asking and praying the Lord, and obtaining his petition, and receiving a taste of God, and becoming a partaker of the Holy Ghost, he causes the gift that was bestowed on him to grow and thrive, resting in his humility, in charity, in meekness.

8. The Spirit Himself bestows these things upon him, and teaches him true prayer, true charity, true meekness, to which before he forced himself, and sought for them, and cared for them, and meditated upon them, and they were given him; and having thus grown up and been perfected in God, he is permitted to become an heir of the kingdom. The humble never falls. Whence indeed could he fall, being lower than all? A proud mind is a great humiliation; a humble mind is a great exaltation and

honour and dignity. Let us therefore force and compel ourselves to humility, though our heart may dislike it, and to meekness, and to charity, praying and beseeching God in faith, hope, and charity incessantly with such an expectancy and aim, that He would send His Spirit into our hearts, that we may pray and worship God in spirit and in truth, 9. that the Spirit Himself may pray in us, that the Spirit Himself may teach us true prayer, which now we have not, though we force ourselves to it; true humility, which now we cannot attain, even by force; may teach us to bring forth in truth bowels of mercies, kindness, and all the commandments of the Lord, without pain or forcing, as the Spirit Himself knows how, filling us with His fruits;

and thus the commandments of the Lord being fulfilled by us through His Spirit, who alone knows the will of the Lord, and the Spirit having perfected us in Himself and Himself perfected in us, when we are once cleansed from every defilement and spot of sin, He will present our souls pure and faultless, like fair brides, to Christ, we resting in God in His kingdom, and God resting in us world without end. Glory to His compassions and to His mercy and love, that He has vouchsafed such honour and glory to mankind, has vouchsafed to make them sons of the heavenly Father, and has called them brethren of His own. To Him be glory for ever. Amen.

HOMILY XX

Only Christ, the true Physician of the inner man, can heal the soul, and array it in the garment of grace. 1. IF any one is naked for want of the divine and heavenly raiment, which is the power of the Holy Ghost—as it is said, If any man have not the Spirit of Christ, he is none of His—let him weep and beseech the Lord, that he may receive the spiritual raiment from heaven, that his soul, now naked of the heavenly operation, may be clothed, because the man who is not clad in the raiment of the Spirit is covered with much shame of vile affections. In the outer world, if any one is naked, he is in great shame and disgrace, and friends turn away from friends when they are naked, and kinsfolk from those belonging to them, and children, seeing their father stripped naked, have turned their faces away, not to look upon their father's naked body, and have gone backwards and covered him, and have not till then turned their faces to him. In the same way God's face is turned away from souls that are not clothed with the raiment of the Spirit in full assurance, from men who have not put on the Lord Jesus Christ in power and reality.

2. The first man when he beheld himself naked was ashamed, so great is the disgrace attaching to nakedness. If then in bodily things nakedness means so much shame, how much more is the soul which is naked of divine power, and wears not, nor is clad with the unspeakable, incorruptible heavenly raiment, the Lord Jesus Christ Himself, in reality, covered with still greater shame and disgrace of vile affections; and every one who is naked of that divine glory ought to be as much ashamed of himself and as much aware of his disgrace, as Adam was when he was naked. Although he made himself an apron of fig-leaves, he wore his shame and nakedness none the less, acknowledging his poverty. Let such a soul then ask of Christ, who gives glory and arrays therewith in light unspeakable, not making for itself a cloak of vain thoughts, deceiving itself with the imagination of a righteousness of its own, or fancying that it possesses the vesture of salvation.

3. If anyone takes his stand upon a righteousness and redemption of his own, not looking for the righteousness of God which is the Lord, as the apostle says, Who is made to us righteousness and redemption, he labours in vain and to no purpose. For all the dream of a righteousness of his own is at the last day manifested as

nothing but filthy rags, as the prophet Esaias says, All our righteousness is as filthy rags. Let us then beg and implore God to clothe us with the garment of salvation, our Lord Jesus Christ, the unspeakable light, which souls that have once worn it shall never put off again, but in the resurrection their bodies also shall be glorified by the glory of the light, with which faithful and noble souls are even now clad, as the apostle says, He that raised up Christ from the dead shall also quicken your mortal bodies by His Spirit that dwelleth in you. Glory to His unspeakable compassion and His inexpressible mercy.

4. And again, as the woman that was diseased with an issue of blood, on believing truly and touching the Lord's hem, at once found cure, and the flow of the unclean fountain of her blood dried up, so every soul that has the incurable wound of sin, the fountain of unclean and evil thoughts, if it only comes to Christ and implores in true faith, finds saving cure of that incurable fountain of the passions, and that fountain which sends up the unclean thoughts fails and dries up through the power of Jesus only;—nothing else can cure this wound. For the enemy at the transgression of Adam so contrived to wound and darken the inner man, the directing mind which sees God. Thenceforth his eyes looked clearly upon bad things and upon the passions, but were shut out from the good things of heaven. 5. He was so sore wounded that none could cure him but the Lord only. To Him alone it was possible. He came and took away the sin of the world; that is, He dried up the unclean fountain of the thoughts of the soul. As that diseased woman spent all that she had upon those who professed to be able to cure her, but could be healed by none, until she approached the Lord, truly believing and touching the hem of His garment, and then at once felt the cure, and the issue of blood staunched, so the soul, wounded at the beginning with the incurable wound of evil passions, none, whether righteous men, or fathers, or prophets, or patriarchs, had force to heal.

6. Moses came, but he could not bestow a complete cure. Priests, gifts, tithes, sabbaths, new-moons, washings, sacrifices, burnt offerings, and every other righteousness, was performed under the law, and the soul could not get cured and cleansed from the unclean issue of bad thoughts. Every righteousness of the soul was unavailing to heal man, until the Saviour came, the true Physician, who cures without cost, who gave Himself a ransom for mankind. He alone accomplished the great, saving deliverance and cure of the soul. He set it free from bondage, and brought it out of darkness, glorifying it with His own light. He dried up the fountain of unclean thoughts that was in it. Behold, it says, the Lamb of God, that taketh away the sin of the world. 7. The earth could not be cured and healed of so great an invisible plague by any medicines of her own, that is, by righteous actions proceeding only from herself; but by the heavenly divine nature of the gift of the Holy Ghost. Only by this medicine could man find cure and attain life, being cleansed in heart by the Holy Ghost. But as that woman, though she could not be cured, and remained undone, yet had feet to come to the Lord, and coming to find cure; and

as that blind man, though he could not pass over and come to the Lord, because he could not see, yet sent a swifter messenger in his voice, saying Thou Son of David, have mercy on me, and thus believed and found cure by the Lord's coming to him and making him to see clearly, so the soul, though undone by vile affections, and blinded by the darkness of sin, yet has the power of will to cry out and call to Jesus, that He would come and work eternal deliverance for the soul.

8. Had not that blind man cried out, had not that sick woman come to the Lord, they would not have found cure; so, unless a man comes to the Lord of his own free will and with whole purpose of heart, and petitions Him with assurance of faith, he finds no cure. Why was it that they were at once cured on believing, while we have not yet seen truly clear, and have not been cured of the hidden affections? And yet the Lord takes more thought for the immortal soul than for the body,—the soul which, if it once gains clear sight, according to him who says, Open thou mine eyes shall never again be blinded, and once cured shall never have wrecked health. If the Lord came upon earth and took such care of perishable bodies, how much more of the immortal soul, made after His own likeness? It is because of our unbelief, because of our divided mind, because we do not love Him with all the heart, nor really believe Him, that we have not yet found the spiritual cure and salvation. Let us then believe Him, and come to Him in reality, that He may speedily work in us the true cure. He has promised to give the Holy Spirit to them that ask Him, and to open to them that knock, and to be found of them that seek, and He that has made the promise cannot lie. To Him be glory and might for ever. Amen.

HOMILY XXI

A Christian man has a twofold warfare set before him, an inward and an outward, the latter, in withdrawing from earthly distractions; the former, in the heart, against the suggestions of the spirits of wickedness. 1. THE man who wishes really to please God, and is in truth an enemy to the opposite party of evil, has to wrestle in two conflicts and two contentions—one in the visible affairs of this life, by withdrawing from earthly distractions and from the love of worldly ties and from affections of sin—the other, in hidden things, by fighting against the spirits of wickedness themselves, as the Apostle said, We wrestle not against flesh and blood, but against principalities, against powers, against the rulers of the darkness of this world, against spiritual wickedness in high places.

2. When man transgressed the commandment, and was exiled from Paradise, he was bound down in two ways and with two different chains. One was in this life, in the affairs of this life, and in the love of the world, that is to say, the love of fleshly pleasures and lusts, of wealth, and glory, and possessions, of wife and children, of kinsfolk, of country, of particular places, of clothes, and of all other things of sense, from which the word of God bids him be loosed by his own free choice—since what binds every man to the things of sense is his own consent—in order that, having loosed and emancipated himself from all these, he may be able to master the commandment perfectly. But besides this, in the hidden region, the soul is hedged and hemmed and walled round, and bound with chains of darkness by the spirits of wickedness, unable to love the Lord as it would, or to believe as it would, or to pray as it would. On all sides, both in things manifest and in things hidden, contrariety has come down to us from the transgression of the first man.

3. Accordingly, as soon as a man hears the word of God, and makes the effort, and casts away the affairs of this life and the bonds of the world, and denies all the fleshly pleasures, and looses himself from these, then, when attending constantly upon the Lord and giving all his time to Him, he is in a position to discover that there is another wrestling, in the heart, another hidden opposition, and another war with the suggestions of the spirits of wickedness, and another contest in front of him. Thus standing steadfast and calling upon the Lord in undoubting faith and much

patience, and looking for the succour that comes from Him, he is enabled to obtain from that source inward deliverance from the bonds and hedges and earthworks and darkness of the spirits of wickedness, which are the workings of the hidden passions. 4. But this war can be brought to nought by the grace and power of God. By himself no man can deliver himself from the contrariety and error of thoughts and of unobserved passions and of devices of the evil one.

If, however, a man is entangled among the things of sense by the affairs of this world, and meshed in various earthly bonds, and carried away by the lusts of evil, he does not so much as discover that there is another wrestling and pummelling and battle within. Let it be that when a man makes the effort and takes himself away, and looses himself from these visible bonds of secular and material affairs and fleshly pleasures, and begins to attend constantly upon the Lord, emptying himself of this world, he is then at length in a position to recognise the inward wrestling of passions in the field against him, and the inward battle, and the evil thoughts: if, as I said before, he does not make the effort, and deny the world, and loose himself from earthly desires with all his heart, and determine wholly and entirely to cleave to the Lord, he does not discover the error of the hidden spirits of wickedness, and the hidden passions of evil, but is a stranger to himself, as one who knows not that he is wounded, and has hidden passions without being aware of them. He is still bound to the visible order, and entangled with the affairs of this world, and does not mind it.

5. The man who has really denied the world, and has made the effort and flung off the burden of the earth, and has taken himself away from the vain desires of fleshly pleasures, and glory, and authority and human honours, and has withdrawn from them with his whole heart—since the Lord secretly helps him in this open effort, in proportion to his denial of the will of the world—and has taken his stand to serve the Lord, and attended constantly upon it with his whole self, body and soul, this man, I say, finds contrariety, and hidden passions, and unseen bonds, and secret battle and effort, and hidden striving; and thus beseeching the Lord, and receiving from heaven the armour of the Spirit, which the blessed apostle reckons up, the breastplate of righteousness and the helmet of salvation, and the shield of faith, and the sword of the Spirit, and arming himself with these, he will be able to stand against the hidden wiles of the devil amidst the wickednesses of the present. Having provided himself with this armour by all prayer and perseverance and supplication and fasting, and all by faith, he will be able to fight out the battle against the principalities and the powers, and the world rulers; and thus having overcome the opposing forces by the co-operation of the Spirit and his own earnestness in all virtues, he will become meet for eternal life, glorifying the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost; to whom be glory and might for ever. Amen.

HOMILY XXII

Concerning the twofold state of those who depart out of this life. 1. WHEN the soul of a man departs out of the body, a great mystery is there accomplished. If it is under the guilt of sins, there come bands of devils, and angels of the left hand, and powers of darkness take over that soul, and hold it fast on their side. No one ought to be surprised at this. If, while alive and in this world, the man was subject and compliant to them, and made himself their bondman, how much more, when he departs out of this world, is he kept down and held fast by them. That this is the case, you ought to understand from what happens on the good side. God’s holy servants even now have angels continually beside them, and holy spirits encompassing and protecting them; and when they depart out of the body, the bands of angels take over their souls to their own side, into the pure world, and so they bring them to the Lord; to whom be glory and might for ever. Amen.

HOMILY XXIII

As only those born of the seed royal can wear the costly royal pearl, so only the children of God are allowed to wear the pearl of heaven. 1. THE great, costly, royal pearl, which serves for a king's crown, is suitable only for a king, and only a king can wear it. Another man is not allowed to wear such a pearl. So unless a man is begotten by the royal Spirit of God, and is made to be of the royal family of heaven and a child of God, according as it is written, But as many as received Him, to them gave He power to become children of God, he cannot wear the costly pearl of heaven, the image of the inexpressible light, which is the Lord, being no king's son. For those who possess and wear the pearl, live and reign with Christ for ever. So said the apostle, As we have worn the image of the earthy, we shall also wear the image of the heavenly.

2. As long as a horse grazes in the scrub among the wild animals he is in no subjection to men; but when he is caught for the purpose of taming, they put on him a heavy bridle, until he learns to walk properly and in good order. Then he is exercised by a skilled rider, that he may become serviceable for war; then they put armour on him, the breastplate and the coat of mail, and first they hang up a bridle and shake it before the horse's eyes, that he may get accustomed to it and not shy at it; and when thus taught by his rider, he learns to war with the enemy. Without rider and without breastplate, a horse is of no use for war. But when he has been trained and is accustomed to the war, he no sooner smells the battle and hears the sound of it, than he charges readily upon the enemy of his own accord, so that the sound that he makes is enough to strike terror into the foe. In like manner, the soul, which since the transgression is wild and in no subjection, roams in the desert of the world with the wild beasts, which are the spirits of wickedness, in sin withholding service. But when it hears the word of God, and believes, it is bridled by the Spirit, and puts away its wild ways and the fleshly mind, being guided by Christ its rider.

Then it gets into distress, and the process of taming, and difficulty, that it may be proved, in order that by degrees it may be brought into subjection by the Spirit, the sin that is in it diminishing by degrees and disappearing. Thus the soul, putting

on the breastplate of righteousness, and the helmet of salvation, and the shield of faith, and the sword of the Spirit, is taught to war against its enemies. Thus, being armed with the Spirit of the Lord, it contends against the spirits of wickedness, and quenches the fiery darts of the wicked one. Without the armour of the Spirit, it does not come into the fighting line; but when it has the Lord's armour, as soon as it hears and perceives hot battles, it goeth on, as it says in Job, with a shout and a cry, because at the very sound of its prayer the enemies fall prostrate. Thus having contended and conquered in the battle by the Spirit, it carries off crowns of victory with great boldness, and thus rests with the heavenly King; to whom be glory and might for ever. Amen.

HOMILY XXIV

The state of Christians is like merchandise, and like leaven. As merchants amass earthly gains, so Christians gather together their thoughts that were scattered about the world. As leaven turns the whole lump into leaven, so the leaven of sin permeates the whole race of Adam; but Christ puts a heavenly leaven of goodness in faithful souls. 1. CHRISTIANS are like merchants trading for very great gains. As merchants amass out of the earth earthly gains, so Christians collect together out of all the earth, by means of all virtues and the power of the Spirit, the thoughts of their own heart in this present age. This is the greatest and the true merchandise. For this world is opposed to the world above, and this present age to the eternity above. The Christian therefore, according to holy scripture, must deny the world, and be translated and pass in mind out of this present age, in which the mind is placed and exposed to allurements ever since the transgression of Adam, into another age, and in frame of thought must live in the world of the Godhead above, as it is said, But our conversation is in heaven.

2. But there is no succeeding in this unless the soul will deny this world and shall believe in the Lord wholeheartedly, in which case the power of the Spirit of God is able to gather in the heart, now scattered over the whole earth, to the love of the Lord, and to translate its frame of mind into the eternal world. From the time of Adam’s transgression the thoughts of the soul have been scattered away from the love of God to this present age, being mingled with material and earthly thoughts. But as Adam, when he transgressed, took into his system a leaven of evil affections, so by participation all who were born of him, and the whole race of Adam, partook of that leaven, and ever since it has grown and increased, until the affections of sin have so developed in men that they have come to fornications and lasciviousnesses and idolatries and murders and other wrong things, until humanity is all leavened with evil. To such an extent has the evil developed among men, that they have come to think that there is no God, and to worship inanimate stones instead, and to be unable so much as to take in the notion of a God. To such an extent has the leaven of wrong affections leavened the race of the old Adam.

3. In the same manner, the Lord, when He came on earth, was pleased to suffer on behalf of all, and to purchase them with His own blood, and to put the heavenly leaven of goodness in faithful souls, when they have been humbled under sin, and then by a process of growth and development to fulfil in them every righteousness enjoined upon them and all virtues, until they are leavened into one in that which is good, and become with the Lord one Spirit, according to St. Paul's saying, so that sin and wickedness cannot even in thought come into the soul so completely and entirely leavened with the Divine Spirit, as it is said, Charity thinketh no evil, and the rest. But without the previous leavening from heaven, which is the power of the Divine Spirit, it is impossible for the soul to be leavened with the goodness of the Lord, and to arrive at life, even as the race of Adam could never have been perverted to such malice and wickedness, if the previous leavening of malice, which is sin, had not crept into him, being, as it is, a power of Satan of a spiritual and immaterial nature.

4. If a person were to knead flour without first putting in leaven, however much pains he may think good to take, turning it over and over, and working it up, the lump remains unleavened and unfit for food; but if leaven is put in, it draws to itself the whole lump of flour, and works it all to leaven, as the Lord said in His comparison of the kingdom, The kingdom of heaven is like unto leaven, which a woman took and hid in three measures of meal, until the whole was leavened. If there were meat, and a person were to take all manner of care of it, but did not salt it with the salt which destroys worms and prevents ill odour, the meat stinks and decays and becomes unserviceable to man. In the same way conceive of all mankind as being so much meat or dough, and imagine the salt and the leaven to belong to another world, the divine nature of the Holy Ghost. Now if this heavenly leaven of the Spirit, this good, holy salt of the Godhead, from yonder age and from yonder home, be not mixed and put into the human nature of men, there is no ridding the soul of the ill odour of wickedness, there is no leavening it from the heaviness and unleavened condition of evil.

5. Whatever the soul may think fit to do of itself, whatever care and pains it may take, relying only upon its own power, and thinking to be able to effect a perfect success by itself, without the co-operation of the Spirit, it is greatly mistaken. It is of no use for the heavenly places; it is of no use for the kingdom—that soul which supposes that it can achieve perfect purity of itself, and by itself alone, without the Spirit. Unless the man who is under the influence of passions will come to God, denying the world, and will believe with patience and hope to receive a good thing foreign to his own nature, namely the power of the Holy Ghost, and unless the Lord shall drop upon the soul from on high the life of the Godhead, such a man will never experience true life, will never recover from the drunkenness of materialism; the enlightenment of the Spirit will never shine in that benighted soul, or kindle in it

a holy daytime; it will never awake out of that deepest sleep of ignorance, and so come to know God of a truth through God’s power and the efficacy of grace.

6. Unless a man is permitted thus through faith to receive grace, he is not qualified or adapted for the kingdom; but on the other hand, if he receives the grace of the Spirit, and does not at all change his mind, or do despite to grace by negligence or wrong-doing, and thus contends for some time without grieving the Spirit, he shall be enabled to obtain eternal life. As one perceives the workings of evil by the passions, by anger, by concupiscence, by envy, by heaviness, by wicked thoughts and other wrong things, so ought one to perceive the grace and power of God by the virtues, by kindness, by goodness, by cheerfulness, by gaiety, by divine gladness, in order to be likened to and mingled with the good and divine nature, with the kind and holy workings of grace. When the will is gradually and progressively tested by time and opportunity, whether it is continually at one with grace and is found well-pleasing, it comes gradually to be altogether in the Spirit, and so being wrought by the Spirit to holiness and purity is made meet for the kingdom. Glory and worship to the undefiled Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Ghost for ever. Amen.

HOMILY XXV

This Homily teaches that no man, without being strengthened by Christ, is capable of overcoming the stumbling-blocks of the evil one, and what those who desire the divine glory must do. It teaches also that through Adam's disobedience we came down into bondage to carnal passions, from which we are delivered by the mystery that is in the cross. It instructs us besides that the power of tears and of the divine fire is great. 1. Those upon whom the divine law is written, not with ink and letters, but implanted in hearts of flesh, these, having the eyes of their mind enlightened, and reaching after a hope, not tangible and seen, but invisible and immaterial, have power to get the better of the stumbling-blocks of the evil one, not by themselves, but from the power that never can be defeated. But those who have not been honoured with God's word, nor instructed by divine law, are vainly puffed up, and fancy that by their own free will they can bring to nought the resources of sin—sin which is only condemned through the mystery contained in the cross. It lies in the power of man's free will to resist the devil, but it does not extend to an absolute command over the passions. Except the Lord build the house, it says, and keep the city, the watchman waketh but in vain, and the builder laboureth in vain.

2. You cannot go upon the asp and basilisk, and tread under your feet the lion and the dragon, without first purging yourself as far as human ability goes, and being strengthened by Him who said to the apostles, Behold, I have given you power to tread on serpents and scorpions, and upon all the power of the enemy. If human nature had had force, without the whole armour of the Holy Ghost, to stand against the wiles of the devil, the apostle would not have said, The God of peace shall bruise Satan under your feet shortly, and again, Whom the Lord shall destroy with the Spirit of His mouth. That is why we are bidden of the Lord to pray, Lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from the evil one. If we are not delivered by the superior power from the fiery darts of the wicked one and admitted to the adoption of sons, our social existence is in vain; we are far from the power of God.

3. Accordingly, one who wishes to be a partaker of the divine glory, and to see as in a glass the form of Christ in the ruling faculty of his own soul, ought with

insatiable affection and an inclination which is never filled, with all his heart and all his might, by night and when it is day, to seek the help which comes mightily from God, of which, as I have said before, it is impossible to partake, unless a man first abstains from the luxury of the world, from the desires of the opposing power, which is alien to the light, and is an activity of wickedness with no kinship to a good activity, but wholly estranged from it. Therefore, if you wish to know why we, who were created in honour and put to live in paradise, came at last to be compared unto the beasts that have no understanding and were made like to them, having fallen from the glory of innocence, understand that, having become by the transgression the slaves of the fleshly passions, we shut ourselves out of the happy land of the living, and being reduced to captivity we are still sitting by the waters of Babylon; and because we are still held in Egypt, we have not yet inherited the land of promise, flowing with milk and honey. We have not yet been leavened with the leaven of sincerity, but are still in the leaven of wickedness. Our heart is not yet sprinkled with the blood of God;

for the snare of hell, and the hook of sin is still fixed in it. 4. We have not yet taken to ourselves the gladness of Christ's salvation, for the sting of death is still rooted in us. We have not yet put on the new man, which after God is created in holiness, since we have not yet put off the old man which is corrupt according to the sinful lusts. We have not yet borne the image of the heavenly, nor been made conformed to His glory. We have not yet worshipped God in spirit and in truth, because sin reigns in our mortal body. We have not yet beheld the glory of the incorruptible, for we are still under the operation of the moonless night. We have not yet put on the armour of light, since we have not yet put off the armour and the darts and the works of darkness. We have not yet been transformed by the renewing of the mind, for we are still conformed to this world in the vanity of the mind. We are not yet glorified with Christ, because we have not suffered with Him. We do not yet bear in our body the marks of Him, and are not in the secret of the cross of Christ, for we are still in the affections and lusts of the flesh. We are not yet heirs of God and joint heirs with Christ, for the spirit of bondage is still in us, not that of adoption.

