

Sermon 39

7:31-35. *To what therefore shall I liken the men of this generation, and to what are they like? They are like to children sitting in the market-place, and calling one to another, and saying, We have played unto you, and ye have not danced: we have wailed unto you, and ye have not wept. For John the Baptist came, neither eating bread, nor drinking wine, and ye say, that he hath a devil. The Son of man came eating and drinking: and ye say, Behold a man gluttonous, and a wine drinker: a friend of publicans and sinners. And wisdom is justified of her children.*

THOSE who have a sound mind examine everything, rejecting the false, but receiving and praising that which is without blame. And such the wise Paul also requires us to be, where writing he said: Be ye wise money-changers; prove all things, and hold that which is good: abstain from every evil kind." We therefore also, as I said, must closely examine with the discerning eye of the mind whatever is done, and search into the nature of actions, that so we may approve of that which is without blame, while we reject that which is counterfeit. But if, making no distinctions, we run the risk of passing an evil sentence upon things highly praiseworthy: and of deeming that which is evil fit for commendation and applause, the prophet's words will apply to us: "Woe unto them that call evil good, and good evil: who call bitter sweet, and sweet bitter: who put light for darkness, and darkness for light." Such was the character of the Israelites, and especially of those whose lot it was to be their chiefs, the Scribes namely and Pharisees: of whom Christ said, "To what shall I liken the men of this generation? and so on."

There was perchance a sort of game among the Jewish children, something of this kind. A troop of youths was divided into two parts: who, making sport of the confusion in the world, and the uneven course of its affairs, and the painful and rapid change from one extreme to the other, played some of them on instruments of music: while the rest wailed. But neither did the mourners share the merriment of those who were playing music and rejoicing: nor again did those with the instruments of music join in the sorrow of those who were weeping: and finally, they reproached one another with their want of sympathy, so to speak, and absence of affection. For the one party would say, "We have played unto you, and ye have not danced:" to which the others would rejoin, "We have wailed unto you, and ye have not wept." Christ declares, therefore, that both the Jewish populace, and their rulers, were in some such state of feeling as this; "For John came, He says, neither eating bread nor drinking wine, and they say, that he hath a devil: the Son of man came eating and drinking; and they say, Behold! a man gluttonous, and a wine drinker, a friend of publicans and sinners." By what then wilt thou be won unto the faith, O foolish Pharisee, when thou thus blamest all things indifferently, nor countest anything worthy of thy praise? The blessed Baptist was the forerunner of the Saviour, saying, "Repent ye, for the kingdom of God is at hand." For he was a man fit to win confidence, and able to persuade, as having even from them the testimony that his life was noble, and worthy of admiration. For he dwelt in the deserts, clad in poor and rough clothing, and scarcely allaying the necessities of the body with locusts and wild honey. Thou wentest out to see him as one who was holy, and had attained to the perfection of all virtue. And dost thou venture afterwards to speak ill of such a one? of one who ought rather to be counted worthy of all admiration? Dost thou say that he hath a devil, who by fastings is mortifying the

law of sin that lurks in our fleshly members, and wars against the law of our mind? What is greater than a life of abstinence? For the very fact of being able to rebuke wisely those pleasures that lead to evil, and to cast over them as a bridle the laboriousness of a life of abstinence, how is not this a great and excellent thing! The blessed Baptist was entirely devoted to piety unto Christ; nor was there in him the very slightest regard either for fleshly lusts, or for the things of this world. Having altogether abandoned, therefore, the vain and unprofitable distractions of this world, he laboured at one, and that a very urgent task, of blamelessly fulfilling the ministry entrusted to him. For he was commanded to preach, saying: "Prepare ye the way of the Lord." Tell me, dost thou think that this man hath a devil?----one over whom the tyranny of Satan had no power; who was the captive of no evil lusts; who had overleapt the pitfalls of the base love of the flesh; who had commanded the herds of demons to be still, and manfully resisted their attacks. For verily he could not have attained to this glory and virtue but through Christ, Who is exalted above Satan, who tempts and gnashes his teeth at the prosperity of the saints. Art thou not ashamed, then, of slandering one who had attained to so great patience and endurance, and had wound chaplets of manly virtue round his head? Hast thou whetted thy tongue even at him, and ventured basely to calumniate him, by affirming that he is a madman, and contemptible, and not in his right mind?