We have not yet become the temple of God and the habitation of the Holy Ghost, for we are still the temple of idols and the hold of the spirits of wickedness because of our propensity to the passions.

5. In truth we have not yet acquired simplicity of conduct or the brightness of the mind. We have not yet had vouchsafed to us the guileless and reasonable milk and the growth invisible. The day has not yet dawned upon us, nor the day star risen in our hearts. We have not yet been mingled with the sun of righteousness, nor begun to flash with His rays. We have not yet received the likeness of the Lord nor been made partakers of the divine nature. We have not yet become the genuine purple of the King, nor the unfalsified image of God. We are not yet smitten with the

passionate love of God, or stricken by the spiritual charity of the Bridegroom. We are not yet acquainted with that ineffable communion, and have not experienced the power and peace that there is in sanctification. To sum it all up, we are not yet a chosen generation, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, a peculiar people. forasmuch as we are still serpents, a generation of vipers.

6. How should we be anything but serpents, we who are not found in obedience to God, but in the disobedience which came by the serpent? How to bewail the calamity as it deserves, I cannot find. How to cry aloud and weep to Him that is able to expel the error lodged within me, I do not know. How shall I sing the Lord's song in a strange land? How shall I lament for Jerusalem? How shall I flee from the grievous bondage of Pharaoh? How am I to quit the foul place of sojourn? How can I deny the bitter tyranny? How can I get out of the land of Egypt? How can I cross the Red Sea? how pass the great wilderness? how escape perishing from the bite of serpents? how conquer the aliens? How shall I utterly destroy the heathen within me? How shall I receive the oracles of the law of God upon these tables of mine? How shall I see the true pillar of light, and of the cloud proceeding from the Holy Ghost? How shall I enjoy the manna of eternal delight? how drink the water from the life-giving rock? How am I to pass over Jordan, entering into the good land of promise? How am I to see the Captain of the Lord's host, whom Joshua the son of Nun, when he saw Him, immediately fell down and worshipped? 7. Unless I go through all this and destroy the heathen within me, I cannot go into the sanctuary of God and rest, nor become a partaker of the glory of the King.

Therefore labour to become a child of God without fault, and to enter into that rest, whither the forerunner is for us entered, even Christ. Labour to be enrolled in the church in heaven with the firstborn that you may be found at the right hand of the majesty of the Most High. Labour to enter into the holy city, the Jerusalem that is at peace, that is above, above all, where also is Paradise. You have no other way to be admitted to these wonderful and blessed types, unless you pour out tears day and night, like him who says, Every night wash I my bed, and water my couch with my tears. You know well that they that sow in tears shall reap in joy. The prophet says boldly, Hold not Thy peace at my tears; and again, Put my tears into Thy bottle; are not these things noted in Thy book? and, My ears have been my meat day and night; and in another psalm, I have mingled my drink with weeping.

8. For the tear that is really shed out of much affliction and anguish of heart in the knowledge of the truth, with burning of the inward parts, is indeed a food of the soul, supplied from the heavenly bread, of which Mary preeminently partook, when she sat at the feet of the Lord and wept, after the testimony of the Saviour Himself. He says, Mary hath chosen that good part, which shall not be taken away from her. O those precious pearls in the flow of blessed tears! O that immediate and ready hearing! What a strong, wise mind! What keen love of the Spirit of

the Lord, moving vehemently towards the unsullied Bridegroom! What a sting of desire in the soul for God the Word! What swift communion of the bride with the heavenly Bridegroom!

9. Imitate her then, my child; imitate her whose eyes were fixed upon nothing but Him only, who said, I am come to send fire upon the earth, and I would that it were already kindled. There is indeed a burning of the Spirit, which burns hearts into flame. The immaterial divine fire has the effect of enlightening souls and trying them, like unalloyed gold in the furnace, but of consuming iniquity, like thorns or stubble; for our God is a consuming fire, taking vengeance on them that know Him not in flaming fire, and on them that obey not His gospel. It was this fire that worked in the apostles, when they spoke with fiery tongues. It was this fire which shone by the voice round St. Paul; enlightening his mind, but blinding his sense of sight; for not without the flesh did he see the power of that light. It was this fire which appeared to Moses in the bush. This fire, in the shape of a chariot, caught up Elias from the earth. The blessed David was seeking the operation of this fire when he said, Examine me, O Lord, and prove me: try out my reins and my heart. 10. It was this fire which warmed the heart of Cleopas and those with him while the Saviour talked after His resurrection. So the angels and ministering spirits partake of the shining of this fire, according to what is said, Who maketh His angels spirits, and His ministers a flaming fire.

It is this fire which burns up the beam that is in the inward eye, making the mind clear, that, recovering its natural power of penetration, it may see without interruption the wonderful things of God, according as one says, Open Thou mine eyes, that I may see the wondrous things of Thy law. This fire drives away devils, and destroys sin; but it is the power of resurrection, and the effectual working of immortality, the illumination of holy souls, and the strengthening of rational powers. Let us pray that this fire may reach us also, that always walking in light, we may never for a moment dash our feet against a stone, but shining as lights in the world, may hold forth the word of everlasting life; that enjoying ourselves among the good things of God we may rest with the Lord in life, glorifying the Father, and the Son, and the Holy Ghost, to whom be glory for ever. Amen.

HOMILY XXVI

Concerning the worth and value, the power and efficiency of the immortal soul, and how it is tempted by Satan and obtains deliverance from the temptations. It contains also some questions full of very great instruction. 1. Do not regard lightly the immaterial substance of the soul, beloved one. The immortal soul is a precious vessel. See how great the heaven and the earth are, and God was not satisfied with them, but only with thee. Consider thy dignity and thy nobility, that to thy succour the Lord came in person, not by the medium of angels, to recall thee who wert lost, thee who wert wounded, and to restore to thee the primal fashioning of the pure Adam. For man was master from the sky above to the things beneath, and capable of discerning the affections, without any connexion with devils, pure from sin, the image and likeness of God. But by the transgression he is lost, and wounded and brought to death. Satan has darkened his mind. In one thing this is so, and in another he lives and discerns, and has a will.

2. Question. When the Holy Ghost comes, is not the natural desire eradicated along with the sin? Answer. I have already said that sin is eradicated, and man recovers the primal fashioning of the pure Adam. Man, however, by the power of the Spirit and the spiritual regeneration, not only comes to the measures of the first Adam, but is made greater than he. Man is deified. 3. Question. Is Satan let loose upon us by measure, or does he fight as he pleases? Answer. As for him, his attack is not directed only against Christians, but against idolaters, and against all the world. If therefore he were allowed to fight as he pleases, he would have demolished all. Why? Because that is his object and his will. But as the potter puts his vessels in, and heats the furnace gradually by measure, not overmuch, lest, if they were baked too violently, they should crack, and not too little, lest they should be spoiled by being half-baked; and if the silversmith or goldsmith applies the fire by measure, for if the fire is in excess, the gold and the silver are melted, and get watery, and are spoiled; and if the mind of man knows how to measure the burden to the beast, to the camel or whatever animal it is, according to its burden-bearing capacity; how much rather does God, knowing what vessels men are, let loose the enemy power accordingly, in different degrees?

4. And as the earth is one, but here is rocky and there rich, and one part is suitable for vine-culture, another for growing wheat or barley, so do these fields of human hearts and wills differ from each other, and so are the gifts of grace from above bestowed. To one is given a ministry of the word, to another discernment, to a third gifts of healings. God knows a man's capacity for stewardship, and distributes His different gifts accordingly. In the like manner with regard to warfare the enemy power is let loose upon men by a kind of measure, according as each man is able to receive and bear the brunt. 5. Question. When a man has received the divine power, and is in some degree altered by it, does he still remain in the state of nature? Answer. In order that the will may be tested, even after grace, to see what way it inclines and gives consent, nature remains as it was before, the hard man in his hardness, and the light-hearted in his light-heartedness. It sometimes happens that an unlearned person is spiritually born again, and converted to a state of wisdom, and hidden mysteries are made known to him; and yet he remains by nature an unlearned man. Another was made by nature hard; and he gives up his will to godliness, and God accepts him; but the hardness of his nature remains, though God is satisfied in him. Another is of kindly habits, gentle, and good: he gives himself to God, and God accepts him; but if he does not continue in works of goodness, He is not satisfied. The whole nature of Adam is liable to change, for better or for worse, capable of what is wrong, yet, if it so pleases, without carrying it into effect.

6. It is like writing in a book. You write what you did not mean to write, and you erase it again. The book takes any kind of writing. So the hard man gave his will to God, was converted to what is good, was accepted by God; for God, to show His compassions, accepts men of all kinds, every sort of disposition. The apostles, when they came into a city, stayed there some time, and healed some of those who were ill, and others not. The apostles themselves would have liked to raise all their dead, and bring to health all who were ill, and they had not entirely their own way: they were not permitted to do all that they liked. In like manner, when Paul was seized by the ethnarch, if the grace that was with him had but willed it, he would have made ethnarch and wall to cleave asunder—and he a man possessed of the Paraclete; but the apostle was let down by means of a basket. Where then was the divine power that was with them? These things happened providentially, that in some matters they did signs and wonderful works, and in some were powerless, in order to show the difference of faith between those who believed not and those who believed, and to test and display the freedom of the will, whether some would take offence at their weaker side. If the apostles had done every single thing that they liked, men and their free will would have been planted in God's service by compulsory force because of the miracles, and it would no longer have been the work of faith or of unbelief. Christianity is a stone of stumbling and a rock of offence.

7. What is written of Job is not without significance, how Satan desired him. He was not able to do anything of himself, without leave. What does the devil say to the Lord? "Give him into my hands: surely he will bless Thee to Thy face." Job is the same to-day, and God is the same, and the devil is the same. In proportion as a man finds the help of God, and is zealous and fervent in grace, Satan desires him, and says to the Lord, "Because Thou succourest him, and helpest him, he serves Thee: let him go, and deliver him to me, surely he will bless Thee to Thy face." So, just because the soul is comforted, grace withdraws, and the soul is delivered to temptations. The devil comes, bringing ten thousand evils to bear—despair, giving it up, wicked thoughts—afflicting the soul, to loosen it and estrange it from hope of God.

8. But the prudent soul, when in miseries and affliction, never despairs, but holds what it holds, and whatever he may bring to bear, it endures amidst ten thousand temptations, saying, "If I die for it, I will not let Him go." Then, if the man endures to the end, the Lord begins to argue with Satan, "Thou seest how many miseries and afflictions thou hast brought to bear upon him; and he has not listened to thee, but serves Me, and fears Me." Then the devil is ashamed, and has nothing more to say. In Job's case, if he had known that in spite of falling into temptations Job would dare and not be worsted, he would never have desired him, for fear of being ashamed. So it is still with those who endure afflictions and temptations; Satan is ashamed and sorry, because he has got nothing by it. The Lord begins to reason with him, "Behold, I gave thee permission; behold, I suffered thee to tempt him. Wast thou able to do anything? Did he listen to thee at all?"

9. Question. Does Satan know all a man's thoughts and intentions?

Answer. If one man, by being with another, knows about him, and you, who are twenty years old, know the affairs of your neighbour, can Satan fail to know your reasonings? He has been with you from your birth. He is six thousand years old. Yet I do not say that he knows what a man will do before he tempts him. The tempter tempts, but does not know whether the man will yield or not yield, till such time as the soul gives up its will into bondage. Nor do I say that the devil knows all the thoughts and devices of the heart. Suppose there is a tree with many branches and many limbs. A man may be able to grasp two or three branches of the tree. So the soul has many branches and many limbs. There are some branches of thought and intention which Satan grasps; there are other thoughts and intentions not grasped by Satan. 10. In one thing the side of evil is the stronger when thoughts spring up, in another the man's thought is more than conqueror, receiving succour and deliverance from God, and resisting sin. At one point the man is mastered, at another he has his will. Sometimes he comes to God with fervour, and Satan knows it, and sees that he is acting against him, and cannot restrain him. Why? Because

he has the will to cry to God; he has the natural fruits of loving God, of believing, of seeking and coming.

In the outer world, the husbandman tills the ground; but in spite of his tilling, he needs rains and showers from above. If no moisture comes from above, the husbandman has no profit from his tilling of the ground. So is it with the spiritual world. There are two factors to be taken into consideration. The man must cultivate with a will the ground of his heart, and labour upon it—for God requires the man's labour and toil and travail. But unless clouds of heaven make their appearance from above, and showers of grace, the husbandman does not profit by his toil.

11. This is the mark of Christianity—however much a man toils, and however many righteousnesses he performs, to feel that he has done nothing, and in fasting to say, "This is not fasting," and in praying, "This is not prayer," and in perseverance at prayer, "I have shown no perseverance; I am only just beginning to practise and to take pains"; and even if he is righteous before God, he should say, "I am not righteous, not I; I do not take pains, but only make a beginning every day." He should every day have the hope and the joy and the expectation of the coming kingdom and deliverance, and to say, "If to-day I have not been delivered, I shall to-morrow." As the man who plants a vine has the joy and the hope in himself, before ever he embarks upon the toil, and sketches out vineyards in his mind, and reckons up the income, when there has been no wine yet, and so enters upon the toil—for the hope and expectation make him labour cheerfully, and for the time being he incurs many expenses out of pocket; and in like manner the man who builds a house, and the man who tills a field, are at much expense to themselves first, in hope of the advantage to come; so it is here. If a man does not keep before his eyes the joy and the hope, "I shall find deliverance and life," he cannot endure the afflictions, or the burden, and adopt the narrow way. It is the presence of hope and joy that make him labour and endure the afflictions.

12. But as it is not easy for a brand to escape from the fire, so neither can the soul escape out of the fire of death, except with a great deal of trouble. For the most part, Satan, under pretext of good thoughts, that in such and such a way you can please God, offers suggestions to the soul, and underhand seduces it to subtle and specious notions, and it does not know how to discern that it is being seduced, and thus it falls into the snare and perdition of the devil. The most deadly weapon of the combatant and champion is this, to enter into the heart and make war there upon Satan, and to hate himself and to deny his own soul, to be angry with it and rebuke it, and to resist the desires that dwell there, and grapple with his thoughts, and fight with himself.

13. If outwardly you keep your body from corruption and fornication, but inwardly commit adultery, to God you are an adulterer and a fornicator in your thoughts, and you have gained nothing by the virginity of your body. If there is a young

woman and a young man, and he by guile wheedles her till she is corrupted, she then becomes an object of loathing to her spouse, because she has been unfaithful. So the incorporeal soul, if it holds fellowship with the serpent that lurks within, the wicked spirit, goes a-whoring from God, as it is written, Everyone that looketh upon a woman to lust after her hath committed adultery already in his heart. There is a fornication effected in the body, and there is a fornication of the soul, when it holds fellowship with Satan. The same soul is partner and sister either of devils, or of God and the angels; and if it commits adultery with the devil, it is unfit for the heavenly Bridegroom.

14. Question. Is Satan ever quiet, and a man set free from warfare, or has he war as long as he lives? Answer. Satan is never quiet from warring. As long as ever a man lives in this world and wears the flesh, he has to war. But when all the fiery darts of the wicked one are quenched, what harm does it do the man, if Satan does try conclusions with him? A man is a friend of the king's, and an adversary brings a suit against him. When he has the king to favour and befriend him, and the king gives him a helping hand, he takes no harm. When any one succeeds in passing through all ranks and degrees and becomes a friend of the king's, no one then can do him any harm. There are in the outward world cities which receive gifts and subsidies from the emperor. If they do perform some service, they lose nothing by it, when they gain and get such advantages from the emperor. So Christians, even if the enemy fights against them, have taken up their quarters with the Godhead, and have put on the power and rest from on high, and do not mind the war.

15. As the Lord put on the body, leaving behind all principality and power, so Christians put on the Holy Ghost, and are at rest. Even if war comes outwardly, Satan may knock, but they are secured within by the power of the Lord, and do not mind Satan. He tempted the Lord in the wilderness forty days, and what harm did it do Him, to approach His body outwardly? Inwardly He was God. So Christians, though outwardly tempted, are inwardly filled with the Godhead, and are in nothing injured. But if any one has reached these measures, he has arrived at the perfect love of Christ, and at the fulness of the Godhead. One that is not so, has still war within. For an hour he is at rest in prayer; at another hour he stands in affliction and at war. Such is the will of the Lord. Because he is still a child, He practises him in the wars; and both things spring up in him, light and darkness, rest and affliction. They rest in prayer, and at another hour they are in distress.

16. Do you not hear what Paul says, "Though I have all gifts, though I give my body to be burned, though I speak with the tongues of angels, and have not charity, I am nothing. These gifts serve only as inducements. Those who are contented with them, are but children, though in the light. Many of the brethren have come to such measures, and had gifts of healing, and revelation and prophecy, and because they did not reach the perfect love, wherein lies the bond of perfectness, war came

upon them, and they took no heed, and fell. But if anyone reaches the perfect love, that man is from thenceforth fast bound, and is the captive of grace. If anyone approaches within a little of the measure but does not reach to be fast bound in love itself, such an one is still subject to fear, and war, and falling, and unless he takes good care of himself, Satan throws him.

17. In this way many have erred when grace came to them. They thought that they had attained perfection, and said, "That is enough; we need no more." But the Lord has no end, and there is no comprehending Him. Christians do not presume to say, "We have comprehended," but are humbled, still seeking night and day. In the outer world, there is no end to learning, and no man knows it except a scholar who has acquired some degree of learning. So in the matter before us, God cannot be comprehended or measured, unless by those who have had a taste of Him, whom they have personally received, and they recognise their own incapacity. If a man who has a smattering of learning goes to a country place, where the people are no scholars, he is admired by them as a scholar, because they are altogether illiterate, and have no means of judging. But let that same man with his small amount of learning pass into a city where there are rhetoricians and real scholars; he dare not appear among them, or open his mouth, because the true scholars consider him illiterate.

18. Question. If a man who is still at war, and who still has both these things in his soul—sin and grace—is removed from this world, where does he go, when both sides have a hold upon him? Answer. He goes where his mind aims, and where his love is. Only if affliction and war come upon you, you ought to resist, and to hate it. That the war comes upon you is not your doing, but to hate it, is; and then the Lord, seeing your mind, that you are striving, and that you love Him with your whole soul, parts death from your soul in one moment—which is not hard for Him to do—and takes you to His bosom and into the light. In a moment of time He snatches you out of the mouth of darkness, and translates you at once into His kingdom. For to God all things are easy to do in a moment of time, if only your love is set upon Him. God needs man's working, because the soul is capable of fellowship with the Godhead.

19. I have often already made use of the parable of the husbandman, how after labouring and putting his seed into the ground he must wait for the rain from above. Unless clouds appear and winds blow, the labour of the husbandman is of no use. The seed lies bare. Apply this to the spiritual order. If the man rests only upon his own working, and does not receive in addition something which his nature cannot supply, he cannot yield to the Lord fruits worthy of Him. Now what is man's working? To renounce, to go out of the world, to pray when it is hard, to be on the watch, to love God and the brethren. This is his own doing. But if he rests upon this working of his own, and does not hope to receive anything else besides, and

the winds of the Holy Ghost do not blow upon the soul, and if clouds of heaven do not appear, nor rain from heaven fall and moisten the soul, the man cannot yield to the Lord fruits worthy of Him.

20. It is written that when the husbandman sees the branch bearing fruit, he purgeth it, that it may bring forth more fruit, but that which beareth not fruit he rooteth out, and giveth it to burning. But this is the part of man, that whether he fasts, or keeps watch, or prays, or does some fine thing, he should ascribe all to the Lord, and say, "If God had not enabled me, I could not have fasted, or prayed, or gone out of the world." In this way, God, seeing your intention, that you ascribe to God the things that are yours, which you do of your own nature, bestows upon you in return the things that are His—the spiritual things, the divine and heavenly things. And what are they? The fruits of the Spirit, gladness and mirth.
21. Question. But since there are natural fruits like these, love, faith, prayer, show us the difference, how the natural things are, and how the spiritual.

Answer. The things which you do of yourself are all very well, and acceptable to God, but they are not quite pure. For instance, you love God, but not perfectly. The Lord comes, and gives a love which is unchangeable, the heavenly love. You pray in the natural manner with wandering and doubt; God gives you the pure prayer, in Spirit and in truth. In the visible world, the soil of itself for the most part produces thorns; the husbandman digs, works it carefully, puts in seed, but the thorns which no one sowed, spring up and multiply; for after the transgression it was said to Adam, Thistles and thorns shall the earth bring forth unto thee. The husbandman again takes trouble, digs up the thorns, and yet they multiply. Apply this spiritually. Since the transgression the ground of the heart brings forth thorns and thistles. The man works it, takes trouble, and still the thorns of the evil spirits spring up. Then the Holy Ghost Himself helpeth the infirmities of men, and the Lord puts heavenly seed in that ground of the heart, and works it; and though the seed is cast, the thistles and thorns still spring up. Again the Lord and the man together work the ground of the soul, and yet the evil spirits and the thorns shoot up there and grow, until the summer comes, and grace abounds, and the thorns are withered by the heat of the sun.

22. For though evil is present with nature, yet it no longer has the same dominion over it, or the same range. The delicate blades of the wheat may be choked by the tares; but when summer comes, after the drying off of the fruits, the tares harm the wheat no more. If there should happen to be thirty peck of pure wheat, and a mixture of tares of perhaps a quart is in it, what comparison does it bear? It is swamped in the abundance of the wheat. So in grace, when the gift of God and grace abounds in the man, and he is rich in the Lord, and yet evil is present to some extent, it cannot seriously harm the man, nor has it any force or range against him. The coming of the Lord and His provision had this object—to liberate those

who were in bondage to evil, and bound over, and subject to it, and to make them conquerors of the death of sin. Brethren therefore ought not to think it strange, if some people give them trouble, with a view to getting rid of evil.

23. In the Old Testament, Moses and Aaron, when they held the priesthood, had much to suffer. Caiaphas, when he occupied their seat, himself persecuted and condemned the Lord; yet the Lord, in respect for the priesthood, suffered him to execute the office. The prophets likewise were persecuted by their own nation. Peter was the successor of Moses, entrusted with Christ's new church and with the true priesthood; for we have now a baptism of fire and the Spirit, and a circumcision in the heart. For the divine and heavenly Spirit lodges in the mind; nevertheless even these perfect ones, so long as they are in the flesh, are not free from anxiety, because of the freedom of their will, but are still subject to fear, and for that same reason are allowed to be tempted. But if the soul succeeds in reaching that city of the saints, then, but not before, it is able to live without trouble and temptations. There, no longer is there anxiety, or trouble, or weariness, or old age, or Satan, or warfare, but rest, joy, peace, and salvation. The Lord is in the midst of them, and He is called the Saviour, becauses He saves the captives. He is called the Physician, forasmuch as He gives the heavenly and divine medicine, and heals the sufferings of the soul; for in some respects they have dominion over the man. To speak of them in comparison, Jesus is King and God; Satan is an usurper and a tyrant.

24. Well, God and His angels wish to adopt this man for the kingdom with themselves, the devil likewise and his angels desire to adopt him to themselves. The soul is in the middle between the two subsistences, and to whichever side the will of the soul inclines, of that side it becomes a possession and a son. And as a father, who sends his son to a foreign country, where he will meet with venomous creatures by the way, gives him remedies and antidotes, in order that if the venomous creatures or dragons attack him he may give them his remedy and kill them; so endeavour, I charge you, to receive the heavenly remedy, the healing and antidote of the soul, that by means of it you may kill the poisonous beasts of unclean spirits. It is indeed no easy matter to get a clean heart; only with much effort and labour can a man get a clean conscience and heart, that the evil may be quite eradicated.

25. It sometimes happens that grace comes to a man without his heart being cleansed. The reason why those who have fallen fell was that they did not believe that after grace smoke and sin could still be present with them. But all the righteous have gone the straight and narrow way to please God, and gone on it to the end. Abraham was rich toward God, as well as to the world, but he called himself dust and ashes. David says, A very scorn of men, and the outcast of the people, a worm and no man. In like manner all the prophets and apostles were ill-treated and reviled. The Lord Himself, who is the Way, and is God, when He came for thy sake, not for His own, to be a pattern to thee of every good thing—see

to what humiliation He came, having taken the form of a servant, who is God, the Son of God, King, the Son of the King, giving healing remedies and curing those that are wounded, when He Himself appeared outwardly as one of the wounded.

26. But do not despise His divine dignity when thou beholdest Him outwardly humbled as one like us. It was for our sake that he appeared thus, not for His own. Consider, at the hour when they cried, Crucify Him, crucify Him, and the multitude came together, how He was humbled beyond all men. In the ordinary world, if there be a malefactor, and he receives sentence from the magistrate, he is then abhorred by the whole people, and set at nought. So was the Lord at the hour of the cross. As a man that was going to die, He was held of no account by the Pharisees. And when they spat in His face, and put on Him the crown of thorns, and buffeted Him, what further humiliation could He have undergone? It is written, I gave My back to the smiters, and I hid not My face from shame and spitting, and my cheeks from buffeting. If God condescends to such insults and sufferings and humiliation, thou, who art by nature clay and of mortal nature, howsoever thou mayest be humbled, thou wilt never do anything like Thy Master. God for thy sake humbled himself, and thou wilt not be humbled for thine own sake, but art proud and puffed up. He came to take upon Him thy afflictions and thy burdens, and to give Thee His own rest; and thou art unwilling to bear troubles and to suffer in order to gain healing for thy wounds. Glory be to His patience and long-suffering for ever. Amen.

HOMILY XXVII

This Homily, like the foregoing, describes at length the dignity and status of a Christian man. Then it teaches many useful things concerning free will, intermixing some questions full of divine wisdom. 1. KNOW, O man, thy nobility and thy dignity, how honourable thou art, the brother of Christ, the friend of the King, the bride of the heavenly Bridegroom. He who has learned to know the dignity of his own soul, is in a position to know the power and the mysteries of the Godhead, and thereby to be the more humbled; since by the power of God a man beholds the greatness of his own fall. But as He passed through passion and cross before He was glorified and sat down on the Father's right hand, so thou also must suffer with Him, be crucified with Him, and so ascend and sit with Him, and be joined with the body of Christ, and reign for ever with Him in that world—if so be that we suffer with Him, that we may be also glorified together.

2. For those who prove able to overcome and pass the fences of evil, enter into the heavenly city, which is at peace, and is full of many good things, where the spirits of just men are at rest. Therefore we ought to take great pains and strive mightily for this; for it is not right for the Bridegroom, who came for thy sake, to suffer and be crucified, while the bride, for whose sake the Bridegroom came, idles along and wanders. A harlot gives herself away disorderly to anybody; so the soul has given herself away to every devil, and i corrupted by those spirits. There are some who have sin and evil because they choose to have it, others against their choice. What is the meaning of this? Those who have evil of their own choice are those who have given away their will to evil, and take pleasure in it, and make friends with it. These have peace with Satan, and make no war in their thoughts with the devil. But those with whom it is against their choice, have the sin that is in them warring in their members, as the apostle says; and the misty power and the veil is against their choice, and they do not consent to it in their thoughts, and take no pleasure in it, nor comply with it, but contend with it by word and deed, and throw their whole weight against it, and are angry with themselves. These are far nobler and more honourable in God's eyes than the others, who of their own choice give away their wills to evil, and have pleasure in it.

3. Suppose a king were to find a poor maiden, clothed in rags, and were not ashamed, but took away her soiled clothes, and washed off her blackness, and adorned her with splendid clothes, and made her a partner of the king, and gave her a share of his table and the banquet; so did the Lord find the soul wounded and stricken, and gave her medicine, and took off her the black garments and the disgrace of sin, and clothed her with royal, heavenly garments, the garments of the Godhead, all shining and glorious, and put a crown upon her, and made her a partaker of the royal table for joy and gladness. And as when there is a pleasure garden, and it has there fruit trees, and all sweet-smelling ones, and there are there many charming spots, all lovely and filled with fragrance and refreshment, and whoever goes there is delighted and refreshed; so are the souls in the kingdom, all in joy, delight, and peace. Kings and lords they are, and gods; for it is written, King of kings, and Lord of lords.

4. Christianity, then, is no ordinary thing. This mystery is great. Recognise therefore thy nobility, that thou art called to kingly dignity, a chosen generation, a royal priesthood, and a holy nation. The mystery of Christianity is foreign to this world. The visible glory of the emperor and his wealth are earthly, and perishable, and passing away; but that kingdom and wealth are divine things, heavenly and glorious, never to pass away or be dissolved. For they reign together with the heavenly King, in the heavenly church, and He is the firstborn from the dead, and they also are firstborn. And yet, though they are all this, chosen and approved before God, in their own eyes they are the least, and highly disapproved; and this is fixed in them like a part of nature, to esteem themselves nothing. 5. Question. Are they then unaware that they have received something additional, and have acquired what they had not before, that was foreign to their nature?

Answer. What I say is that they are not approved, and that they have made no progress, and they do not know how they acquired what they had not; but while they are all this, grace itself comes and teaches them not to count their soul dear, for all their progress, but to count themselves naturally the reverse of dear, and dear though they are to God, to themselves they are not so. With all their progress and knowledge of God, they are as if they knew nothing, and rich as they are before God, in their own eyes they are poverty stricken. But as Christ took the form of a servant, and conquered the devil by humility, so at the beginning it was by pride and self-esteem that the serpent overthrew Adam; and the same serpent, lurking in hearts, still casts down and destroys the race of Christians by self-esteem.

6. If a man is free and well born, according to the world, and possessed of much wealth, and continues to make money, and increases his income, he loses his senses, and becomes self-confident, and becomes unbearable, and kicks and cuffs everybody. That is the way with some people of no discretion, who, on finding some little enjoyment and power of prayer, began to be puffed up and to lose their

senses, and to pass sentence; and so they fell to the lowest parts of the earth. The same serpent who threw Adam out by pride, saying, Ye shall be as gods, still suggests pride in men's hearts, saying, "You are perfect; you have enough; you have got rich; you have no need; you are blessed." There are others in the world, who have riches, and improve upon them with large incomes, and yet hold within the bounds of discretion, and neither boast nor are lifted up, but keep their level, because they know that after affluence comes dearth; and again when loss and dearth befall them, they are not dismayed, but still keep level, knowing that the turn of plenty will come back; and by long training in these matters, they are never surprised, and in times of increase and plenty are not elated, and if loss comes upon them, they are not surprised.

7. Christianity is in practice something like this—the tasting of the truth, the eating and drinking of the truth, to eat and drink on and on in reality and to good effect. Suppose there to be a spring, and some one that is thirsty begins to drink of it, and then before he has done some one carries him off, and will not allow him to be as much filled as he desires, that man is the more inflamed for having tasted of the water, and he makes the more earnest effort to get it. So in the spiritual order a man tastes and partakes of heavenly sustenance, and then, before he has done, it withdraws, and no one enables him to take his fill. 8. Question. Why is he not allowed to take his fill?

Answer. The Lord knows the man's weakness, that he is easily lifted up. Therefore He withdraws, and permits the man to be exercised and put to trouble. If you receive but a little, and no one can put up with you, you are so puffed up with it, how much more intolerable you would have been if some one had given you your fill at once! But God, knowing that weakness, providentially brings you into troubles, that you may be humble, and the more earnest in seeking God. A poor man according to the world found a purse of gold, and was so light with pleasure that he began to proclaim, "I have found a purse; I am a rich man"; then by the report the loser heard of it, and recovered it. Another man, who was rich, lost his senses, and began to kick, and to be insolent to everybody, and to exalt himself above certain persons, when the emperor heard of it, and confiscated his property. So it is in the spiritual realm. If some people taste but a little refreshment, they do not know how to manage it, but lose even what they had received, for sin tempts them, and darkens their mind.

9. Question. How do some fall after the visitation of grace? Is not Satan shown to be much the weaker? Where it is day, how can there be night? Answer. It is not that grace is quenched or feeble; but in order that your free-will and your liberty may be tested, which way it inclines, grace makes way for sin; and then you again draw nigh to the Lord with your will, and entreat that grace may visit you. How is it written, Quench not the Spirit? The Spirit cannot be quenched, but is always

light; but you, if you are careless and do not with your own will correspond, are yourself quenched and lose the Spirit. In like manner it says, Grieve not the Holy Spirit, whereby ye were sealed unto the day of redemption. You see that it lies in your own will and freedom of determination to honour the Holy Spirit and not to grieve Him. I assure you that freedom of choice remains even in perfect Christians, who are subjugated to what is good and intoxicated with it, and the consequence is that, though put to the proof by ten thousand evils, they turn to that which is good.

10. As when persons of rank and wealth and high birth by their own will and choice forsake their wealth and birth and dignities, and go and put on poor sordid clothing, and dishonour instead of respect, and bear hardship, and are held of no account, this is all left to their own discretion. You may believe me, that even the apostles, perfected as they were in grace, were not hindered by that grace from doing as they desired, if they wished occasionally to do a thing that was not pleasing to grace. Our nature is susceptible of good and bad, and the adverse power acts by persuasion, not compulsion. You have free choice to incline which way you will. Do you not read that Peter was to be blamed, and that Paul went and reproved him. In spite of being what he was, he was still to be blamed. And Paul, for all his spirituality, of his own will, engaged in a dispute with Barnabas, and they grew so sharp that they withdrew from one another. And that same Paul says, Ye that are spiritual, restore such an one, considering thyself, lest thou also be tempted. There! the spiritual are tempted, because their freedom of will remains; and the enemies keep plying them as long as they are in this world.

11. Question. Could not the apostles sin, if they chose? or was grace too mighty for their wills? Answer. They could not sin, because they could not choose to sin, being in light and in such grace. I do not say that grace in them was weak. What I say is that grace permits even perfect spiritual persons to have the use of their will, and power to do what they choose, and to turn in which direction they like. And human nature, which is weak, has power to turn, even when good is present with it. If there are people in full armour, with breastplate and other arms, they are then well protected inside, and the enemies do not attack them; or if they attack, it is within the power of their will either to make use of those arms, and to fight and struggle with the foe, and to carry off the victory, or to take a liking to that foe, and come to terms with him, and refrain from fighting, in spite of the armour. In the same way, Christians, arrayed with perfect power, and possessed of the armour of heaven, can, if they are so minded, take a liking to Satan, and come to terms with him, and desist from the war. Nature is liable to change, and a man can, if he pleases, become a son of God or a son of perdition. His freedom of will remains.

12. It is one thing to give a description of bread and table, and another to eat and take the relish of that bread, and to be strengthened in all your members. It is

one thing to speak in words about a delicious drink, and another to go and draw from the very spring, and to take your fill of the delicious drink. It is one thing to discourse of war, and of noble combatants and warriors, and another to go yourself into the fighting-line, and to close with the enemy, and to go in and out, and to take and give, and to carry off the victory. In spiritual things the same holds good. It is one thing to give descriptive accounts with a certain head-knowledge and correct notions, and another in substance and reality, in full experience, and in the inward man, and in the mind, to possess the treasure and the grace and the taste and the effectual working of the Holy Ghost. Those who utter bare words, make a parade and are puffed up by their mind. Our speech, it says, and our preaching was not with enticing words of man's wisdom, but in demonstration of the Spirit and of power; and again elsewhere, The end of the commandment is love out of a pure heart and a good conscience and faith unfeigned. A man like that does not fall. To many who sought after God, the door has been opened, and they have seen a treasure, and have entered into it; and in the midst of their joy, while they were saying, "We have found a treasure," He has shut the doors upon them. Then they began to cry aloud, and to mourn, and to seek the more. "We found a treasure and have lost it." Grace withdraws of set purpose, that we may seek more earnestly. The treasure is shown, to encourage us to seek after it.

13. Question. Some say that after grace a man has passed from death unto life. Can then one who is in the light have impure thoughts? Answer. It is written, Having begun in the Spirit, do ye now finish in the flesh? It says again, Put on the whole armour of the Spirit, that ye may be able to stand against the wiles of the devil. Naturally enough, these are two different places—one where he was when he put on the armour, and one where he is when he fights with the principalities and powers—in the light, or in the darkness. Again, That ye may be able to quench the fiery darts of the wicked one, and again, Grieve not the Holy Spirit of God, and again, It is impossible for those who were once enlightened, and have tasted the gift of God, and were made partakers of the Holy Ghost, and fell away, to renew them again. There! those who were enlightened and have tasted fall away. You see that a man has the power of will to agree with the Spirit, or to grieve Him. Certainly he takes up arms with a view to going to battle and contending against the foe; certainly he was enlightened, in order to campaign against the darkness.

14. Question. What does the apostle mean by saying, Though I have all knowledge and all prophecy, and speak with the tongues of angels, I am nothing?

Answer. We ought not to understand it to mean that the apostle is nothing; but in comparison with that charity which is perfect, these things are little, and he who is in these measures may fall; but he who has charity is beyond falling. I can assure you, that I have seen men who had come by all the spiritual gifts and were partakers of the Spirit, who, not having attained perfect charity, fell. One, a

nobleman by birth, renounced the world, sold his possessions, gave his slaves their liberty; being a man of prudence and understanding, he was renowned for his strict and holy life; and meanwhile, conceiving an opinion of himself and getting proud, at last he came down to debaucheries and a thousand bad things. 15. Another in time of persecution gave his own body, and was a confessor. When peace was restored, he was set free, and had a great name. His eyelids were injured by having been smoked. This man, being much glorified and called to prayers, took victuals, and gave to his servant, and his mind was as if he had never heard the word of God. Another gave his body under persecution, and was hung up, and scraped, and then flung into prison. There he was religiously served by one of the sisters-regular. He contracted a familiarity with her, while in prison, and fell into fornication. Observe the fall of the rich man who sold his possessions, and of him who gave his body to martyrdom. 16.

Another, a prudent ascetic, who lived with me in the same dwelling and prayed with me, was so rich in grace that in praying beside me he would be struck speechless, grace boiled so within him. There was given him also the gift of healings, and he not only drove away devils, but those who were bound hand and foot and had dreadful sufferings he would cure by the imposition of his hands. Then he relaxed his care, and being much glorified by the world, and taking pleasure in it, he became vain, and fell into the lowest depths of sin. Observe the fall of one who had the gift of healing. You see how men fall, before reaching the measures of charity. For one who arrives at charity is bound and intoxicated; he is drowned, and carried captive to another world, as if he had no consciousness of his own nature.

17. Question. What is the meaning of the things which eye hath not seen, nor ear heard, neither hath it entered into the heart of man? Answer. At that time, the great and the righteous men, and kings and prophets, were aware indeed that the Redeemer was coming; but that He should suffer and be crucified, and His blood poured out upon the cross, they neither knew, nor had they heard it; neither had it entered into their heart that there should be a baptism of fire and of the Holy Ghost, and that in the church bread and wine should be offered, the symbol of His flesh and blood, and that those who partake of the visible bread eat spiritually the flesh of the Lord, and that the apostles and Christians receive the Paraclete, and are endued with power from on high, and are filled with the Godhead, and their souls mingled with the Holy Ghost. This the prophets and kings knew not, neither did it enter into their heart. Now, Christians have a very different wealth, and their hearts are set upon the Godhead; but for all this joy and comfort, they are still under fear and trembling.

18. Question. What fear and trembling?

Answer. That they may make no mistake, but correspond with grace. It is like a man possessed of treasures, who is journeying to places where there are robbers.

He is glad of the riches and the treasure; but he is in fear lest the robbers should set upon him and spoil him of them; and as one who carries his blood in his hands, so is he. Look, so far as outward things go, we have all made our renuntiation, and are strangers, without possessions, and deprived of fleshly fellowship. Now, there lies the body in prayer; the brethren must say whether the mind is in correspondence with the body. Artisans and foremen in the world usually apply their whole body to their business and their mind too, both night and day. Now look well to yourself. Your body is strange to this world; is your mind alienated from the age? do you never wander into the world? Every man of the world, soldier, or merchant, wherever his body is, has his mind also there fixed, and there is his treasure. It is written, Where your treasure is, there will your heart be also. 19. What treasure is your mind after? Is it wholly and entirely Godwards, or not? If it is not, you must tell me what it is that hinders. Certainly they are evil spirits, Satan and the devils, who have hold of the mind, and put fetters on the soul.

The devil is very wily, and has many conjuring tricks, and loopholes, and all manner of shifts, and keeps hold of the ranges and thoughts of the soul, and will not allow it to pray properly and to draw nigh to God. For nature itself is capable of fellowship with the devils and spirits of wickedness, and likewise with angels and the Holy Ghost. It is the temple of Satan, or the temple of the Holy Ghost. Examine your mind, brethren; which are you in fellowship with? angels, or devils? Whose temple are you? a habitation of God, or of the devil? With what treasure is your heart filled? grace, or Satan? Like a house that has been filled with evil smells and filthiness, it must be thoroughly cleansed, and set in order, and filled with all fragrance and treasures, that the Holy Ghost may come instead of Satan, and may rest in the hearts of Christians.

20. Not the moment, however, that he hears the word of God, does a man come to be of the good side. If hearing made him of the good side at once, there would no longer be conflicts, or critical battles, or a race. Without further ado, if only he had heard, he would have come into peace and to perfect measures. But the facts are otherwise. You take away the man’s free will, if you say so, and deny the existence of the opposite power, wrestling with the mind. What we say is this, that the man who hears the word comes to compunction, and after that, grace purposely withdraws, for the man’s good, and he enters into training and the discipline of battle, and engages in a struggle and contest with Satan, and only after a long race and contest carries off the prizes of victory, and becomes a Christian. If merely hearing made a man to belong without more ado to the good, then all the theatre-people and the whoremongers will go into the kingdom and the life. No one will give them this without effort and striving, because it is a straight and narrow way. By this rough way we have to travel, and to endure, and bear affliction, and so to enter into life.

21. If it were possible to succeed without effort, Christianity would no longer be a stone of stumbling and a rock of offence. There would be no faith and unbelief. You would make man a creature of necessity, incapable of turning to good or evil. It is only to one who can turn to either side that a law is given—one who is at liberty to do battle with the adverse power. No law is laid down for a nature that is under necessity. The sun, the heaven and the earth, call for no legislation; such creatures are of a nature governed by necessity, and for this reason they are not liable to reward or punishment. Reward and glory are prepared for him who turns to the good; hell and punishment are prepared for this convertible nature, capable of fleeing from the evil and throwing its weight upon the right-hand side, the side of good. If you say that he is not of an alterable nature, you make the good man undeserving of praise. For one who is good and kind by nature does not deserve praise for it, though he may be very desirable. What is not good by choice is not praiseworthy, however desirable it may be. Praise is only deserved by one who by his personal resolution with effort and struggle makes the good his own through free-will and choice.

22. As if when the Persians have a camp on one side and the Romans a camp on the other, two winged youths of equal powers should come forth from them and engage in a struggle, so the opposing force and the mind are in equipoise. Satan has power to influence and entice the soul to his own will, and the soul has equal power to resist and to refuse any compliance with him. Both powers, good and evil, act by suasion, not by compulsion. A choice like this may count upon divine assistance, and is able in its struggle to receive weapons from heaven, and by them to root out evil and conquer it. To resist sin is in the power of the soul, though without God it cannot conquer the evil or root it out. Those who say that sin is like a mighty giant and the soul like a little child are wrong. If things were so ill-matched, sin like a giant and the soul like a little child, the Law-giver would be unjust, in having given man a law to struggle against Satan.

23. This is the foundation of the way to God—in much patience, in hope, in humility, in poverty of spirit, in meekness to travel along the way of life; and it is by these things that a man can come to have righteousness in himself. By righteousness we mean the Lord Himself. These commandments, which so enjoin us, are like milestones and waymarks that stand by the king’s highway, which leads wayfarers up to the heavenly city. We read, Blessed are the poor in spirit, blessed are the meek, blessed are the merciful, blessed are the peacemakers. That is what you may call Christianity. If any one does not travel by this way, he has wandered where there is no way; he uses a bad foundation. Glory to the compassions of the Father and the Son and the Holy Ghost for ever. Amen.

HOMILY XXVIII

This Homily describes and bewails the calamity of the soul, that by reason of sin the Lord does not dwell in it; and concerning John the Baptist, that none among those born of women is greater than he. 1. AS once God was wroth with the Jews, and gave Jerusalem openly over to its enemies, and they which hated them were lords over them, and there was no longer any feast there, or any offering; so, being wroth with the soul, He gave it over to its enemies, both to devils and to passions; and so, when these had seduced it, they ruined it utterly, and no longer was there any feast there, or any incense or offering sent up by it to God, its tokens being filled in the streets, dreadful beasts and serpent spirits of wickedness making their domicile within it; and as a house, if it has not the master resident in it, gets clothed with darkness and shame and abuse, and filled with dirt and filth, so the soul which has not its Master with His angels making merry in it, gets filled with the darkness of sin, and the shame of passions, and all manner of disgrace.

2. Alas for the street, if no one walks in it, nor hears in it the voice of man, because it becomes the habitation of wild beasts. Alas for the soul when the Lord takes not His way in it, and drives not out of it with His voice the spiritual wild beasts of wickedness. Alas for the house when the master does not live in it. Alas for the land when it has not the husbandman to till it. Alas for the ship when it has not the steersman, because it is carried along by the waves and surges of the sea and is lost. Alas for the soul when it has not Christ, the true steersman, in it, because finding itself in the sea of the bitterness of darkness, and tossed by the surge of passions, and storm-beaten by the winds of evil spirits, it ends by gaining perdition. Alas for the soul, when it has not Christ to till it carefully, that it may be able to bring forth good fruits of the Spirit; because left desolate, and filled with thorns and thistles, its fruit in the end is the burning of fire. Alas for the soul when it has not Christ, its Master, living in it; because, left desolate, and being filled with the noisome odour of passions, it finds itself the habitation of iniquity.

3. As the husbandman, when he goes to till the ground, must take the proper tools and clothing for tilling, so Christ, the King, the heavenly and true husbandman, in coming to humanity, which had been laid desolate by sin, put on the body, and

carried the cross for His tool, and so tilled the desolate soul, and took out of it the thorns and thistles of evil spirits, and plucked up the tares of sin, and burned up with fire every weed of its sins; and thus tilling it with the wood of the cross He planted in it that fairest paradise of the Spirit, bearing every fruit that is sweet and desirable for God as its owner. 4. And as in Egypt, during the three days' darkness, the son saw not his father, nor brother, brother, nor true friend his friend, because the darkness hid them, so when Adam transgressed the commandment and fell from his former glory, and came under the power of the spirit of the world, and the veil of darkness fell upon his soul, from his time and until the last Adam, the Lord, they saw not the true Father in heaven, or the good, kind mother, the grace of the Spirit, or the sweet and desired Brother, the Lord, or the friends and kindred, the holy angels, with whom He rejoiced, making merry and keeping festival. And it was not only until the last Adam, but even to this day those upon whom the Sun of righteousness, Christ, has not arisen, and in whom the eyes of the soul have not been opened and enlightened by the true light, are still under the same darkness of sin, wrought upon by the same influence of pleasures, subject to the same punishment, not yet having eyes to behold the Father.

5. This is a thing which every one ought to know, that there are eyes deeper within than these eyes, and a hearing deeper within than this hearing. As these eyes sensibly behold and recognise the face of a friend or beloved one, so the eyes of the worthy and faithful soul, being spiritually enlightened with the light of God, behold and recognise the true Friend, the sweetest and greatly longed for Bridegroom, the Lord, while the soul is shone upon by the adorable Spirit; and thus beholding with the mind the desirable and only inexpressible beauty, it is smitten with passionate love of God, and is directed into all virtues of the Spirit, and thus possesses an unbounded, unfailing love for the Lord it longs for. What therefore is more blessed than that everlasting voice of John, when he shows the Lord before our eyes, saying, Behold the Lamb of God, which taketh away the sin of the world.

6. Truly among them that are born of women there is none greater than John the Baptist. He is the fulfilment of all the prophets. All the prophets prophesied of the Lord, showing His coming afar off: John prophesied of the Saviour and showed Him before all eyes, crying aloud and saying, Behold the Lamb of God! What a sweet and beautiful voice of him who shews then and there Him whom he heralded! Greater than John is none of them that are born of women. But he that is least in the kingdom of heaven is greater than he—the apostles, born of God from above, who received the firstfruits of the Comforter Spirit—for they were allowed to be His fellow-judges and partners of His throne; they have been made redeemers of men. You find them dividing the sea of evil powers, leading believing souls through. You find them husbandmen, tilling the vine of the soul. You find them bridesmen, marrying souls to Christ: I have espoused you, it says, to one Husband. You find them giving life to men. In short, you find them in sundry parts and in divers

manners serving the Spirit. This is the little one who is greater than John the Baptist.

7. As the husbandman governs a yoke of oxen and tills the ground, so the Lord Jesus, the fair true Husbandman, yoked the apostles two and two and sent them forth, tilling with them the ground of those who hear and truly believe. Only this is worth saying, that the kingdom of God and the preaching of the apostles is not in the word of hearing only, like one who knows a set of words and rehearses them to others, but the kingdom is in power and effectual working of the Spirit. This was the sad case of the children of the Israelites; always studying the scriptures, and in fact making the Lord the theme of their study, and yet not receiving the truth itself, they parted with that inheritance to others. So those who rehearse to others words of the Spirit, while they do not themselves possess the word in power, part with the inheritance to others. Glory to the Father and to the Son and to the Holy Ghost for ever. Amen.

HOMILY XXIX

God works the dispensations of grace upon mankind after a twofold manner, intending to require the fruits of it by a just judgment. 1. THE wisdom of God, being infinite and incomprehensible, works the dispensations of grace incomprehensibly and unsearchably upon the human race in various fashions for the testing of our free will, so that those who love Him with their whole heart, and will endure every danger and toil for God's sake, may be made manifest. To some the gifts and endowments of the Holy Ghost come in advance, directly they draw near in faith and prayer, without labour, or sweat, or toil. Sometimes, while they are still in the world, God gives them grace, not idly, nor out of season, nor at random, but in an unspeakable and incomprehensible wisdom, in order to try the determination and free will of those who have so quickly received the grace of God, whether they were sensible of the benefit and of the kindness and sweetness of God that was shewn them, in proportion to the grace received without pains of their own, in return for which they ought to show diligence, and run well, and fight hard, and to bear the fruit of will and purpose and love, and to give back a requital for their spiritual gifts, by yielding themselves wholly up to the love of the Lord, and accomplishing His will alone, and perfectly withdrawing from all carnal affection.

2. To others, even when they have withdrawn from the world, and have renounced this age, according to the gospel, and pass their time in much perseverance in prayer and fasting and diligence and the other virtues, God does not immediately grant the grace and the refreshment and rejoicing of the Spirit, being patient with them and reserving the gift. And this He does, not idly, nor unreasonably, not at random, but with unspeakable wisdom, for the testing of their free will, to see whether they have counted God faithful and true who promised to give to them that ask and to open the door of life to them that knock, to see whether after believing His word in truth they continue to the end in full assurance of faith and diligence, asking and seeking, and will not prove faint-hearted, and draw back, and give up, and in unbelief and hopelessness despise the quest, not persevering to the end, because of the putting off of the time, and because of the testing of their will and purpose.

3. For he who does not receive at once, is the more kindled through God's delay and patience, and the more desirous of the good things of heaven, and every day adds to his longing and diligence, his running and striving, and every disposition of virtue, his hunger and thirst after that which is good, not slacking for the sinful suggestions which are present in the soul, or turning aside to despise or forget or despair; nor again under pretence of patience will he give himself over to slackness, using this argument, that "Some day or other I shall receive the grace of God," and from this enticed by sin into carelessness. On the contrary, so long as the Lord Himself in His delay is patient over him, testing the faith and love of his will, the man himself ought the more keenly, the more laboriously, without giving in, without turning faint, to seek the gift of God, having once for all believed and assured himself, that God is true and cannot lie, who has promised to give His grace to those who ask with faith to the end, in all perseverance.

4. For God is faithful and true in His leading of faithful souls, and they have set to their seal that He is true, according to the true word. Therefore in accordance with this intuition of faith they examine themselves to see in what respects they on their part are lacking—in labour, in striving, in diligence, in faith, in love, or in the rest of the dispositions of virtue; and thus examining with all minute exactness, they force and constrain themselves to the best of their power to please the Lord, having once for all believed that God, being true, will not cheat them of the gift of the Spirit, if they continue to the end with all diligence serving Him and waiting upon Him, but that they will have the heavenly grace vouchsafed to them, while they are still in the flesh, and will obtain eternal life.

5. And so they set in motion all their love towards the Lord, denying everything else, and looking only for Him with much desire and hunger and thirst, and always waiting for the refreshment and consolation of grace, and not willingly finding consolation or refreshment or binding attachment in anything of this world; but always resisting material attractions they look only for the help and succour of God, when the Lord Himself is secretly present already to souls that take upon them this kind of diligence, and purpose of heart and endurance, and helps them, and preserves them, and confirms them unto every fruit of virtue, even though they are in trouble and distress, even though they have not yet in certainty of the truth and in manifestation to the soul received the grace of the Spirit and the refreshment of the heavenly gift, and have not had experience of it in full consciousness, because of the unspeakable wisdom of God, and His inexpressible judgments, in which He tries believing souls in various ways, with a view to a love which is of the will and of purpose. For there are bounds and measures and degrees of choice and purpose, and of the will to love, and of disposition to obey all His holy commandments with might and main; and when souls thus fill up the measure of their love and duty, they are permitted to receive the kingdom and the eternal life.

6. For God is just and just are His judgments, and with Him there is no respect of persons; and He judges each in proportion to the varying benefits with which He has endowed mankind—benefits of body or of spirit, whether knowledge, or understanding, or discernment—and will require the fruits of virtue accordingly, and will render to each the due reward of his works in the day of judgment. He will come, we are told, and will render to every man according to his deeds, and mighty men shall be mightily tormented, for mercy will soon pardon the meanest; and the Lord says, The servant which knew his lord's will, and prepared not himself, neither did according to his will, shall be beaten with many stripes; but he that knew not, and did things worthy of stripes, shall be beaten with few stripes; and unto whom much is given, of him shall much be required, and to whom men have committed much, of him they will ask the more. The knowledge and understanding I have mentioned may be variously thought of, either according to grace and the heavenly gift of the Spirit, or in conformity with the natural intelligence and discernment, and through the instruction of the divine scriptures. Of each man will be required the fruits of virtue in proportion to the benefits conferred upon him from God, whether natural, or given by God's grace. Therefore every man is inexcusable before God in the day of judgment, for every man will be required to answer of his will and purpose according to what he knew of the fruits of faith and love and every other virtue towards God, whether he knew by hearing, or had never heard the word of God.

7. For the faithful, truth-loving soul, looking to the eternal blessings laid up for the righteous, and to the unspeakable benefit of the grace of God that is to visit it, esteems itself, and its diligence and pains and labour, all unworthy in comparison with the unspeakable promises of the Spirit. This is the poor in spirit, whom the Lord pronounced blessed; this is he who hungers and thirsts after righteousness; this is he who is contrite in heart. Those who take upon them this purpose and diligence and pains and longing after virtue, and continue therein to the end, will be enabled to obtain life and the eternal kingdom in truth. Therefore let no brother be exalted against his brother, or proceed to form an opinion of himself under the cheating influence of sin, to think, "Behold, I for my part possess a spiritual gift." It is not fit that Christians should have these notions. You know not what the morrow may do for him; you are ignorant what his end will be, and what your own. Let each give heed to himself, and examine his own conscience at all times, and try the work of his heart, what diligence and striving towards God his mind has; and looking towards the perfect mark, of liberty, and of freedom from passions, and of the Spirit's rest, let him run without stopping and without sloth, never satisfied with any spiritual gift or with any righteous attainment. Glory and adoration to the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost, for ever. Amen.

HOMILY XXX

The soul that is to enter into the kingdom of God must be born of the Holy Ghost; and how this is effected. 1. THOSE who hear the word ought to give proof of the work of the word in their own souls. The word of God is no idle word, but has its own work upon the soul. For this reason it is sometimes called a “work,” with a view to the “work” being found in the hearers. May the Lord, then, grant the work of the truth in the hearers, in order that the word may be found fruitful in us. For as the shadow precedes the body, but the shadow manifests the body, while the truth is the body itself, so the word is like a shadow of the truth of Christ. But the word precedes the truth. Fathers upon earth beget children of their own nature, from their own body and soul, and when they are begotten they educate them carefully with all diligence as their own children, until they become full-grown men and successors and heirs. For the aim and whole care of the fathers from the outset is to beget children and to have heirs, and if they had not begotten them, they would have had great sorrow and grief, and on the other hand they had corresponding joy when they had begotten them. Their kinsfolk and neighbours likewise rejoice.

2. In the same way our Lord Jesus Christ, taking thought for the salvation of man, employed from the outset all His providential care through the fathers and the patriarchs, through the law and the prophets, and in the end came Himself, and despising the shame of the cross, endured death; and all this toil and care of His was in order that He might beget children from Himself, from His own nature, being pleased that they should be begotten of the Spirit from above, of His own Godhead. And as those fathers, if they have no children, are grieved, so the Lord, who loved mankind as His own image, willed to beget them of the seed of His own Godhead; so, if any of them will not come to such a birth, to be born of the womb of the Spirit of the Godhead, Christ is submitted to great grief, after suffering for them and enduring so much to save them.

3. For the Lord wills all men to have the privilege of this birth. He died for all, and called all to life. But life is the birth from above of God. Without it the soul cannot live. The Lord says, Except a man be born from above, he cannot see the kingdom of God. And so, on the other hand, as many as believe the Lord, and come

and receive the privilege of this birth, cause joy and great gladness in heaven to the parents that begat them; and all angels and holy powers rejoice over the soul that is born of the Spirit and has become spirit itself. For this body is a similitude of the soul, and the soul is the image of the Spirit; and as the body without the soul is dead, and unable to do anything at all, so without the heavenly soul, that is, without the Divine Spirit, the soul is dead from the kingdom, being unable to do any of the things of God without the Spirit.

4. As the portrait painter keeps an eye upon the king's face and draws, and when the king's face is towards him, attending to him at his painting, he draws the portrait easily and well, but when he turns his face away, he cannot draw, because the face is not gazing at the painter; in like manner Christ, the good artist, for those who believe Him and gaze continually at Him, straightway portrays after His own image a heavenly man. Out of His own Spirit, out of the substance of light itself, the ineffable light, He paints a heavenly image, and bestows upon it its good and gracious Spouse. If a man does not gaze constantly at Him, overlooking everything else, the Lord will not paint His image with His own light. We must therefore gaze upon Him, believing and loving Him, throwing away all else, and attending to Him, in order that He may paint His own heavenly image and send it into our souls, and thus, wearing Christ, we may receive eternal life, and even here may have full assurance and be at rest.

5. As the golden coin, if it does not receive the imprint of the king's image, does not come upon the market, and is not stored in the king's treasuries, but is discarded, so the soul, if it has not the image of the heavenly Spirit in light unspeakable, even Christ imprinted on it, is not fit for the treasuries above, and is discarded by the good merchants of the kingdom, the apostles. He who was invited, and did not wear the wedding garment, was cast out as an alien into the alien darkness, for not wearing the heavenly image. This is the mark and sign of the Lord imprinted upon souls, being the Spirit of light unspeakable. And as a dead man is useless, and of no use to those of the place, and so they carry him outside the city and bury him, so the soul which does not bear the heavenly image of the divine light, the life of the soul, is cast away and discarded; for a dead soul is of no use to that city of the saints, not bearing the luminous and Divine Spirit. For as in the world the soul is the life of the body, so in the eternal heavenly world the life of the soul is the Spirit of the Godhead. Without the life of the Spirit, this soul is dead to those above, and of no use.

6. He therefore that seeks to believe and come to the Lord, should entreat that he may receive here on earth the Divine Spirit; for that Spirit is the life of the soul, and for this cause the Lord came, that He might give life to the soul here on earth, even His Spirit. For He says, While ye have the light, believe in the light; the night cometh, when ye can no longer work. Therefore if any man has not sought, while

here, and received life for his soul, even the divine light of the Spirit, when he departs out of the body, he is separated forthwith in the regions of darkness on the left hand, not entering into the kingdom of heaven, having his end in hell with the devil and his angels. As gold or silver, when cast into the fire, becomes purer and better attested, and nothing can impair it, such as wood or hay—for it devours everything that comes near it, for they also become fire—so the soul going up and down in the fire of the Spirit and in the divine light will suffer no harm by any of the evil spirits. Even if anything shall draw nigh it, it is consumed by the heavenly fire of the Spirit: Or as a bird, when aloft on the wing, is in no anxiety, fearing not the bird-catchers nor evil beasts, for up so high it derides them, so the soul, receiving the wings of the Spirit, and flying into the heights of heaven, is above everything, and derides them all.

7. And Israel after the flesh, when Moses that day divided the sea, went through it below; but these, being God's children, walk on the top over the sea of bitterness of the evil powers. Their body and their soul have become the house of God. In that day when Adam fell, God came walking in the garden. He wept, as it were, beholding Adam, and said, "After what good things, what evils hast thou chosen! After what glory, what shame dost thou wear! How dark art thou now! how ill-looking! how corrupt! After what light, what darkness hath covered thee!" And when Adam fell and died from God, his Maker bewailed him; angels, and all the powers, the heavens, the earth, and all the creatures mourned over his death and fall, for they saw him that had been given them for their king become the servant of a hostile and evil power. Therefore he clothed himself with darkness in his own soul, a bitter and an evil darkness, for he was made a subject of the prince of darkness. This was he who was wounded by the robbers, and became half dead, as he went down from Jerusalem to Jericho.

8. Lazarus also, whom the Lord raised, who stank so that no one could go near the sepulchre, was a symbol of Adam whose soul had come to stink and was filled with blackness and darkness. But thou, when thou hearest of Adam, and the wounded man, and Lazarus, let not thy mind go off as it were to the hills, but be thou within in thy soul, for thou thyself bearest the same wounds, the same stench, the same darkness. We all are his sons, of that dark race, and all partake of the same stench. The malady from which he suffered, we all, who are of Adam's seed, suffer from the same. Such a malady has befallen us, as Esaias says, It is not a wound, nor a bruise, nor an inflamed sore; it is not possible to apply a mollifying ointment, nor oil, nor to make bandages. Thus were we wounded with an incurable wound; the Lord alone could heal it. For this reason He came in His own person; because none of the ancients, nor the law itself, nor the prophets, were able to heal this wound. He alone by His coming healed that sore of the soul, that incurable sore.

9. Let us then welcome our God and Lord, the true healer, who alone is able to come and cure our souls, after He has laboured so much for our sake. He is always knocking at the doors of our hearts, that we may open to Him, that He may enter in and rest in our souls, and we may wash and anoint His feet, and He may make His abode with us. The Lord in that passage reproached the man who did not wash His feet; and again He says elsewhere, Behold, I stand at the door and knock, if any man will open unto Me, and I shall come in unto him. To this end He endured to suffer many things, giving His own body unto death, and purchasing us out of bondage, in order that He might come to our soul and make His abode with it. For this cause the Lord says to those on the left hand in the day of judgment, that are sent by Him to hell with the devil, I was a stranger, and ye took Me not in; I was an hungered, and ye gave Me no meat; I was thirsty, and ye gave me no drink. His food and His drink, His clothing and shelter and rest is in our souls. Therefore He is always knocking, desiring to enter into us. Let us then receive Him, and bring Him within into ourselves; because He is our food and our drink and our eternal life, and every soul that has not now received Him within and given Him rest, or rather found rest in Him, has no inheritance in the kingdom of heaven with the saints, and cannot enter into the heavenly city. But Thou, Lord Jesus Christ, bring us thereunto, glorifying Thy name, with the Father and the Holy Ghost, for ever. Amen.

HOMILY XXXI

The believer ought to be changed in mind, and gather up all his thoughts in God; for in these all service of God consists. 1. THE believer ought to ask of God to be changed in his purposes, by an alteration of heart from bitterness to sweet, and remember how the blind man was healed, the woman with an issue of blood likewise obtained healing by the touch of His hem, the nature of lions was tamed, the nature of fire was deadened. Because God is the highest good; and unto Him thou oughtest to gather up thy mind and thoughts, and to think of nothing else, but to watch expectantly for Him.

2. Let the soul, therefore, be as one that gathers in straying children and admonishes the thoughts which sin has scattered, and bring them home into her body, always watching for the Lord in fasting and charity, when He shall come and gather her in truth. The future being uncertain, let her set her hope yet more upon her Pilot, with a good hope, and remember how Rahab, when living among aliens, believed the Israelites, and was admitted to share their privilege, while the Israelites in their affections turned back into Egypt. As therefore Rahab received no harm by dwelling among the aliens, but her faith made her at home in the portion of the Israelites, so sin shall not harm those who in hope and faith wait for the Redeemer, who at His coming changes the thoughts of the soul, and makes them godlike, heavenly, good, and teaches the soul prayer—prayer true, undistracted, unwandering. Fear not, He says, I go before thee, and will level the mountains; I will break in pieces the gates of brass and cut in sunder the bars of iron. And again, Beware, He says, that there be not a secret thought of wickedness in thy heart; say not in thy heart, This nation is strong and powerful.

3. If we do not become slothful and give over the field to the unruly thoughts of evil, but compel our minds to obey our will, forcing our thoughts to the Lord, assuredly the Lord will come to us with His will and take us in unto Himself in truth. All well-pleasing and all service are in the thoughts. Therefore endeavour to please the Lord, always looking for Him within, seeking Him in thy thoughts, and forcing and constraining thine own will and purpose to stretch upwards continually towards Him. Then see how He comes unto thee and makes His abode with thee. In

proportion as thou gatherest up thy mind to seek Him, He is far more constrained by His own tender compassion and kindness to come to thee and give thee rest. He stands contemplating thy mind, thy thoughts, thy intentions, observing how thou seekest Him, whether with thy whole soul, not indolently, not carelessly.

4. And when He sees thy diligence to seek Him, then He manifests Himself and appears to thee, and imparts to thee of His own succour, and makes the victory thine, delivering thee from thine enemies. Having first contemplated thy seeking unto Him, and how thy whole expectation is without ceasing fixed on Him, He then teaches and gives thee true prayer, true charity, which is Himself in thee made all things—paradise, tree of life, pearl, crown, builder, husbandman, sufferer, incapable of suffering, man, God, wine and living water, lamb, bridegroom, warrior, armour, Christ all in all. And as the babe knows not how to take care of itself, or do for itself, but looks only to its mother, waiting until she has pity on it and takes it up, so faithful souls always hope only in the Lord, ascribing all righteousness to Him. As without the vine the branch is dried up, so is he who desires to be justified without Christ. As is the robber and the thief, who does not enter through the entrance, but climbeth up some other way, so is he who is justified to himself without the Justifier.

5. Let us therefore take this body of ours, and make an altar of it, and lay upon it every intention of ours, and beseech the Lord that He would send from heaven the great invisible fire, and consume the altar and everything upon it, and that all the priests of Baal, which are the opposing activities, may fall; and then we shall see the spiritual rain coming in the soul like a man’s footprint, so that it becomes the promise of God in us, as it is said in the prophet, I will raise up and build again the tabernacle of David which is fallen, and will build again the ruins thereof, in order that the Lord with His own loving kindness may shine upon the soul which is dwelling in night and darkness, in the drunkenness of ignorance, so that it may wake to soberness and walk without stumbling, performing the works of day and of life. For where the soul feeds, thence is it nourished, either from the world, or from the Spirit of God; and God is there nourished, and lives, and rests, and goes up and down.

6. To conclude, every one, if he will, shall prove himself, whence he is nourished, and where he lives, and what condition he is in, so that having thus perceived, and gained an accurate estimate, he may give himself perfectly to the movement towards that which is good. Well, in praying, take heed to yourself at prayer, observing your thoughts and your motions, where they come from, whether from God or from the adversary, and who it is that supplies your heart with nourishment, the Lord, or the world-rulers of this age. And when, O soul, thou hast proved and known, ask the Lord with labour and longing for heavenly nourishment and growth and the motions of Christ, according to the saying, Our conversation is in heaven,

and not, as some imagine, in a shape or fashion. Behold, the mind and disposition of those who have only a form of godliness is like the world. Behold their agitation, and the fluctuation of their purposes, their unstable judgment, their timidity and fear, according to that which is said, Groaning and trembling shalt thou be upon the earth. According to their unbelief and the confusion of their unstable thoughts, they are tossed about every hour, like all the rest of men. Such men only differ from the world in fashion, not in mind, and only in bodily observances of the outer man; while in heart and mind they are pulled this way and that way in the world, and are involved in earthly ties and those of unprofitable cares, not having gained the peace from heaven in their hearts, as the apostle says, Let the peace of God rule in your hearts—the peace which reigns and renews the minds of believers in the love of God and of all the brotherhood. Glory and worship to the Father, and the Son, and the Holy Ghost, for ever. Amen.

HOMILY XXXII

The glory of Christians abides even now in their souls, and will be manifested at the time of resurrection, and will glorify their bodies in correspondence with their piety. 1. THE languages of this world differ. Every nation has a language of its own. But Christians learn one new language, and are all instructed under one wisdom of God, not a wisdom of this world, nor of this passing age. And as Christians walk in this creation, they come upon new and heavenly sights, and upon glories and mysteries, taking occasion by what meets their senses. There are various kinds of tame animals, as horse and ox. Each of them has its own body and its own voice. So also among wild beasts; the lion has its own body and its own voice, and the stag likewise. And among creeping things there is great variety, and among winged creatures there are, many forms of body. The body and voice of the eagle is one, the body and voice of the hawk is another. There are the same varieties in the sea—many bodies unlike each other; and in the earth there are many seeds, but each seed has its own fruit. There are many trees; but some trees are bigger and some smaller, and the crops that they bear are very different; for each kind of tree has a flavour of its own. And there are herbs, and great differences between them—some profitable for health, others only for fragrance. But each tree produces from within the clothing which meets the eye, leaves, and blossoms, and fruits. The seeds likewise bring forth from within the clothing that we see. The lilies themselves produce their raiment from within, and adorn the sward.

2. Even so those Christians, to whom it has been granted to gain in this life the heavenly raiment, have that raiment dwelling in their souls; and when it is foreordained of God that this creation should be dissolved, and that heaven and earth should pass away, then the heavenly raiment, which here and now had clothed and glorified their souls, and which they had possessed in their hearts, that same shall assuredly enrobe with glory their naked bodies also, which rise from the tombs, the bodies which awake in that day, even with the invisible heavenly gift and raiment which Christians receive even now. But as the sheep or the camels, when they find grass, greedily and hastily get to the food and store up provender within themselves, and in time of hunger bring up the same from their maw, and chew the cud, and have for their food what they had before laid in; so in like manner those

who have now seized the kingdom of heaven, and living in spirit have tasted of the heavenly food, at the time of resurrection have that same to cover and to warm all their members.

3. As then we spoke of the variety of seeds, that many are sown in the same ground and yield a diversity of fruits, all unlike each other; and likewise of trees, that some are bigger and some less, but one ground holds the roots of them all; even so the heavenly church, being but one, is without number, and each is adorned by the glory of the Spirit in a manner peculiar to himself. For as the birds produce out of their own bodies the raiment of their feathers, and great is the variety among them—for some flit along near the ground, while others soar in the air—or as the heaven is one, and contains in itself many stars, some brighter, some greater, some smaller, but all are fixed in the heaven; so the saints are in divers manners rooted in the one heaven of the Godhead and in the earth invisible. So also the thoughts which come to Adam are different when they come, but the Spirit coming into the heart makes one thought and one heart, for both those above and those below are governed by the same Spirit.

4. But what are the animals that divide the hoof? Since with their cloven hoof they make straight way, they are set for a figure of those who walk uprightly in the law. But as the body's shadow is from the body itself, but cannot fulfil any fleshly function—for a shadow cannot bind up wounds, or give food, or speak—and yet it is from the body itself, and shows in advance the coming of the body, so the ancient law is a shadow of the new covenant. The shadow reveals the truth beforehand, but it had no ministration of the Spirit. Moses, clothed in flesh, could not enter into the heart, and take away the filthy garments of darkness. Only spirit of spirit and fire of fire dissolves the power of the evil darkness. Circumcision, in the shadow of the law, foreshows the true circumcision of the heart approaching. The baptism of the law is a shadow of the true realities. That baptism washed the body; but here a baptism of fire and Spirit cleanses and washes the polluted mind. 5. There a priest compassed with infirmity entered into the holy place offering sacrifice for himself and for the people; here the true High Priest, even Christ, entered once for all into the tabernacle not made with hands and the altar above, ready to cleanse those who ask Him, and the conscience that has been defiled. For He says, I will be with you until the end of the world.

The high priest had on his breast two precious stones, and they bore the names of the twelve patriarchs. What was done there was a type. For in such a manner the Lord put on the apostles and sent them as evangelists and heralds of the whole world. You see how the shadow shows the approach of the reality. Yet just as the shadow has no function to perform, and heals no troubles, so neither could the ancient law heal the wounds or troubles of the soul; for indeed it had no life.

6. The conjunction of two particular things makes a perfect whole—for example, two covenants. Man was made after the image and similitude of God: he has two eyes, two eyebrows, two hands, two feet, and if he should chance to have but one eye, or one hand, or one foot, it is something to find fault with. If a bird has but one wing, it cannot possibly fly with it. So the nature of mankind, if it remains naked and by itself, and does not receive the mixture and communion of the heavenly nature, has failed to be put right. It remains naked and deserving of blame in its own nature, in great defilement. For the soul itself was surnamed the temple and habitation of God, and the King's bride; for it says, I will dwell in them, and walk in them. So it pleased God; because He came down from holy heavens and embraced thy reasonable nature, the flesh, which is of the earth, and mingled it with His divine Spirit, in order that thou, the earthy, mightest receive the heavenly soul. And when thy soul has communion with the Spirit, and the heavenly soul enters into thy soul, then art thou a perfect man in God, and an heir, and a son.

7. But as neither the ages above nor those below can take in the greatness and incomprehensibleness of God, so neither the worlds above nor those on earth are able to comprehend His minuteness, and how He makes Himself small to those who are minute and small. As His greatness is incomprehensible, so also is His minuteness; and it comes to pass that He arranges for thee to be in afflictions, and sufferings, and humiliations; and the things which thou deemest to be contrary to thee, these prove to be for thy soul's good. If thou desirest to be in the world, and to become rich, misfortune meets thee. Thou beginnest to think with thyself, "Because I have failed in the world, what if I were to go away and renounce it and serve God? When thou art come to this point, thou hearest the commandment saying, "Sell what thou hast; hate fleshly society; serve God. Then thou beginnest to thank thy misfortune in the world, that "on that account I am found obedient to the commandment of Christ. Well then, in part, so far as outward things go, thou hast changed thy mind, and withdrawn from the world and from fleshly society: it behoves thee therefore to be changed in mind likewise from the fleshly temper to the heavenly temper. Well, at the very sound thereof, thou beginnest to discriminate, and thou no longer hast rest, but only care and trouble to gain what thou hast heard of. 8.

And when thou deemest thyself to have done all by renouncing, the Lord taketh account with thee. "Why dost thou boast? Did not I create thy body and thy soul? Did not I make the gold and silver? What hast thou done? The soul begins to make confession and to beseech the Lord, and say, "All things are Thine. The house I am in is Thine. My clothes are Thine. From Thee is my food, and of Thee am I supplied for every need. Then the Lord begins to reply: "I thank thee. The goods are thine own. The good will is thine own; and because of thy love towards Me, since thou hast made Me thy refuge, come, I will now give thee what hitherto neither thou

hast gained, nor do men have it upon earth. Take Me, thy Lord, with thine own soul, that thou mayest ever be with Me in joy and gladness."

9. A woman espoused to a husband brings all that she has and her whole dowry, and out of her great affection casts it into the hands of her husband, and says this: "I have nothing of my own. All that I have is yours; and my dowry is yours, and my soul and my body are yours. So also the wise soul is virgin to the Lord, having communion with His Holy Spirit. But as He, when He came upon earth, suffered and was crucified, so it behoves thee also to suffer with Him. When thou withdrawest from the world, and beginnest to seek God, and to discriminate, then thou findest thyself at war with thine own nature in its old habits and the custom that thou hast grown up with; and in warring against custom, thou discoverest thoughts that oppose thee, and war against thy mind, and these thoughts drag thee and make thee stray into the material world from which thou camest out. So thou beginnest to wage conflict and battle, setting in motion thoughts against thoughts, mind against mind, soul against soul, spirit against spirit; and there the soul is in agony of fear. 10. For there is revealed a certain hidden, subtle power of darkness seated in the heart; and the Lord is nigh thy soul and body, seeing thy battle, and puts in thee secret heavenly thoughts, and begins to give thee rest in secret.

But He suffers thee to be chastened for a while, and grace provides that thou shouldest come into these very afflictions; and when thou comest into rest, grace makes herself known to thee, and shows thee that it was for thy benefit that she permitted thee to be exercised. It is as when a rich man has a child, and the child a tutor. For a while he makes him smart with straps; and the chastisement, and the stripes, and the weals appear grievous, until the child becomes a man, and then he begins to thank the tutor. So does grace chastise thee by design, until thou comest unto a perfect man.

11. The husbandman flings the seed in every direction; and he who plants a vine wishes that all of it should bear fruit. So he applies the pruning-hook, and if he finds no fruit, he is grieved. So the Lord wishes His word to be sown in the hearts of men. But as the husbandman is grieved at the unrepaying ground, so the Lord is grieved at the unrepaying heart which bears no fruit. As the winds blow everywhere, over all creation, and as the sun lightens upon all the world, so the Godhead is everywhere, and is everywhere found. If thou seekest Him in heaven, He is found there in the thoughts of the angels. If thou seekest Him upon earth, He is found here also in the hearts of men. But few out of many are found the Christians who are well pleasing to Him. Glory and majesty to the Father, and to the Son, and the Holy Ghost for ever. Amen.

HOMILY XXXIII

We ought to pray to God continually and with attention. 1. IT behoves us to pray, not by bodily habit, nor with a habit of crying, nor by a custom of silence, or of bending the knees, but soberly, taking heed to our minds, to wait upon God, until He shall come to us and visit the soul through all its modes of egress and its paths and senses, and so to be silent when we ought, and to cry out when we ought, and to pray with loud crying, so long as the mind is strong towards God. As the body, when at work, is entirely occupied with the work on which it is engaged, and all the members of it help one another, so let the soul be entirely given up to asking and love towards the Lord, not wandering and carried about with thoughts, but with all its might endeavouring and gathering itself up with all its thoughts, and bent upon waiting for Christ.

2. And thus will He lighten upon it, teaching it the true asking, giving it the pure spiritual prayer, which is worthy of God, and the worship which is in spirit and in truth. But as one who has taken up the profession of merchandise is not content with a single device for getting gain, but presses forward to increase and multiply his gain in every direction, after one device pursuing another, and then running on to another expedient, and always shying off from what is unprofitable, runs to that which is more lucrative; so let us also fit our souls out with versatility and skill, to obtain the great true gain, even God, who teaches us truly to pray. In this way the Lord rests upon the soul's good intention, making it a throne of glory, and sitting and resting upon it. That was what we heard from the prophet Ezekiel, concerning the spiritual creatures harnessed to the chariot of the Lord. He represents them to us as eyes all over, as the soul is that carries God, or rather is carried by God; it becomes all eye.

3. As a house that has its master at home is full of all orderliness and beauty and seemliness, so the soul which has its Lord with it, and abiding in it, is full of all beauty. It has the Lord with His spiritual treasures for its inhabitant and its charioteer. But woe to the house whose master is away, and whose lord is not present. It is desolate, and broken down, full of all uncleanness and disorder. There, as the prophet says, sirens and demons dwell. In the deserted house are cats

and dogs, and all uncleanness. Woe to the soul that does not arise from its grievous fall, nor receive the fair Master of the house, even Christ, for its inhabitant, but remains in its uncleanness, and has within it those who persuade and compel it to have enmity with its own Bridegroom, and desire to corrupt its thoughts from Christ.

4. But when the Lord sees that to the best of its ability the soul recollects itself, always seeking and waiting for the Lord night and day, and crying to Him, even as He commanded to pray without ceasing in everything, He will avenge it, as He promised, cleansing it from the evil within it, and will present it unto Himself a bride without blemish and without spot. Now if you believe that these things are true, as indeed they are, take heed to yourself, whether your soul has found the light to guide it, and the true meat and drink, which is the Lord. If you have not, seek night and day, that you may receive. When you see the sun, seek the true Sun, for you are blind. When you behold the light, look into your soul, whether you have found the true Light, the good Light. All the things which meet the senses are a shadow of the true realities of the soul. There is another man within, besides the man who is seen; and eyes, which Satan has blinded, and ears, which he has deafened; and Jesus came to make this inward man whole. To whom be the glory and the might, with the Father and the Holy Ghost for ever. Amen.

HOMILY XXXIV

Concerning the glory of Christians which shall be vouchsafed to their bodies at the resurrection, and they shall be enlightened together with the soul. 1. AS the bodily eyes see everything clearly, so to the souls of the saints the beauties of the Godhead are manifest and visible, and Christians are mingled with them and think upon them. To the bodily eyes that glory is hidden, but to the believing soul it is clearly revealed—the soul which was dead, which the Lord raises out of sin, even as He wakens the dead bodies also, and prepares for it a new heaven and a new earth, and a sun of righteousness, giving it all things out of His own Godhead. There is a true world, and a living earth, and a fruitful vine, and a bread of life, and living water; as it is written, I believe to see the goodness of the Lord in the land of the living, and again, Unto them that fear the Lord shall the sun of righteousness arise, with healing in his wings; and the Lord said, I am the true vine, and again, I am the bread of life, and again, He that drinketh of the water that I shall give him, there shall be in him a well of water springing up into everlasting life.

2. For the whole coming of the Lord was for man’s sake—man who lay dead in the grave of the darkness of sin, of the unclean spirit and of evil powers—that now in this world He might raise man up and quicken him, and cleanse him from all blackness, and enlighten him with His own light, and array him in His own garments, the heavenly garments of His own Godhead. But at the resurrection of the bodies, whose souls were raised before and glorified before, then the bodies also are glorified with them, and are enlightened by the soul which had been enlightened and glorified in this life. For the Lord is their home, their tabernacle and their city. They are clothed with the habitation from heaven, not made with hands, the glory of the divine light, as being made children of light. They will gaze upon each other with no evil eye; for evil has been taken away. There is there no male nor female, bond nor free, for all alike are changed into a divine nature, being good, and Gods, and children of God. There brother will then speak peace to sister without confusion, for all are one thing in Christ, at rest in one light. One will gaze upon another, and in the gazing will forthwith shine back in truth, at the true contemplation of light inexpressible.

3. Thus in many shapes and many varying divine glories they look upon each other, and each is astonished and rejoices with joy unspeakable, gazing upon the other's glory. You see how the glories of God are beyond all utterance, and are incomprehensible, of light inexpressible, and of mysteries eternal, and of good things without number. As, in the world of sense, it is impossible for any one to comprehend in number the plants, or seeds, or various blossoms of the earth, and it is out of the question for any one to measure or understand the entire wealth of the earth; or as in the sea it is impossible for a man to comprehend the living creatures in it, or their number, or their kinds, or their differences, or the measure of its water or the measure of its place; or as in the air it is impossible to know the number of the birds, or their kinds or variety; or as it is impossible to comprehend the greatness of the sky, or the positions of the stars, or their courses; so is it impossible to speak or to recount the wealth of Christians, which is infinite and incomprehensible. For if these creatures are so infinite and incomprehensible to men, how much more He that created and prepared them!

A man ought therefore rather to rejoice and be glad because such wealth and such an inheritance is prepared for Christians, that no one can utter it or reckon it up. With all diligence and humility therefore we ought to set ourselves to the Christian's contest and to receive that wealth. For the inheritance and portion of Christians is God Himself. The Lord Himself, it says, is the portion of mine inheritance and of my cup. Glory to Him who gives Himself, and mingles His own holy nature with the souls of Christians, for ever. Amen.

HOMILY XXXV

Concerning the old Sabbath and the new. 1. IN the shadow of the law given by Moses God commanded that every man should rest on the sabbath and do nothing. This was a type and shadow of the true sabbath given to the soul from the Lord. For the soul to which it has been granted to be set free from base and foul thoughts both keeps true sabbath and enjoys true rest, being idle and at leisure so far as the works of darkness are concerned. There, in the typical sabbath, although they rested in bodily fashion, their souls were in bondage to wickednesses and sins. This, the true sabbath, is true rest, the soul being idle and cleansed from the suggestions of Satan, and resting in the eternal rest and joy of the Lord. 2. As then He enjoined that even the unreasoning animals should rest on the sabbath day, that the ox should not be forced under the yoke of necessity, and that they should not lade the ass—for the animals also were to rest from their heavy works—so when the Lord came and gave the true eternal sabbath, He gave rest to the soul which was burdened and heavy laden with the burdens of the iniquity of unclean imaginations, and labouring perforce at the works of unrighteousness, as being in bondage to bitter masters; and He lightened it of the burdens, hard to be borne, of vain and impure imaginations; and He took away the yoke, the bitter yoke, of the works of unrighteousness, and refreshed the soul when it was wearied with the imaginations of uncleanness.

3. The Lord calls man to rest, saying, Come, all ye that labour and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest; and as many souls as are obedient and draw near, He makes them rest from all these heavy, burdensome, unclean thoughts, and they are idle from all iniquity, keeping a true, delicious, holy sabbath, and celebrate a festival of the Spirit, a festival of joy and gladness unspeakable; and they perform a pure service, well pleasing to God, out of a pure heart. This is the true and the holy sabbath. Let us therefore beseech God that we also may enter into this rest, that we may be idle from base and evil and vain imaginations, that thus we may be able to serve God out of a pure heart, and celebrate the feast of the Holy Ghost. Blessed is he who enters into that rest. Glory to Him whose good pleasure it is, Father, Son, and Holy Ghost, for ever. Amen.

HOMILY XXXVI

Concerning the twofold resurrection of souls and bodies, and of the divers glory of the risen. 1. THE resurrection of dead souls is even now. The resurrection of bodies is in that day. But as the stars, though fixed in heaven, are not all equal, but one differs from another in brightness and magnitude, so in spiritual things there are advances, according to the measure of faith, in the Spirit Himself, one man richer than another. The scripture says, He that speaketh in a tongue speaketh by the Spirit of God, He is a spiritual man, speaking to God. But he that prophesieth, edifieth the church. The latter had the greater abundance of grace. The one edifies himself only; the other his neighbour also. This is like a grain of corn sown in the earth; the same grain out of the same heart produces many grains differing from each other. And again the ears, some are larger, some smaller, but all are gathered into one threshing-floor, one barn; though they differ, one bread is made of them. 2. Or as in a city there are multitudes of people, and some are infant children, some men, or young men; but all drink water of one well, and all eat of one bread, and have one air to breathe; or as lamps are, one with two wicks and one with seven, but where the greater abundance of light is, the illumination is greater. So as many as are in fire and light cannot be in darkness; but there is much difference. If a father has two sons, one a child, the Other a young man, he sends the one abroad to foreign cities and countries, but the little one he keeps continually under guard, because he can do nothing. Glory be to God. Amen.

HOMILY XXXVII

Concerning Paradise and the spiritual law. 1. THE friendship of the world, according to that which is written, is enmity with God. For which cause the scripture bids every one to keep his own heart with all diligence, that keeping in it the word, like a paradise, a man may enjoy grace, not hearing the serpent that winds within, when he counsels the things that make for pleasure, whereby is engendered the wrath that slays a brother, and the soul that brings it forth perishes, but hearing the Lord when He says, “Take heed to faith and hope, through which is engendered love towards God and man, which gives eternal life.” Into this paradise Noe entered, keeping the commandment and working, and through love was redeemed from the wrath. Keeping this paradise, Abraham heard the voice of God. Keeping this, Moses received glory in his countenance. David likewise keeping this worked, from whence he gained the mastery of his enemies; and Saul too, so long as he kept his heart, prospered, but when at last he transgressed, at last he was forsaken. For the word of God follows each man by measure according to proportion. So long as a man holds fast, he is held fast; and so long as he guards, he is guarded.

2. For this cause the whole company of holy prophets, apostles, martyrs, kept the word in their hearts, caring for nothing else, but despising earthly things, and abiding in the commandment of the Holy Ghost, and preferring before all things the Spirit’s love of God and the Spirit’s good, not in word only or in mere knowledge, but in word and deed as well, by actual practice, choosing poverty instead of wealth, dishonour instead of glory, suffering instead of pleasure, affliction instead of enjoyment, and for that reason love instead of wrath. For as they hated the sweet things of life, they rather loved those who took them away, as working with them to the purpose, forbearing to know good and evil. They neither denied those who were good, nor blamed those who were evil, esteeming all alike to be envoys of the Master’s dispensation. Therefore they had a well-disposed benevolence towards all. When they heard the Lord say, Forgive, and ye shall be forgiven, then they reckoned those who wronged them as benefactors, because from them they received occasion for their own forgiveness. When again they heard, As ye would that men should do unto you, do ye also unto them, then they began to love good

men also according to conscience. Leaving their own righteousness, and seeking the righteousness of God, they naturally found love also included in it.

3. For the Lord, in giving many commandments concerning love, bade us seek the righteousness of God, for He knows that it is the mother of love. There is no other way to be saved but through our neighbour; according as He enjoined, Forgive, and ye shall be forgiven. This is the spiritual law, written in faithful hearts, the fulfilling of the first law. I came not, He says, to destroy the law, but to fulfil. How is it fulfilled? Let me tell you. The first law, by reasonable occasion of him who sinned, condemned, over and above, him that was sinned against; for wherein thou judgest another thou condemnest thyself. So says the law: In the midst of judgment, judgment; in the midst of striking, a stroke. 4. Forgiveness is the fulfilling of the law. We have called it a "first law"; not that God has set two laws before men, but one law, which is spiritual in its nature, but in regard to retribution, it awards to each man the retribution which is just, forgiving him that forgives, and contending with him that contends. With the clean, it says, thou shalt be clean, and with the froward thou shalt wrestle. Therefore those who spiritually fulfil it, and are favoured in proportion, came to love with a spiritual love not only those who did them good, but also those that reproached them and persecuted them, looking for a recompense of good things. Of good things, I say; not because they acquiesced in the wrongs done to them, but because they did good to the souls of the wrongdoers. They committed them to God as the means by which they obtained the beatitude; as it says, Blessed are ye, when they shall revile you, and persecute you.

5. It was under a spiritual law that they were taught to be thus minded. While they endured, and preserved their inward meekness, the Lord, looking upon the patience of the heart under attack and of the love that lost not its self-control, broke through the middle wall of partition, and they cast away perfect hatred, and their love was no longer against the grain, but with relief. The Lord brought to nought the sword that turned every way, which stirs the thoughts, and they entered into that within the veil, whither the forerunner is for us entered, even the Lord; and they revelled in the fruits of the Spirit, and having beheld things to come in security of heart, no longer, as the apostle says, in a glass, and darkly, they said what eye hath not seen, nor ear heard, neither have entered into the heart of man, how many things God hath prepared for them that love Him.

But I will ask this wonderful question. 6. Question. If it has not entered into the heart of man, how do you come to know it—especially when you confessed in the Acts that you were men of like passions with us? Answer. Well, listen what answer Paul makes to this. But God, he says, hath revealed them unto us by His Spirit; for the Spirit searcheth all things, yea, the depths of God. But lest any one should say that to them the Spirit was given because they were apostles, but that we are naturally incapable of it, he says elsewhere in prayer, That God would give you

to be strengthened with might in the inward man, that Christ may dwell in your hearts; and again, But the Lord is the Spirit, and where the Spirit of the Lord is, there is liberty; and again, But if any have not the Spirit of Christ, he is none of His.

7. Let us therefore pray to partake of the Holy Spirit in full assurance and experience, and to enter in whence we came out, and that for the future the serpent may be kept away from us, the parent of wrath, the counsellor of vain glory, the spirit of carking and surfeiting; so that having gained a firm faith we may keep the commandments of the Lord, and may grow up in Him unto a perfect man, unto the measure of the stature, that we may no longer be under dominion to the deceit of this world, but may be in the full assurance of the Spirit, and not disbelieve, that the grace of God has pleasure even in sinners when they repent (for that which is bestowed according to grace is not measured by comparison with previous infirmity; otherwise grace is no more grace;) but believing in the Almighty God may come with simple and not over-anxious heart to Him who through faith bestows the participation of the Spirit, and not through comparison of the works of nature; for it says, Ye received not the Spirit by the works of the law, but by the hearing of faith.

8. Question. What is the meaning of the text, I had rather speak five words in the church with my understanding? Answer. The word church is understood of two several things, the assembly of the faithful, and the compound soul. When it is taken spiritually, of the individual man, the church denotes him as a compound whole. “Five words” mean the comprehensive virtues which build up the whole man in varying modes of distribution. As he who spoke in the Lord comprehended all wisdom in his five words, so he who follows the Lord builds up godliness to abundance through the five virtues. Five they are, and they comprehend all; first prayer, then temperance, alms, poverty, patience. These, performed with longing desire and set purpose, are words of the soul spoken by the Lord and heard by the heart. The Lord works, and then the Spirit speaks without sound, and the heart performs in outward manifestation, in proportion as it desires.

9. And as these virtues contain all virtues, so they are productive of each other. If the first is wanting, there is an end of all. Likewise through the second come those that follow, and so on. How shall any one pray except under the operation of the Spirit? And the scripture bears me out when it says, No man can say that Jesus is the Lord, but by the Holy Ghost. And how will a man persevere who enters on a course of temperance without prayer and with no assistance? And he who is not temperate in everything, how shall he do alms to the hungry or the wrongdoer? And he who does no alms, will not himself willingly submit to poverty. And again, resentment is akin to the desire of money, whether it has or whether it has not. But the virtuous soul is thus built up into the church, not because of what it has done,

but because of what it has desired. It is not his own work that saves a man, but He who bestows on him the power. If any one therefore endures the marks of the Lord, let him not pride himself on anything, even if he have done some ordinary thing, but only on having loved and taken pains with a view to action. Never think that you have been beforehand with the Lord in your virtue, according to him who says, It is He that worketh in you, both to will and to do of His good pleasure.

10. Question. What then does the scripture charge a man to do? Answer. We have already said that a man has by nature the power of taking pains, and this is what it demands. It charges therefore that a man should first consider, and that when he has considered, he should love, and should use his will to take pains. But to have the mind influenced, or to endure the labour, or to accomplish the work, this the grace of the Lord bestows on the man who has willed and believed. Man's will therefore is like a material support. Where the will is not present, even God Himself does nothing, though He could, because of man's freedom. The effectual working of God depends upon the will of man. On the other hand, if we give our whole will, He ascribes to us the whole work. Wonderful is God in all things, and altogether beyond the grasp of our understanding; but we men endeavour to speak some portion of His wonders, relying upon the scripture, or rather made intelligent by it. For who, it says, hath known the mind of the Lord? But He says Himself, How often would I have gathered thy children together, and ye would not, so that we believe by this that it is He who gathers us, and demands of us nothing but the will. But what is it that manifests the will, except voluntary labour?

11. For as iron when it saws, and fells, and delves, and plants, gets worn itself and fails; but there is another who sets it in motion and applies it, and when it is battered makes it red hot and renews it; so although man becomes worn and wearied in working that which is good, yet the Lord works secretly in him, and when he is wearied and battered, comforts and renews his heart, as the prophet says, Shall the axe boast itself apart from him that heweth, or the saw exalt itself apart from him that draws it? So is it also with regard to evil, when a man obeys it and makes himself ready for it. Then Satan also draws and sharpens him, as the robber his sword. We have likened the heart to iron, because of its insensibility to things and its great hardness. But we ought not, like insensible iron, to be ignorant of Him who holds us—otherwise we should not change quickly from the word which is our husbandman to the suggestion of the evil one—but rather, like the ox and ass, to know Him who drives and guides us according to disposition; for it says, The ox knoweth his owner, and the ass his master's crib, but Israel knoweth Me not. Let us therefore pray to receive the knowledge of God, and to be instructed in the spiritual law to the accomplishment of His holy commandments, glorifying the Father and the Son and the Holy Ghost for ever. Amen.

HOMILY XXXVIII

Great exactness and intelligence is required to discern true Christians, and who these are. 1. MANY who appear to be righteous are taken for Christians. It is a task for skilled men and experts to try whether such men have really the stamp and image of the King, lest perchance they should be counterfeits of the works of skilled men, and skilled men wonder at them and criticise them. But people who are not skilled cannot test deceitful workers, for they too wear the shape of monks and Christians. For the false apostles also suffered for Christ, and they also preached the kingdom of heaven. That is why the apostle says In perils more abundant, in afflictions above measure, in prisons more abundant, wishing to show that he had suffered more than they. 2. Gold is easily found; but pearls and precious stones which do for a king's diadem are seldom found, for many times none that will do are found. So Christians also are built up into the crown of Christ, that those souls may be made partakers with the saints. Glory to Him who so loved that soul, suffered for it, and raised it up from the dead. But as a veil was put over the face of Moses, that the people might not gaze upon his face, so now a veil lies upon your heart, that you may not behold the glory of God. When this is taken away, then He shines forth and manifests Himself to Christians, to those who love Him and seek Him in truth, as He says, I will manifest Myself to him, and will make My abode with him.

3. Let us endeavour then to come to Christ, who cannot lie, that we may obtain the promise, and the new covenant, which the Lord has made new through His cross and death, having burst the gates of hell and sin and brought out the faithful souls, and given them the Comforter within, and brought them into His kingdom. Let us reign then with Him, even we, in Jerusalem, His city, in the heavenly church, in the choir of the holy angels. The brethren who have been long time exercised and tried, these can succour the less experienced, and feel for them.

4. For some who had made themselves sure, and had been mightily worked upon by grace of God, have found their members so sanctified that they reckoned that concupiscence does not occur in Christianity, but that they had acquired a sober and chaste mind, and that from henceforth the inward man was raised aloft to divine and heavenly things, so that they really imagined such an one to have come

already to the perfect measures. And when the man imagined that he was already near the calm haven, billows rose up against him, so that he found himself again in the middle of the ocean, and was carried where sea was sky and death was ready. Thus sin entered after all, and wrought all manner of evil concupiscence. And again a certain class of persons having some grace vouchsafed to them, and having received a drop, so to speak, out of the whole deep sea, find it hour by hour, and day by day, such a work of wonder, that the man who is under its influence is amazed and astounded at the strange, surprising operation of God, to think that he should be given such wisdom. After this, grace enlightens him, guides him, gives him peace, makes him good in every way, being itself divine and heavenly, so that in comparison with that man kings and potentates, wise men and nobles are esteemed as least and worthless. After a time and season things change, so that of a truth such a man esteems himself a greater sinner than all others; and again at another season sees himself like a great colossal king, or a king's powerful friend; again at another season sees himself weak and a beggar. Then the mind falls into perplexity, why things should be thus and then thus. Because Satan in his hatred of the good suggests evil things to those who attain virtue, and strives to overthrow them. That is his occupation.

5. But do not submit to him, while you work at the righteousness that is accomplished in the inner man, where stands the judgment seat of Christ, together with His undefiled sanctuary, that the testimony of your conscience may glory in the cross of Christ, who has purged your conscience from dead works, that you may serve God with your spirit, that you may know what you worship, according to Him who said, We worship that which we know. Obey God who guides you. Let your soul have communion with Christ, as bride with bridegroom. For this mystery is great, it says; but I speak concerning Christ and the blameless soul. To Him be the glory for ever. Amen.

HOMILY XXXIX

Why the Holy Scripture was given to us by God. 1. AS a king writes letters to those upon whom he wishes to confer patents and special gifts, and signifies to them all, “endeavour to come quickly to me, that you may receive from me royal gifts”; and if they do not come and receive them, they will be none the better off for having read the letters, but, on the contrary, are liable to be put to death for not choosing to go and be honoured by the king’s hand; so God, the King, has sent to men the holy scriptures as His letters, declaring by them that they should pray to God and believing should ask and receive a heavenly gift of the substance of His Godhead; for it is written, That we should be made partakers of the divine nature. But if man will not come, and ask, and receive, he is none the better off for having read the scriptures, but is rather liable to death, because he did not choose to receive from the heavenly King the gift of life, without which it is impossible to obtain immortal life, which is Christ. To whom be glory for ever. Amen.

HOMILY XL

That all the virtues and all the vices are bound each to other, and like a chain are linked one to another. 1. CONCERNING exterior discipline, and what practice is best and first, know this, beloved, that all the virtues are bound up together. The one is linked to the other, like a kind of spiritual chain; prayer to love, love to joy, joy to meekness, meekness to humility, humility to service, service to hope, hope to faith, faith to obedience, obedience to simplicity. And on the opposite side, evil things are bound one to another, hatred to anger, anger to pride, pride to vainglory, vainglory to unbelief, unbelief to hardness of heart, hardness of heart to carelessness, carelessness to sloth, sloth to sullenness, sullenness to want of endurance, want of endurance to love of pleasure. The other parts of vice likewise are dependent upon each other; so also on the good side the virtues are dependent on each other and connected.

2. But the chief of all good endeavour, the topmost of right actions, is perseverance in prayer. From it we may daily gain increasingly the rest of the virtues through asking them of God. By it is formed, in those to whom it is vouchsafed, the fellowship of the holiness of God and of spiritual energy, and the attachment of the disposition of the mind to the Lord in love unspeakable. The man who compels himself every day to persevere in prayer is enflamed with divine affection and fiery longing by spiritual love towards God, and receives the grace of the sanctifying perfection of the Spirit. 3. Question. Since there are some who sell their goods, and emancipate their slaves, and perform commandments, yet do not seek to receive the Spirit in this world, living thus, do they not go into the kingdom of heaven? Answer. This is a subtle matter. Some say that there is one kingdom and one hell; but we say that there are many grades and differences and measures, both in the kingdom and in hell. As there is one soul in all the members, which operates aloft in the brain, and also moves the feet beneath, so the Godhead contains all creatures, the heavenly, and those under the bottomless pit, and is everywhere fulfilled in the creation, although it transcends the creatures, because it is infinite and incomprehensible. This Godhead looks upon men, and providentially orders all things according to reason; and when some pray, not knowing what they seek, and some fast, others continue in service; God being a just judge, gives to each a

reward according to the measure of faith. What they do, they do for the fear of God; but not all these are sons, or kings, or heirs.

4. And in the world there are some who are murderers, others fornicators, and others extortioners, while others distribute their own possessions to the poor. Upon both these classes the Lord keeps His eye, and to those who do good He gives refreshment and reward. For there are superior measures, and there are little measures, and in light and glory there are differences, and in hell itself and punishment appear poisoners and robbers, as well as others who have committed only little sins. Those who say that there is one kingdom and one hell, and that there are no degrees, say ill. How many worldly people there are who are now continually at theatres and other disorderly things, and how many there are now who pray and fear God! On these and those alike God keeps an eye, and, like a just judge, prepares refreshment for the one and punishment for the other.

5. As men harness horses and drive chariots and race them against each other, while each struggles to overcome and conquer his opponent, so is there a spectacle in the heart of those who strive, the evil spirits wrestling with the soul, and God and the angels beholding the contest. At each hour many fresh devices are set on foot by the soul, and likewise by iniquity within. The soul has many secret devices, and in due time produces them and gives them birth. Iniquity likewise has many devices and inventions, and gives birth hour by hour to fresh devices against the soul. The mind is charioteer, and harnesses the chariot of the soul, holding the reins of the thoughts; and thus it runs against the chariot of Satan, where he too has harnessed against the soul. 6. Question. If prayer is rest, how do some say, “We cannot pray,” and will not continue in prayer?

Answer. Rest itself, when it abounds, produces compassion and other forms of service, such as to visit the brethren, to serve them with the word. Nature itself desires to go and see the brethren, to speak a word. Nothing thrown in the fire can remain in its own nature. It cannot help becoming fire. If you throw pebbles into the fire, they become a little lime. The man who wishes to plunge at large into the sea, and to get into the middle of the ocean, is submerged and disappears from sight, while the man who goes in step by step wishes to come up and float on the top and get out at the haven to see the people on shore. So in the spiritual world a man enters into the depth of grace, and again bethinks him of his companions, and nature itself desires to go to one’s brethren to fulfil duties of charity, and to prove the word.

7. Question. How can the two things be in the heart together, grace and sin? Answer. As when there is fire outside a brazen vessel, then when you put fuel under, the vessel gets hot, and the inside of it boils and bubbles up, because the fire outside burns up beneath; but if a man pays no attention, and puts no fuel under, the fire begins to get less hot, and almost to go out; so grace, which is the

heavenly fire, is both inside you and outside you. So if you pray, and give your thoughts to the love of Christ, see how you supplied the fuel, and your thoughts become fire, and are plunged in longing after God; and even if the Spirit withdraws a little, as though It were outside you, still It is within you, and Its signs are seen outside you. But if one is careless, lending himself a little either to worldly affairs or to wandering, iniquity comes back and enters into the soul, and begins to afflict the whole man. The soul therefore remembers its former rest, and begins to be afflicted, and to suffer without intermission.

8. The mind has again given heed to God. The former rest has begun to draw near it. It begins to seek more earnestly. “I beseech Thee,” it says, “O Lord.” Little by little is added to it the fire which kindles and refreshes the soul, as the hook lifts the fish out of the depth by little and little. If this were not so, and he were not to taste of bitterness and death, how could he have discerned the bitter from the sweet, and death from life, and given thanks to the life-giving Father and Son and Holy Ghost, for ever? Amen.

HOMILY XLI

Very deep are the secret chambers of the soul, which grows in part with the growth of grace or of wickednesses. 1. THE precious vessel of the soul is of great depth, as it says in a certain place, He seeketh out the deep, and the heart. When man swerved from the commandment, and came under sentence of wrath, sin took him for her subject; and being herself like a great deep of bitterness in subtilty and depth, she entered within and took possession of the ranges of the soul, even to the deepest inner chambers of it. In such fashion as this let us liken the soul and sin when mixed with it, as if there should be a great big tree with many branches and it has its roots in the deepest parts of the earth. So the sin which had come in, taking possession of the ranges of the deepest chambers of the soul, came to be customary and to have the first say, growing up with each man from infancy, and going up and down with him, and instructing him in evil things.

2. When therefore the influence of divine grace has overshadowed the soul according to the measure of each man's faith, and he receives help from on high, still grace has overshadowed him only in part. Let not a man imagine that his whole soul has been enlightened. There is still a large range of wickedness within, and the man has need of much labour and pains, corresponding to the grace given him. That is the reason why divine grace began to visit the soul only in part, though it had power to cleanse and perfect the man in the turn of an hour, in order to test the man's purpose, whether he preserves his love towards God entire, not complying with the evil one in anything, but lending himself wholly to grace. In this way the soul, approving itself time after time, and grieving grace in nothing, nor using it despitefully, is helped by this method of little by little; and grace itself finds range in the soul, and strikes root even to the deepest parts and reasonings of it, when the soul on many occasions approves itself and corresponds with grace, until the whole soul is embraced by the heavenly grace, which thenceforth reigns in the vessel itself.

3. But if any one is not very humble, he is delivered to Satan, and is stripped naked of the divine grace that was given him, and is tempted with many afflictions, and then his self-esteem is shewn in its true colours, because in reality he is naked and

wretched. He who is rich in the grace of God ought to be very humble and contrite of heart, and to consider himself as poor and having nothing. None of it is his own. Another gave it him, and takes it away when He pleases. He who humbles himself thus before God and men is able to keep the grace that was given to him, as the Lord says, He that humbleth himself shall be exalted. Elect though he be of God, let him be reprobate to himself; and being really faithful, let him consider himself unworthy. Such souls are well pleasing to God, and are quickened in Christ, to whom be glory and might for ever. Amen.

HOMILY XLII

Not external things, but internal, advance or injure a man, namely the Spirit of grace or the spirit of wickedness. 1. SUPPOSE there is a great city, and it is deserted, the walls all broken down, and it be taken by enemies, its greatness is of no use. Care then must be taken in proportion to its greatness that it should have strong walls, that the enemy may not come in. In like manner, souls adorned with knowledge and intelligence and acuteness of mind are like great cities. But careful inquiry must be made whether they are fortified with the power of the Spirit, lest the enemy should get into them and lay them waste. The wise men of the world, Aristotle, or Plato, or Socrates, being prudent in knowledge, were like great cities, but they were made waste by enemies, because the Spirit of God was not in them.

2. But as many simple folk as are partakers of grace are like little cities fortified by the power of the cross. They only fall from grace for two causes, and perish either because they cannot bear the afflictions that are brought upon them, or because, having tasted the sweets of the pleasures of sin, they continued in them. Those who tread the way cannot go through without temptations. As in childbirth the beggar and the queen have the same pangs, and as the rich man's land and the poor man's alike, if they receive not the necessary culture, cannot bear worthy fruits, so in the culture of the soul not the wise man, not the rich man, reigns in grace, unless through endurance, and afflictions, and many a labour. The life of Christians ought to be of that kind. As honey, being sweet, does not admit of anything bitter or poisonous, so Christians are good to all who come near them, good or bad, as the Lord says, Be ye good, like your heavenly Father. The thing that injures and pollutes a man is from within. Out of the heart proceed evil thoughts, as the Lord says; because the things which defile the man are from within.

3. From within, creeping and advancing in the soul, is the spirit of wickedness, calculating, inciting, which is the veil of darkness, the old man, which those who flee to God must put off, and put on the heavenly, new man, which is Christ. Nothing outside can hurt a man, only the spirit of darkness dwelling in the heart, alive and active; so that every one in his thoughts ought to possess the conflict, that Christ may shine upon his heart. To whom be glory for ever. Amen.

HOMILY XLIII

Concerning the progress of a Christian man, the whole power of which depends upon the heart, as is here described in various ways. 1. AS many lamps and burning torches are kindled from the fire, but all the torches and lamps are kindled and shine from a single nature, so Christians are kindled and shine from a single nature, the divine fire, the Son of God, and have their torches burning in their hearts, and shine before Him while on earth, as He did. For it says, Therefore hath God, even Thy God, anointed Thee with the oil of gladness. That is why He was called Christ, in order that we also, being anointed with the same oil with which He was anointed, might become Christs, of the one substance and one body. It says again, Both He that sanctifieth and they which are sanctified are all of one. 2. Christians, then, in one direction are like lamps containing the oil in themselves, that is, the fruits of righteousness: but if it be not kindled from the lamp of Godhead within them, they are nothing. The Lord was the burning lamp, because of the Spirit of the Godhead which abode substantially in Him and set on fire His heart according to His human nature.

As if there were a rotten pouch filled with pearls, so Christians ought to be lowly and easily despised in the outward man, but inwardly in the inner man they have the pearl of great price. Others are like to whited sepulchres, outwardly painted and decorated, but within full of dead men’s bones, of much stench and unclean spirits. They are dead from God, and clothed with all shame and filthiness and with the darkness of the adversary.

3. The apostle says that the child, so long as he is little, is under tutors and governors of evil spirits, which spirits do not wish the child to grow up, lest he should become a full-grown man, and begin to aim at the advantage of the house, and to claim the lordship. The Christian ought at all times to have God in remembrance; for it is written, Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart; that he may love the Lord not only when he goes into the place of prayer, but that in walking, and talking, and eating, he may have the remembrance of God, and love and dutiful affection for Him. It says, Where thy mind is, there also is thy treasure. To whatever thing a man’s heart is tied, and where his desire draws him, that is his

God. If the heart at all times desires God, He is the Lord of his heart. But if a man after renouncing and making himself without possessions, and without home, and fasting—if this one is still tied to the man that he is, or to worldly affairs, or to house, or to the charm of parents, where his heart is tied and his mind is captive, that is his God, and he is found to have gone out of the world by the front door, but to have entered and thrown himself into the world by the side door.

As sticks thrown into the fire cannot resist the power of the fire, but are forthwith burned up, so the devils desiring to fight with a man to whom the Spirit has been vouchsafed are burned and consumed by the divine power of the fire, if only the man is at all times cleaving to the Lord, and keeping his trust and his hope towards Him. And even if the devils are strong as strong mountains, they are burned by prayer, like wax by fire. But meantime great is the struggle and the battle against them which awaits the soul. There are rivers of dragons, and mouths of lions. There is fire which flames into the soul. As the perfect evildoer, drunk with the spirit of error, is insatiable to evil, either murdering, or committing adultery, so Christians, when they have been baptized into the Holy Spirit, are without experience of evil; but those who have grace, but are still mingled with sin, these are subject to fear, and travel through fearful places. 4.

For as merchants on a voyage, though they find a wind to suit them and the sea calm, but have not yet reached the haven, are always subject to fear, lest suddenly a contrary wind should stir and the sea rise into billows, and the ship be in peril, so Christians, even if they have in themselves a favourable wind of the Holy Spirit blowing, are nevertheless yet subject to fear, lest the wind of the adverse power should rise and blow on them, and stir disturbance and billows for their souls. There is need therefore of great diligence, that we may arrive at the haven of rest, at the perfect world, at the eternal life and pleasure, at the city of the saints, at the heavenly Jerusalem, at the church of the firstborn. Unless a man gets through these measures, he is under much fear, lest in the meantime the evil power should effect some fall.

5. As a woman who has conceived carries her babe within in the dark, so to speak, and in covert; but if by and by the child comes forth at the proper time, it sees a new creation, which it never saw before, of sky and earth and sun, and immediately friends and kinsfolk with cheerful countenances receive it into their arms; but if through some derangement it happens that the child is displaced, then the surgeons whose business it is are obliged to use the knife, and the child is thus found to pass from death to death, from darkness to darkness—so think of what happens in the spiritual world. As many as have received the seed of the Godhead, these have it invisibly, and because of sin which dwells there also they conceal it in dark and obscure places. If therefore they make themselves sure, and preserve the seed, these in due time are visibly born again, and then at the dissolution of the

body the angels and all the companies above receive them with cheerful countenances. But if after receiving the weapons of Christ to fight manfully a man grows slack, such a one is immediately delivered over to the enemies, and at the dissolution of the body passes from the darkness which now encompasses him to another and a worse darkness, and to perdition.

6. Suppose there to be a garden with many fruit trees and other sweet-smelling plants, and that it were all well tilled and laid out for beauty, and that it had also a small wall by way of hedge to preserve it, and suppose that a vehement stream goes through there, though but a little of the water dashes against the wall and saps the foundation, it gets itself a course, and little by little breaks up the foundation, and finds entrance and tears its way, and roots up all the plants, and mars all the tilling, and makes it fruitless. So is it with man's heart. It has its good thoughts; but the streams of evil also are always near the heart, desiring to cast it down, and to incline it to its own side. Then if the mind be ever so little light, and yield to unclean thoughts, behold, the spirits of error have found scope, and have entered in, and have overturned the beauties that were there, and have destroyed the good thoughts and laid the soul waste.

7. As the eye is little in comparison of all the members, and the pupil, small as it is, is a great vessel, because it sees at one glance sky, star, sun, moon, cities and other creatures, and likewise these things, seen at the glance, are formed and imaged in the little pupil of the eye; so is the mind in the heart, and the heart itself is but a little vessel, and yet there are dragons, and there lions, and there venomous beasts, and all the treasures of wickedness; and there are rough uneven ways, there chasms; there likewise is God, there the angels, there life and the kingdom, there light and the apostles, there the heavenly cities, there the treasures, there are all things. For as is a fog laid upon all the world, so that man sees not man, so is the darkness of this age, laid upon all creation and upon every nature of man from the transgression; for which cause, being overshadowed of the darkness, they are in night, and pass their lives in dreadful places. And as is a thick smoke in a single house, so is sin, with its filthy thoughts, settling upon the thoughts of the heart, and creeping over them, and an infinite multitude of devils.

8. As in the natural order, when a war is in preparation, the wise men and the great personages do not go to it, but fear death and stay away; and raw recruits, and the poor, and the ignorant are put forward; and it so falls out that they get a victory over the enemies, and pursue them out of their borders, and receive from the king rewards of victory and crowns, and come to promotions and dignities, and those great ones are found to be behind them; so is it in the spiritual order. The ignorant begin by hearing the word, and do the work thereof with the love of the truth in their thoughts, and receive from God the grace of the Spirit; while the wise, and

those who seek the word in subtle fashion, these fly from the war, and make no advancement, and are found behind those who fought and conquered.

9. As, when the winds blow vehemently, they move all the creatures under heaven, and succeed in making a great sound, so the power of the enemy buffets and carries the thoughts along, and shakes the depths of the heart at will, and scatters the thoughts for its own advantage. Like tax-collectors sitting in the narrow ways, and laying hold upon the passers-by, and extorting from them, so do the devils spy upon souls, and lay hold of them; and when they pass out of the body, if they are not perfectly cleansed, they do not suffer them to mount up to the mansions of heaven and to meet their Lord, and they are driven down by the devils of the air. But if whilst they are yet in the flesh, they shall with much labour and effort obtain from the Lord the grace from on high, assuredly these, together with those who through virtuous living are at rest, shall go to the Lord, as He promised, Where I am, there shall also My servant be, and to endless ages they reign with the Father and the Son and the Holy Ghost, now and ever and to the ages of ages. Amen.

HOMILY XLIV

What change and renewal is wrought in a Christian man by Christ, who has healed the afflictions and diseases of the soul. 1. HE who comes to God, and desires to be in truth a partner of Christ's throne, ought to come with a view to this end, that he may be changed and altered from his former condition and conduct, and be made a good and new man, who brings nothing of the old man with him. If any man be in Christ, it says, he is a new creature. This was the very purpose of the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ, to change and alter and renew nature, and to create afresh this soul that was overturned by passions through the transgression, mingling it with His own Spirit, the Spirit of Godhead. New mind, and new soul, and new eyes, new ears, a new spiritual tongue, and in short new men altogether—this was what He came to make of those who believe Him, or let us say new bottles, anointing them with His own light of knowledge, that He might change their wine into new wine, which is His Spirit; for new wine, He says, must be put into new bottles.

2. As the enemy, when he had got man into subjection, made him new for himself, enveloping him in lusts of wickedness, and anointing him with the spirit of sin poured into him the wine of all iniquity and evil doctrine; so the Lord, having delivered him from the enemy, made him new, anointing him with His own Spirit, and poured into him the wine of life, the new doctrine of the Spirit. He who changed the nature of the five loaves into the nature of a multitude, and gave a voice to the irrational nature of an ass, and converted the harlot to chastity, and prepared the nature of burning fire to bedew those who were in the furnace, and tamed for Daniel the nature of savage lions; He is able also to change the soul, which was waste and had become savage, from sin into His own goodness and loving-kindness and peace, by the holy and good Spirit of promise.

3. As a shepherd knows how to cure the scabby sheep, and to protect it from wolves, so Christ, the true shepherd, when He came, was alone able to cure and to convert man, the lost and scabby sheep, from the scab and leprosy of sin. The priests and Levites and teachers before were unable to cure the soul by the oblations of gifts and sacrifices, and by their sprinklings of blood, wherewith indeed they were unable even to cure themselves. For it is not possible, it says, that the blood of

bulls and of goats should take away sin. But the Lord said, showing the impotence of the physicians of the time, Ye will surely say unto me this parable, Physician, heal thyself; as much as to say, "I am not like them, who cannot so much as heal themselves. I am the true physician, and the good shepherd, who lay down My life for the sheep, who am able to heal all manner of sickness and all manner of disease of the soul. I am the sheep without spot, that was offered once, and that am able to cure those that come to Me." The true healing of the soul is from the Lord only. Behold, it says, the Lamb of God, that taketh away the sin of the world, that is to say, of the soul that has believed Him, and that loves Him with a whole heart.

4. The good Shepherd, then, heals the scabby sheep. Sheep cannot heal sheep. And except man, the reasonable sheep, be healed, there is no entrance for him into the heavenly church of the Lord. It is thus said even in the law through shadow and image. Concerning the leper, and him who has a blemish, the Spirit speaks figuratively, with this meaning; A leper, or one that hath a blemish, shall not enter into the assembly of the Lord; but it charged the leper to go to the priest, and with much entreaty to take him to the house of his tabernacle, and [ask him] to lay his hands upon the leprosy, indicating the spot where the leprosy had attacked him, and to heal it. After the same manner, Christ, the true high priest of good things to come, bending over souls that are afflicted with the leprosy of sin, enters into the tabernacle of their body, and heals and cures their disorders. Thus the soul will be enabled to enter into the heavenly church of the saints of the true Israel. For any soul that bears the leprosy of the sin of the passions, and has not come to the true high priest, and been healed now in the camp of the saints, cannot enter into the heavenly church. For [that church] being without blemish, and pure, seeks souls that are without blemish and pure. Blessed, says the scripture, are the pure in heart, for they shall see God.

5. The soul which really believes Christ must be changed and altered from its present evil condition to a new condition which is good, and from its present lowly nature into another nature which is divine, and be itself made new by the power of the Holy Ghost. Thus can it be fit for the heavenly kingdom. These things can be obtained by us if we believe and love Him in truth, and live by all His holy commandments. If in the time of Elisaeus the casting of light wood upon the waters brought up the heavy iron, how much more in this case will the Lord send forth His light, buoyant, good, and heavenly Spirit, and by means of Him bring up the soul that is sunk in the waters of wickedness, and make it light, and wing it to the heights of heaven, and alter and change it out of its own nature.

6. In the visible world, no one can pass and get across the sea of himself, without having the light and buoyant ship, built of wood, which alone is able to walk over the waters—for if a man treads upon the sea, he is drowned and perishes. In the same way no soul can of itself cross and pass over and get beyond the bitter sea of

sin, and the dangerous deep of the wicked powers of the darkness of the passions, unless he shall receive the buoyant, heavenly, winged Spirit of Christ, which walks over all wickedness and passes on, whereby he shall be enabled to arrive by a straight, right course at the heavenly haven of rest, at the city of the kingdom. And as those who are in the ship do not draw, or drink of the sea, nor have their clothing or their food from it, but bring these things with them from abroad in the ship, so the souls of Christians do not take from this world, but from above, out of heaven, heavenly sustenance, and spiritual clothing; and living thereby, embarked in the ship of the good, life-giving Spirit, pass beyond the adverse evil powers of principalities and dominions. And as all ships are built of one substance of wood, that by means of them men may get over the bitter sea, so from one Godhead's heavenly light of the divers gifts of the one Spirit, all Christian souls receive power and fly high over all wickedness.

7. But since the ship needs also a pilot, and a sweet, well-tempered wind to make a good passage, the Lord Himself becomes all these in the faithful soul, carrying it over the terrible storms and the wild waves of wickedness, and the blasts of the violent winds of sin, mightily and skilfully and expertly, as He knows how, dispersing their tempest. Without Christ, the heavenly pilot, it is impossible for any to pass the wicked sea of the powers of darkness, and the gusts of bitter temptations. They go up, it says, to the heavens, and down again to the deep. But Christ possesses all a pilot's knowledge, both of wars and temptations, treading over the wild waves. For in that He Himself, it says, was tempted, He is able to succour them that are tempted.

8. So our souls must be altered and changed from their present condition to another condition, and a divine nature, and be made new instead of old—that is, good and kind and faithful, instead of bitter and faithless, and being thus made fit, be restored to the heavenly kingdom. The blessed Paul writes thus of his own change, and of the apprehension wherewith he was apprehended of the Lord: I follow after, if that I may apprehend that for which also I was apprehended by Christ. How then is he apprehended of God? Like as if some usurper were to seize and carry off a captivity, and it were then apprehended or caught by its true sovereign, so when Paul was under the influence of the usurping spirit of sin, he persecuted the church and made havoc of it. But since he acted through zeal for God according to ignorance, supposing himself to be contending for truth, he was not disregarded, but the Lord apprehended him, shining about him unspeakably, the heavenly King and true, vouchsafing His own voice to the man, and striking him like a slave, set him free. Behold the Master's goodness and power of changing, how He is able to change souls that were enveloped in sin and had relapsed into wildness, and in a moment of time to convert them to His own goodness and peace!

9. All things are possible with God; as it proved in the case of the robber. In a moment of time he was changed through faith, and restored to paradise. This was the purpose of the Lord's coming, to alter and create our souls anew, and make them, as it is written, partakers of the divine nature, and to give into our soul a heavenly soul, that is the Spirit of Godhead leading us to all virtue, that we might be enabled to live eternal life. May it be that with all our hearts we should believe His inexpressible promises, because He is true that promised. We must love the Lord, and be diligent every way in all virtues, and ask persistently and continually, so as to receive the promise of His Spirit completely and to perfection, that our souls may be brought to life while we are still in flesh. For if the soul shall not receive in this world the hallowing of the Spirit through much faith and prayer, and be made partaker of the divine nature, being mingled with grace whereby it shall be able to fulfil every commandment unblameably and purely, it is not made for the kingdom of heaven. What good thing a man has gained here, the same in that day will be his life, through the Father, and the Son, and the Holy Ghost, for ever. Amen.

HOMILY XLV

No art, no wealth of this world, but only the appearing of Christ, is able to cure man, whose great kinship with God this Homily sets forth. 1. HE that has chosen the solitary life ought to consider all things that are concerned with this world as alien and strange to himself. One who in truth pursues the cross of Christ, denying all things, yea, and his own life also, ought to have his mind nailed to the love of Christ, esteeming the Lord before parents, brethren, wife, children, kindred, friends, possessions. This Christ set forth, when He said, “Every one that hath not left father, or mother, or brethren, or wife, or children, or lands, and followeth Me, is not worthy of Me.” In nothing else is salvation and peace found for men, as we have been told. How many kings have appeared of the race of Adam, possessing all the earth, thinking great things because of their royal power; and yet none of them, for all this kind of advantages, had the power to discern the evil which had invaded the soul in consequence of the first man’s transgression, and had darkened it, that it knew not the change which had passed over it—that the mind at first was pure and saw its Master, being in honour, and now, because of its banishment, is clothed with shame, the eyes of the heart being blinded, that it may not behold that glory, which our father Adam before his disobedience beheld.

2. There have been also divers kinds of wise men according to the world; of whom some have displayed excellence by means of philosophy; others have been admired for their expertness in sophistry, others have displayed oratorical skill; others have been men of letters and poets, and have composed histories according to the conventional plan. There have also been different kinds of artificers, who have practised the arts according to the world. Some have carved in wood all kinds of birds and fishes, and figures of men, and in those have endeavoured to display their excellence. Some have taken in hand to fashion portraits, statues in bronze and the like; others have erected great and beautiful buildings; others, mining the earth, bring up the silver and gold that perishes, others precious stones. Others, possessing personal beauties, were elated by the comeliness of their countenances and were the more enticed by Satan, and fell into sin. And all these artificers of whom I have spoken, being held by the serpent who dwells within, and not knowing the

sin that abode with them, have been captives and slaves to the evil power, gaining no advantage from their science and their art.

3. The world, then, which is filled with all varieties, is like a rich man, who possesses splendid great houses, and gold and silver, and divers properties, and service of all sorts in abundance; and yet is oppressed by sufferings and sicknesses all at the same time, and all his kinsfolk stand beside him, with all his riches, unable to relieve him of his infirmities. No pursuit belonging to this life, not brethren, not wealth, not courage, nor all other things that we have mentioned, relieve of sin the soul which has been immersed by sin, and cannot discern things clearly. Only the appearing of Christ is able to cleanse soul and body. Let us then rid ourselves of all temporal care, and devote ourselves to the Lord, crying to Him night and day. This visible world, and the satisfaction found in it, appear to solace the body, but so much the more do they sharpen the maladies of the soul, and increase the mischief from which it suffers.

4. A certain prudent man, desiring to spare no pains in the inquiry, made it his business to gain an experience of all the things that come to pass in this world, if he might by chance profit by them. He had recourse to kings, potentates, rulers, and found no saving cure from that quarter to apply to his soul, and after spending a long time with them was none the better for it. He went again to the wise men of the world and the orators: he quitted them also in the same way, having gained no benefit from them. He made the tour of the painters, and of those who raise the gold and silver from the earth, and of all the artists, and was unable to discover any remedy for his own wounds. At last, taking leave of them, he began to seek God for himself, God who heals the diseases and maladies of the soul. But while he kept an eye upon himself and thought these matters over, his mind was found wandering among those very things from which he had ostensibly withdrawn because he hated them.

5. As some woman who in the world is rich and possesses much money, and a fine house, is bereft of protection, and those who set upon her to injure her and to lay her buildings waste are many; and she, not brooking the affront, goes about seeking a powerful man to marry her, well suited for the purpose and educated in all directions; and when after much anxiety she gains such a husband, she rejoices over him, and finds in him a strong wall; in the same way the soul, after the transgression, having been for a long time afflicted by the adverse power, and having fallen into great isolation, a widow and desolate, deserted by the heavenly Husband because of the transgression of the commandment, and made the sport of all the opposing powers; for they drove her out of her wits, bewildering her out of her heavenly understanding, so that she does not see what they have done to her, but thinks that she was made like that from the beginning; then, having learned, by being told, of her desolation and unprotected state, she groaned before the clemency

of God, and found life and salvation—why? Because she returned to her kindred. For there is no tie of blood or suitableness like that between the soul and God, and between God and the soul.

God made the various kinds of birds—some to burrow in the ground, and to have their sustenance and satisfaction from thence; for some He ordained that they should dive under the waters, and have their life from thence. He fashioned two worlds—one above, for the ministering spirits, and appointed that they should have their social life there; the other below for men, under this atmosphere. He created also heaven and earth, sun and moon, waters, trees that bear fruit, all manner of races of animals. But in none of them does God find rest. All the creation is governed by Him; and yet He did not fix His throne in them, or establish communion with them, but was well pleased with man alone, entering into communion with him, and resting in him. Seest thou the kinship of God with man, and of man with God? Therefore the sagacious and prudent soul, after going the round of all created things, found no rest for herself, except in the Lord; and the Lord was well pleased' in nothing except in man alone.

6. If you open your eyes towards the sun, you find his orb in the sky, but his light and his beams inclining to the earth, and all the power of its light and its radiance bearing down upon the earth. So also the Lord is seated at the right hand of the Father above all principality and power, but He keeps His eye intent upon the hearts of men on earth, that He may bring those who wait for the succour that He gives, up to where He is; because He says, Where I am, there shall My servant also be, and Paul again, He hath raised us up together with Him and made us sit together with Him at His right hand in heavenly places. Animals without reason are much more sagacious than we. They are all joined each to its own kind, wild to wild, and sheep to their own species; and you—you do not ascend to your heavenly kin, which is the Lord, but give yourself over and consent in your thoughts to the thoughts of evil, making yourself an ally of sin, and fighting on its side against yourself, thus making yourself prey for the enemy to devour; as if a bird were caught by the eagle and eaten up, or a sheep by the wolf, or a child that knows nothing were to stretch out its hand to the serpent, and were bitten by it and killed. The parables have as it were their living counterparts in the spiritual reality.

7. As a wealthy maiden, betrothed to a husband, may receive ever so many presents before the marriage, ornaments, or dresses, or costly vessels, but is not satisfied until the time of the wedding comes and she is made one with him, so the soul, when it is engaged as a bride to the heavenly Bridegroom, receives as an earnest from the Spirit gifts of healings, it may be, or of knowledge, or of revelation, but it is not satisfied with these, until it attains the complete union, namely, charity, which can never change nor fail, which sets those who have longed for it free from passion and from agitation. Or as a babe that is decked with pearls and costly

clothes, when it is hungry, thinks nothing of the things that it wears, but despises them, and cares only for its nurse’s breast, how it may get the milk; so reckon it to be, I pray you, even with the spiritual gifts of God. To whom be glory for ever. Amen.

HOMILY XLVI

Concerning the difference between God's word and the worlds, and between God's children and the children of this world. 1. THE Word of God is God, and the word of the world is world; and there is a great difference and distance between the Word of God and the word of the world, and between the children of God and the children of the world. Everything that is begotten resembles its parents. If then the offspring of the Spirit shall choose to give itself up to the word of the world and the things of the earth and the glory of the present order, it is mortified and perishes, being unable to find the true satisfaction of life. Its satisfaction is only there, whence it was begotten. As the Lord says, he who is encompassed by cares of this life and bound by earthly bonds is choked, and becometh unfruitful from the Word of God. In like manner also he who is possessed by a fleshly intention, who is a man of the world, if he should wish to listen to the Word of God, is choked, and becomes like one devoid of reason; for, being accustomed to the deceits of evil, when such men hear about God, they are as it were oppressed by tiresome discourse, and their minds are sick of it.

2. Paul says, The natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit; for they are foolishness unto him. And the prophet says, The word of God was to them as vomit. You see that it is not possible to live except according to the word that each was born to. You must listen to another way of putting it. If the carnal man gives himself up to be changed, he begins by dying in that quarter, and becoming unfruitful as regards that former life in wickedness. But as if a man is subject to a disease or a fever, although his body is prostrate upon the bed, unable to accomplish any of the activities of the earth, his mind is not quiet, but plucked this way and that, in concern about his business, and seeks the physician, sending his friends to him; so the soul, weak with passion from the transgression of the commandment, and in a state of impotence, comes to the Lord and believes and finds His help; and when it has denied its former evil life, although it still lies in its old weakness, unable to accomplish in truth the works of life, yet to be zealously concerned about the life, to ask of the Lord, to seek the true Physician—this it has and can.

3. It is not as some say, who are led astray by wrong teachings, that man is dead once for all, and cannot accomplish anything good whatsoever. A babe has no force to accomplish anything, and is unable to go on its own feet to its mother; but yet it rolls itself, and makes a noise, and cries, seeking after its mother. The mother meanwhile pities it, and rejoices that the little one seeks after her with pains and crying; and though the babe cannot come to her, yet because of the child's much seeking the mother comes to it herself, all over-mastered by love for her babe, and takes it up, and cherishes it, and nurses it with great affection. This is what God does, in His kindness towards man, with the soul that comes to Him and longs for Him. Nay, much more, impelled by charity, He of His own accord, in the goodness which is inherent in Him and is all His own, cleaves to the intention of that soul, and becomes one spirit with it, according to the apostolic saying. When the soul cleaves to the Lord, and the Lord pities and loves, coming to it and cleaving to it, and the intention from that time remains continually faithful to the grace of the Lord, they become one spirit, one composite thing, one intention, the soul and the Lord; and while the body belonging to it is prostrate upon earth, the intention of the soul has its conversation wholly in the heavenly Jerusalem, mounting even to the third heaven, and cleaving to the Lord, and ministering to Him there.

4. And He, while sitting in the throne of majesty on high, in the heavenly city, is wholly in company with the soul, in the body that belongs to it. He has set her image above in Jerusalem, the heavenly city of the saints, and has set His own image, the image of the unspeakable light of His Godhead, in her body. He ministers to her in the city of the body, while she ministers to Him in the heavenly city. She has inherited Him in heaven, and He has inherited her upon earth. The Lord becomes the soul's inheritance, and the soul becomes the inheritance of the Lord. If the intention and mind of sinners in darkness can be so far from the body, and is able to sojourn at a distance, and to travel in a moment to distant countries, and oftentimes, while the body is prostrate on the earth, the mind is in another country, in company with him or her whom it loves, and sees itself living there;—if, I say, the soul of the sinner is so light and volatile that his mind is not debarred from places far away, much more does the soul from whom the veil of darkness has been taken away by the power of the Holy Ghost, and her mental eyes have been enlightened through the heavenly light, and she has been perfectly delivered from the passions of shame, and has been made pure through grace, serve the Lord wholly in heaven in the spirit, and serve Him wholly in the body, and find herself so expanded in thought as to be everywhere and where she wills, and, where He wills, to serve the Lord.

5. This is what the apostle says, That ye may be able to comprehend with all the saints, what is the breadth, and length, and height, and depth, and to know the love of Christ which passeth knowledge, that ye may be filled unto all the fulness of God. Consider the unspeakable mysteries of the soul from which the Lord takes

away the darkness that lies over her, and reveals her, and is revealed to her; how He expands and extends the thoughts of her mind to the breadths and lengths and depths and heights of all creation, visible and invisible. A great and divine work and wonderful indeed is the soul. In fashioning her, God made her such as to put no evil in her nature, but made her after the image of the virtues of the Spirit. He put in her the laws of virtues, discernment, knowledge, prudence, faith, charity, and the other virtues, according to the image of the Spirit.

6. Even now in knowledge and prudence and charity and faith the Lord is still found and manifested to her. He has put in her intelligence, divers faculties, will, the ruling mind. He has seated in her much other subtlety besides. He made her mobile, volatile, unwearying. He bestowed on her to come and go in a moment, and in her thoughts to serve Him where the Spirit wills. Altogether He created her such as to be His bride, and capable of fellowship with Him, that He might be mingled with her, and be one spirit with her, as the apostle says, He that is joined unto the Lord is one spirit. To whom be glory for ever. Amen.

HOMILY XLVII

An allegorical interpretation of the things done under the Law. 1. THE glory of Moses which he had upon his countenance was a figure of the true glory. For as in that case the Jews were not able to look steadfastly upon the face of Moses, so now Christians receive that glory of light in their souls, and the darkness, not bearing the radiance of the light, is blinded and banished. They were made known to be the people of God by circumcision: here, God's peculiar people receive the sign of circumcision inwardly in their heart. The heavenly knife cuts away the unwanted portion of the mind, which is the impure uncircumcision of sin. With them was a baptism sanctifying the flesh; with us, a baptism of Holy Ghost and fire, for this is what John preached; He shall baptize you with Holy Ghost and fire. 2. There they had an outer tabernacle and an inner, and into the first the priests went continually, accomplishing the services; but into the second went the high priest alone once every year, with blood, the Holy Ghost this signifying, that the way into the holiest was not yet made manifest. Here, on the other hand, those who have the privilege enter into the tabernacle not made with hands, whither the forerunner is for us entered, even Christ. It is written in the law that the priest should take two doves, and kill the one, and sprinkle the living one with its blood, and loose it and let it fly free. That which was done was a figure and shadow of the truth; for Christ was slain, and His blood sprinkling us has made us to grow wings, for He has given us the wings of the Holy Ghost, that we may fly without hindrance into the air of the Godhead.

3. To them was given a law written upon tables of stone; but to us, spiritual laws, engraven upon fleshy tables of the heart, for it says, I will put My laws in their hearts, and upon their minds will I write them. All those things were temporary and to be done away; but now all are accomplished in truth on the inner man. The covenant is within, and the battle within. In short, whatsoever things happened unto them were done in a figure, and were written for our admonition.

God foretold to Abraham the future, saying, Thy seed shall be a stranger in a land that is not theirs, and they shall afflict it, and make it to serve four hundred years. This was fulfilled in the image of the shadow. The people became a stranger, and

was enslaved by the Egyptians, and was afflicted in clay and brick. Pharaoh set over them superintendents and taskmasters, that they should do their works by compulsion; and when the children of Israel groaned unto God by reason of their tasks, then He looked upon them through Moses; and having smitten the Egyptians with many plagues, He brought them out of Egypt, in the month of flowers, when first the pleasant spring appears, and the gloom of winter is passing off. 4. And the Lord spake unto Moses, to take a lamb without blemish, and to slay it, and to smear the blood of it upon the doors and the lintels, that he that destroyed the firstborn of the Egyptians might not touch them. The angel that was sent saw the sign of the blood from afar and removed; but he entered into the houses that were not signed, and slew all the firstborn. Moreover He commanded leaven to be put away out of every house, and enjoined that they should eat the lamb that was slain with unleavened bread and bitter herbs, and that they should eat it with their loins girt, and their shoes upon their feet, and with their staves in their hands;

and thus He commanded them to eat the Lord's passover with all haste in the evening, and not to break a bone of the lamb. 5. He brought them forth also with silver and gold, commanding them to borrow everyone of his Egyptian neighbour vessels of gold and of silver; and they came out of Egypt while the Egyptians were burying their firstborn, and joy was theirs for their riddance of the squalid bondage, and grief and wailing to the others for the destruction of their children. Wherefore Moses says, This is the night in which God promised to deliver us.

All these things are a mystery of the soul, redeemed by the coming of Christ. For Israel is interpreted to be the mind beholding God. He is set free from the bondage of darkness, from the Egyptian spirits. 6. For since at the transgression man died the dreadful death of the soul, and received curse upon curse—Thistles and thorns shall the ground bring forth unto thee, and again, Thou shalt till the ground, and it shall not henceforth yield unto thee her fruits—thorns and thistles sprouted and sprang up in the ground of his heart. His enemies by guile took away his glory, and clothed him with shame. His light was taken away, and he was clothed in darkness. They murdered his soul. They scattered and divided his faculties and dragged his mind down from its height, and Israel became the man who is bondservant to the true Pharaoh, and he set over him his overseers and taskmasters, those spirits of wickedness which compel him, whether he will or no, to do his wicked works, and to fulfil the tale of mortar and of brick. These withdrew him from his heavenly state of mind, and brought him down to material, earthly, clayey works of wickedness, and words and devices and reasonings that are vain. Taken from her proper height, the soul found herself in a kingdom of hatred to man, where bitter rulers compel her to build them the evil cities of sin.

7. But if the soul groans and cries unto God, He sends forth to her the spiritual Moses, who delivers her from the bondage of the Egyptians: but she cries and

groans first, and only then begins to receive deliverance, being herself also delivered in the month of new blossoms, in the springtime, when the ground of the soul can put forth the fair and blossoming boughs of righteousness, and the bitter winter storms of the ignorance of darkness are over, and of the great blindness that comes of shameful deeds and sins. Then also He bids all old leaven to be removed out of each house, namely the deeds and dispositions of the old man which waxeth corrupt, to cast away, as far as possible, wicked thoughts and uncleanly imaginations.

8. The lamb must be slain and sacrificed, and the blood of it be smeared upon the doors: for Christ, the true, good Lamb, without blemish, was slain, and the lintels of the heart were anointed with His blood, that the blood of Christ shed upon the cross might be to the soul for life and deliverance, and to the devils of Egypt for woe and death. The blood of the Lamb without blemish is indeed woe to them, and joy and gladness to the soul. Then, after the anointing, He bids to eat the lamb at even, and the unleavened bread, with bitter herbs, with loins girt and shoes on feet, and staff in hand. Unless the soul be prepared beforehand on every side, to the best of her power, through good works, it is not given to her to eat of the lamb. And though the lamb be sweet, and the unleavened bread excellent, yet the bitter herbs are bitter and harsh; for with much affliction and bitterness the soul eats of the lamb and of the good unleavened bread, while the sin that is with her afflicts her. 9. And it says that it shall be eaten at even. The time of even is midway between light and darkness. So the soul being near this deliverance is midway between light and darkness, while the power of God stands firm and will not suffer the darkness to come over the soul and swallow it up.

And as Moses said, This is the night of the promise of God, so Christ, when the book was given Him in the synagogue, as it is written, called it the acceptable year of the Lord, and the day of redemption. There it was a night of retribution; here, a day of redemption. And rightly so; for all those things were a figure and shadow of the truth, and in a mystical prefiguration sketched the true salvation of the soul that has been shut up in darkness, and secretly bound with fetters in the lowest pit, and shut in with gates of brass, and cannot be set at liberty without the redemption of Christ.

10. So He brings the soul out of Egypt and the bondage in it, the firstborn of Egypt being destroyed at the exodus. Already a part of the power of the true Pharaoh falls. Mourning possesses the Egyptians. They groan for grief at the salvation of the captive. He commands them to borrow of the Egyptians vessels of gold and of silver, and to take them and go out. The soul in going out of the darkness takes back her vessels of silver and gold, namely her own good faculties purified seven times in the fire, in which God is served and satisfied. The devils that were neighbours to her wasted and held and squandered her faculties. Blessed is the soul that is

redeemed out of darkness, and woe to the soul that does not cry and groan to Him that is able to rescue her from those hard and bitter taskmasters.

11. The children of Israel march away, when they have kept the passover. The soul moves onwards, when it has received the life of the Holy Ghost, and has tasted of the Lamb, and been anointed with His blood, and has eaten the true bread, the living Word. A pillar of fire and a pillar of cloud went before the Israelites, protecting them: the Holy Ghost strengthens these, warming and guiding the soul in a way that can be felt. When Pharaoh and the Egyptians knew of the people's escape, and of their own loss of their bondservice, he took courage to pursue, even after the destruction of the firstborn. He hastily harnessed his chariots, and with all his people he made speed after them to destroy them; but when he was now on the point of getting in among them, a cloud stood betwixt them, hindering and darkening the one, and guiding the other with light and protecting them. Not to prolong this discourse by developing the whole story, take the parable in all particulars as referring to spiritual things.

12. When first the soul escapes from the Egyptians, the power of God draws near and helps it, leading it to the truth. But when the spiritual Pharaoh, the king of the darkness of sin, perceives that the soul is in revolt and is escaping from his kingdom, he catches up the faculties so long held in possession—for these are his goods—and, clever as he is, hopes that the soul will come back to him. But when he learns that it is fleeing from his tyranny for good and all—a more audacious thing than the slaughter of the firstborn and the stealing of the faculties—he dashes at it, fearing that if the soul clean escapes, no one will be found to fulfil his will and work. He pursues it with afflictions and temptations and invisible wars. There it is tested; there it is tried; there appears its love towards Him who brought it out of Egypt. For it is delivered over to be tested and tried in all manner of ways. 13. It beholds the power of the enemy desiring to get at it and do it to death, and not able to do so. Between it and the Egyptian spirits the Lord stands. It beholds before it a sea of bitterness and affliction or despair. It can neither win its way back, seeing the enemy ready for it, nor move forward, for the terror of death, and afflictions grievous and manifold encompassing it, make it to see death.

The soul therefore loses all opinion of itself, having the sentence of death in itself, because of the swarm of evil ones that surrounds it. And when God sees the soul fallen into the terror of death, and the enemy ready to swallow it up, then, then indeed He gives it a little succour, dealing patiently with the soul, and testing it, whether it stands fast in faith, whether it has love towards Him. For so has God appointed the way that leadeth unto life, to be with affliction and distress, and much testing, and very bitter temptations, that from thence the soul may afterwards arrive at the true land of the glory of the children of God. When therefore the soul gives up all opinion of itself and renounces itself, because of the exceeding

affliction and the death before its eyes, in that instant with a strong hand and an uplifted arm He rends the power of darkness through the shining of the Holy Ghost, and the soul passes through the dreadful places, escaping and passing through the sea of darkness and of the all-devouring fire.

14. These are mysteries of the soul which are truly brought to pass in a man who earnestly endeavours to come to the promise of life, and is redeemed out of the kingdom of death, and receives the earnest from God, and partakes of the Holy Ghost. Thereupon the soul delivered from amidst her foes, and having passed through the bitter sea by the power of God, and beholding her enemies destroyed before her eyes, whose bondservant she was before, rejoices with joy unspeakable and full of glory, comforted by God, and at rest in the Lord. Then the Spirit which she has received sings a new song unto God, with the timbrel, that is the body, and the invisible strings of the harp, which is the soul and its most subtle faculties, and the key of divine grace for striking the chords, and lifts up praises to Christ who quickeneth. For as it is the breath that speaks, when it passes through the pipe, so is the Holy Ghost through holy men who bear the Spirit, singing hymns and psalms, and praying to God with a pure heart. Glory to Him who has delivered the soul from the bondage of Pharaoh, and has made her His own throne, and house, and temple, and His pure bride, and has brought her into the kingdom of eternal life, while yet in this world.

15. In the law, unreasoning animals were offered in sacrifice, and unless they were slain, the offerings were not acceptable; and now, unless sin be slain, the offering is not acceptable with God, nor true. The people came to Marah, where was a well that gave bitter water, unfit to drink. So God commanded Moses, when he was in despair, to throw a tree into the bitter water, and when the tree was thus cast in, the water was made sweet, and being converted from its bitterness became serviceable and fit for the people of God to drink. In the same way the soul has been made bitter from drinking the poison of the serpent and becoming like to his bitter nature, and made sinful. Wherefore God casts the tree of life even into the bitter fountain of the heart, and it is converted from its bitterness and made sweet, being mingled with the Spirit of Christ; and thus being made good for use it passes on to the service of its Master, for it becomes spirit clothed in flesh. Glory to Him who converts our bitterness into the sweetness and goodness of the Spirit. Woe to him in whom the tree of life has not been cast! He cannot obtain any change for the good.

16. The rod of Moses bore two images. To enemies it presented itself as a serpent, biting and destroying; to the Israelites as a staff, on which they found support. Thus the true wood of the cross, which is Christ, is the death of the enemy, the spirit of wickedness; but to our souls, it is a staff, and a sure prop, and life, upon which they rest. There were formerly types and shadows of these true realities.

The ancient service is a shadow and image of the present service. Circumcision, the tabernacle, the ark, the pot and the manna, the priesthood, the incense, the washings, and, in short, all that was done in Israel, and in the law of Moses, and in the prophets, was done with reference to this soul, made after the image of God, and fallen under the yoke of bondage, and under the kingdom of the darkness of bitterness.

17. For God desired to have communion with her, and espoused her to Himself as the King's bride, and He cleanses her from pollution, and washing her makes her bright from her blackness and her shame, and quickens her out of the state of death, and heals her of her shattered condition, and gives her peace, reconciling her enmity. For creature though she is, she has been espoused as bride to the King's Son; and by His own power God receives her to Himself, gradually accommodating Himself to her changes, until He has increased her with His own increase. For He stretches her out and lengthens her to an endless and immeasurable increase, until she becomes a bride without blemish and worthy of Him. First he begets her within Himself, and increases her through Himself, until she receives the full-grown measure of His love. For being Himself a perfect Bridegroom, He takes her as a perfect bride into the holy, mystical, undefiled fellowship of marriage; and then she reigns with Him to endless ages. Amen.

HOMILY XLVIII

Concerning perfect faith in God. 1. THE Lord in the gospel, wishing to bring His own disciples to a perfect faith, said, He that is faithful in little, is faithful also in much; and he that is unfaithful in little, is unfaithful also in much. What is the little? and what is the much? The little are the promises of this world, which He has undertaken to supply to those who believe Him, such as food, raiment, and the other things which are for the refreshment or health of the body, and so on; enjoining that we should not be anxious at all concerning these, but with confidence in Him to trust that the Lord is always a provider for those who take refuge in Him. The much are the gifts of the eternal and imperishable world, which He has undertaken to supply to those who believe Him, and who are incessantly anxious concerning those things, and who ask Him for them. Because He has given commandment to that effect. Seek ye only, He says, His kingdom and righteousness; and all these things shall be added unto you, that in this way each one may be proved by these little and temporal things, whether he believes God; because He has undertaken to supply them, while we are free from anxiety about such things and are only concerned about eternal things to come.

2. Then it is manifest that he believes concerning things imperishable, and is really seeking eternal good things, if he preserves his faith sound concerning the things of which we have spoken. For every one of those who obey the word of truth ought to prove and examine himself, and indeed to let himself be examined and proved by spiritual men, how far he has believed and given himself to God, whether really and truly according to His word, or in fancied justification and faith, imagining that he has faith within him. A man is proved and tested by the question whether he is faithful in the little, that is, concerning temporal things. How that is done, I will show you.

Do you say that you believe the kingdom of heaven to be vouchsafed to you, and that you have been born from above and made a son of God, and a fellow-heir of Christ, to reign with Him through all eternity, and to take pleasure in light unspeakable during endless and innumerable ages like God? No doubt you will say, “Yes; that was why I withdrew from the world and have given myself to God.” 3. Examine

yourself, then, whether earthly cares do not still hold you, and much thought concerning the food and clothing of the body, and other attentions and refreshments, as though you came by them of your own power, and were to make provision for yourself, when you were enjoined to have no anxiety at all concerning yourself. If you believe that you will receive things immortal, eternal, abiding, and abounding, how much more do you not believe that the Lord will supply you with these passing and earthly things, which God has given even to ungodly men, and to beasts and birds, even as He gave you commandment that you should not be anxious at all about them, saying, Take no thought what ye shall eat, or what ye shall drink, or wherewithal ye shall be clothed; for after all these things do the Gentiles seek! But if you still have anxiety concerning these things, and have not trusted yourself wholly to His word, know that you have not yet believed that you shall receive the good things eternal, which are the kingdom of heaven, although you imagine that you believe, while you are still found unfaithful in the small things that perish.

And again, as the body is of more value than raiment, so is the soul of more value than the body. Do you believe, then, that your soul is receiving healing at Christ's hand from the eternal wounds which with men are incurable, the wounds of the passions of sin, for the sake of which healing the Lord also came hither, that He might now cure the souls of the faithful of those incurable wounds, and cleanse them from the foulness of the leprosy of evil,—He, the only true physician and healer? 4. You will say, "Certainly I believe it. For this I stand, and this is my expectation." Know, then, after searching yourself, whether bodily ailments do not carry you off to earthly physicians, as if Christ, whom you believed, could not heal you! See how you deceive yourself, because you imagine that you believe, when you do not yet believe, as you ought, in truth. For if you believed the eternal, irremediable wounds of the immortal soul, and its disorders of evil, to be cured by Christ, you would have believed Him able to cure also the temporary disorders and maladies of the body, and would have had recourse to Him only, to the neglect of medical attentions and remedies. He who created the soul has made the body also; and He who heals that immortal part, is able to cure the body also of its temporary disorders and maladies.

5. But you will say, no doubt, "God has given to the body for its healing the herbs of the earth and its drugs, and has prepared the appliances of physicians for the disorders of the body, ordaining that the body which is of the earth should be cured by the various specifics of the earth. I agree with you that this is so. But take heed, and you will know how the matter stands,—to whom these things are given, and for whom God, has ordained them, according to His great and infinite kindness and love towards man. When man fell from the commandment which he had received, and came under the sentence of wrath, and was banished, as it were, into captivity and disgrace, or to toil in some mine, from the pleasure of paradise into this world, and came under the power of darkness, and was reduced to unbelief by the error of

the passions, he fell thenceforward under the disorders and maladies of the flesh, instead of being free from disorder and malady, as before. And certainly all that are born of him have fallen under the same disorders. 6. God, therefore, ordained these remedies for the weak and unbelieving, not willing to destroy utterly the sinful race of men, because of His great loving-kindness, but gave medicine to the men of the world, and to all who are without, for solace, and healing, and care of the body, and permitted them to be used by those who could not yet entrust themselves wholly to God.

But you, a monk, who have come to Christ, and desire to be a son of God, and to be born from on high of the Spirit, and are expecting promises higher and greater than the first man had, for all his freedom from disorder, even that God should please to give you the presence of the Lord,—you, who are become a stranger to the world, ought to possess a belief, and a conception, and a manner of life, new and strange beyond all the men of the world. Glory to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Ghost, for ever. Amen.

HOMILY XLIX

It is not enough to have got rid of the pleasure of this world, unless a man gets the blessedness of the other. 1. WHEN a man has quitted his home, and renounced this world, and has rid himself of the pleasure of the world, and of possessions, and of father and mother, for the Lord’s sake, and has crucified himself, and made himself a stranger and poor and needy, but does not find in himself divine comfort instead of the comfort of the world, nor feel the pleasure of the Spirit in his own soul instead of the temporal pleasure, and is not clothed in the inward man with the garments of the light of the Godhead instead of those garments that perish, and does not know to satisfaction, instead of this temporal and carnal fellowship, the fellowship of the heavenly Bridegroom in his own soul, and has not the joy of the Spirit within instead of the tangible joy of this world, and does not receive the solace of heavenly grace and a divine repletion in the soul in the appearing to him of the glory of the Lord, as it is written; and, in short, instead of this temporal enjoyment, does not obtain even now in his own soul an enjoyment incorruptible, greatly to be desired; this man is become salt without savour; this man is beyond all men miserable; this man has been deprived of things here, and failed to enjoy divine gifts. He does not know divine mysteries through the working of the Spirit in the inner man.

2. For this is the reason why a man is made a stranger to the world, in order that his soul may pass in mind into another world and age, according to the apostle. Our conversation, he says, is in heaven; and again, Though we walk on earth, we do not war after the flesh. Therefore, one who renounces this world must firmly believe that we ought in mind to pass even now through the Spirit into another age, and there to have our conversation and pleasure and enjoyment of spiritual good things, and to be born of the Spirit in the inner man, as the Lord said, He that believeth in Me, hath passed from death unto life. Because there is another death besides the death that is seen, and another life besides the life that is seen. The scripture says, She that liveth in pleasure is dead while she liveth; and, Let the dead bury their dead; Because the dead shall not praise Thee, O Lord, but we, the living, shall bless Thee.

3. For as the sun, when he has risen upon the earth, is all there upon the earth, but when it comes to sunset, he gathers all his beams together, betaking himself to his own home; so the soul which is not begotten from above of the Spirit is all on the earth, spread abroad in thought and mind all over the earth, even to the ends of it; but when it is permitted to receive the heavenly birth and fellowship of the Spirit, it gathers all its thoughts together, and taking them still with it, enters in unto the Lord, into the dwelling from heaven, not made with hands, and all its thoughts become heavenly and pure and holy, making their way into the divine air. Delivered from the prison of the darkness of the wicked ruler, who is the spirit of the world, the soul finds pure and divine thoughts, because it has seemed good to God to make man partaker of the divine nature.

4. If, then, you are going to withdraw from all the affairs of this life, and if you persevere in your prayer, shall you not esteem this labour rather to be full of rest, and shall you not consider the little affliction and pain to be charged with joy and recreation exceeding great? If your body and your soul had been consumed away hour after hour throughout life for the sake of good things so great, what did that come to? Oh, the unspeakable compassion of God, that He bestows Himself in free gift upon those who believe, that in a little space of time they should inherit God, and God should dwell in man's body, and that the Lord should find a fair home in man! As God created the heaven and the earth for man to dwell in, so He created man's body and soul for a dwelling for Himself, to inhabit and take His rest in the body as in His own house, having for His fair bride the lovely soul, made after His own image. The apostle says, I have espoused you to one husband, to present you as a chaste virgin to Christ; and again, Whose house we are.

As the husband with diligence treasures up all good things in his house, so the Lord lays up and treasures in the soul and body, which are His house, the heavenly wealth of the Spirit. Neither the wise by their wisdom nor the prudent by their prudence were able to comprehend the subtilty of the soul, or to speak of it as it is, but only those to whom through the Holy Ghost that comprehension is revealed, and the exact knowledge concerning the soul is declared. Consider here, and discern, and understand, how. Listen. He is God; the soul is not God. He is the Lord; it is a servant. He is Creator; it is a creature. He is the Maker; it the thing made. There is nothing common to His nature, and to that of the soul. But by reason of His infinite, unspeakable, inconceivable love and compassion, it pleased Him to dwell in this thing of His making, this intelligent creature, this precious and extraordinary work, as the scripture says, that we should be a kind of firstfruits of His creatures, for His wisdom and fellowship, for His own habitation, for His own precious and pure bride.

5. When such good things are set before us, and such promises have been promised, and such has been the good pleasure of the Lord towards us, let us not neglect, O

my children, nor delay to press to the life eternal, and to give up ourselves entirely to pleasing the Lord. Let us, then, beseech the Lord that by His own power of Godhead He would deliver us from the prison of the darkness of the passions of shame, and would cause His own image and handiwork to shine up, making the soul sound and pure, and so we may be permitted to have the fellowship of the Spirit, glorifying the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost, for ever. Amen.

HOMILY L

It is God that works wonders through His saints. 1. WHO was it that shut the doors of heaven? Elias? or was it God in him, who commanded the rain? I trow that He who wields power over heaven was Himself seated in his mind, and that by his tongue the Word of God forbade rain to come down upon the earth, and spake again, and the gates of heaven were opened, and the rain came down. Likewise also Moses put down a rod, and it became a serpent, and he spake again and it became a rod; and he took ashes of the furnace and sprinkled, and it became boils; and again he smote, and there came lice and frogs. Could the nature of men do these things? He spake to the sea, and it was divided; to the river, and it was turned into blood. Well, it is plain that a heavenly power was dwelling in his mind, and did these signs through Moses.

2. David, how was he able, unarmed, to engage in battle with such a giant? And when he hurled the stone at the Philistine, by David's hand the hand of God guided the stone, and it was the divine power itself that slew him and gained the victory. David could never have done it: he was too weak in body. Joshua, the son of Nun, when he came to Jericho, besieged it seven days, unable to do anything by his own nature; but when God commanded, the walls fell down of themselves. And when he entered into the land of promise, the Lord said to him, "Go forward to battle"; Joshua answered, "As the Lord liveth, I will not go without Thee." And who is it that commanded the sun to stand still another two hours in the conflict of battle?—his nature alone, or the power that was with him? And Moses, when he engaged with Amalek, if he stretched out his hands towards heaven unto God, smote Amalek, but if he dropped his hands, Amalek prevailed.

3. But when you hear of these things happening, let not your mind travel far away; but since these things were a figure and shadow of the realities, apply them to yourself. When you shall stretch out the hands of your mind, and your thoughts, towards heaven, and shall be minded to cleave to the Lord, Satan shall get the worst of it with your thoughts. And as at Jericho the walls fell by the power of God, so now also the walls of evil that hinder your mind, and the cities of Satan, and your enemies, shall be utterly destroyed by the power of God. Thus, in the shadow, the

power of God was continually present with the righteous, doing visible wonders; and the divine grace dwelt in them inwardly as well. Likewise upon the prophets also it wrought, and ministered the Spirit in their souls, to prophesy, and to speak, when there was need to say great things to the world. For they did not speak at all times, but when the Spirit that was in them would. Yet the power was always with them.

4. If, then, the Holy Ghost was poured out to such an extent upon the shadow, how much rather upon the New Covenant, upon the cross, upon the coming of Christ, where the outpouring and drunkenness of the Spirit took effect. It says, I will pour out of My Spirit upon all flesh. This is what the Lord Himself meant when He said, I will be with you until the end of the world. For every one that seeketh, findeth. If ye, being evil, know how to give good gifts unto your children, how much more shall your heavenly Father give the Holy Spirit to them that ask Him with power and much assurance, as the apostle says.

Such things, then, are found by measure, and time, and much labour, and patience, and affection towards Him, the senses of the soul being exercised, as the scripture says, through good and through evil, that is, through the crafts and plots and manifold besetments and lyings in wait of evil on the one hand, and on the other through the various gifts and divers helps of the working and power of the Spirit. He who discovers the plotting of evil, defiling the inward man by means of the passions, and is not acquainted himself with the help of the Holy Spirit of truth, strengthening his infirmity, and renewing his soul in gladness of heart, such an one goes his way without discernment, not discovering as yet the manifold dispensation of the grace and peace of God. And on the other hand, he who is helped by the Lord, and is found in spiritual mirth and heavenly gifts of grace, if he should imagine that he is no longer liable to be injured by sin, is deceived without his knowing it, not discerning the subtilty of evil, and not understanding the gradual growth of infancy to maturity in Christ. For through the supply of the Holy and Divine Spirit faith increases and makes progress, and at the same time every stronghold of wicked thoughts passes gradually to complete casting down.

Every one of us, therefore, ought to search whether he has found the treasure in this earthen vessel, whether he has put on the purple of the Spirit, whether he has seen the King and found rest in His near presence, or still serves in the outermost parts of the house. The soul has many members, and great depth; and besides, sin has come in and taken possession of all its members and of the ranges of the heart. Then, when man seeks, grace comes to him, and takes possession, it may be of two members of the soul. So the inexperienced man, being comforted by grace, imagines that grace has taken possession of all the members of his soul, and that sin is rooted out. But the greatest part is still under the power of sin, and only one part under grace; and he is cheated and knows it not.

We might write at greater length concerning these things to your sincerity of disposition, but we have given you thus briefly a starting point, that like men of understanding you may go to work upon it and search out the power of the words and become yet more understanding in the Lord, and increase your singleness of heart in His grace and in the power of the truth, so that holding fast your own salvation with all certainty, and being delivered from all interference of wickedness and craft of the adversary, you may have the privilege to be found unfallen and uncondemned in the day of judgment of our Lord Jesus Christ; to whom be glory for ever. Amen.

Source. English translation: an older public-domain translation as collected in the Writings-Database (HistoricalChristianFaith), mostly from the Ante-Nicene, Nicene and Post-Nicene Fathers and similar nineteenth-century editions. SermonIndex has only divided it into chapters and short sections; the wording is the translator's own. Square brackets, Greek or Latin words and footnote-free text are as the source file prints them, and a transcription error may remain. No Greek or Latin text is shown beside it yet, and no modern English version has been made.