Let us, then, see what is on the other side, and which seems, as it were, to follow a different course from the Baptist's conduct. Christ was not in the wilderness, but rather made the city His habitation in company with the holy Apostles: He did not eat locusts and wild honey: His clothing was not of camel's hair, nor had He a leathern girdle upon his loins. His mode of life rather was such as is usual in towns, with no such hardness in it as that practised by the holy Baptist. Dost thou, then, praise Him at least? Dost thou approve of His easiness of approach, and His freely mixing with others, and entire carelessness about His diet? By no means. Thy censoriousness extended even unto Christ: for thou saidst, "Behold a man gluttonous, and drinking wine! a friend of publicans and sinners!" Because thou hast occasionally seen Jesus faring luxuriously, does He appear to thee a drinker of wine, and a carouser, and gluttonous? How canst thou prove this? For when once upon a time Mary and Martha received Him at Bethany, and one of them was distracted with overmuch service, Christ is seen preventing excess, and reducing us to a bare sufficiency. For He said, "Martha, Martha: thou art careful, and hurried about many things: but few things are required, or one." And such He was constantly and everywhere.

But dost thou accuse Him because He went about with publicans and sinners? And is this the cause of thine offence? But what detriment can it be imagined that Christ suffered, from His willingness to be with sinners? He was not liable at all to be taken by their sins, being entirely beyond the reach of fault. He even said, at one time: "The prince of this world cometh, and will find nothing in Me?" at another, again: "Who of you rebuketh Me because of sin?" He could in no respect therefore be contaminated by being with sinners.

But thou sayest, the law of Moses commanded that "we should not hold converse with the wicked." Let us, however, study the object of the law: let us see for what cause it forbade the Israelites holding intercourse with the wicked, and mingling with the deceivers. Now the truth most certainly is, that the law of Moses ordained these things, not so much that thou mightest vaunt thyself over others, and make the commandment a reason for boasting; but rather, because thy mind is weak, and readily drawn aside into folly, and because thy heart runs willingly after evil pleasures, it would free thee from the wish to be with those whose life is culpable, lest thou shouldst become like them in mind, and foolishly be caught in their snare.

"For evil communications corrupt good manners." Thou receivedst the commandment therefore as a safeguard for thy infirmity. For if thou hadst been established in virtue, and thy mind steadfast in the fear of God, the law would not have hindered thee from holding useful intercourse with those who were weak, in order that they might become imitators of thy piety, and learn to emulate thy doings: that walking in the steps of thy zeal, they might advance to that which is more excellent. Conceive, therefore, no proud imaginings, since, even in the commandment of Moses, thou art accused of infirmity. Thou blamest Christ for going about with sinners and publicans. Is it because thou art afraid lest He should suffer from their contamination? Tell me, then, dost thou imagine that He also shares thy frailness? Art thou entirely ignorant of the mysteries respecting Him? That the Word being God was with us: that is, was incarnate for our sakes? That the Father sent Him "not to condemn the world, but that the world through Him might be saved." Now it belongs to one who condemns, to avoid the company of such as are still in their sins: but it is the part of him who wishes to save to be with them, and admonish them, and prevail upon them to change from their disgraceful courses, and instead of the path of wickedness, to choose the way that leadeth to eternal life. "He came not to call the righteous, hut sinners, to repentance." And as He said Himself, "They that are whole need not a Physician: but they that are sick." Why therefore dost thou blame Him for loving man so well, and find fault with His godlike gentleness? Why reproach Him for being kind to us, and healing our sickness? And yet every body praises physicians, not when they avoid those who are sick, but when they are constantly with them, and by the resources of their art bring them gradually back to sound health. And why then, since Jesus is the Physician of souls and spirits, dost thou blame Him for saving sinners? He could sustain no pollution, even though He ate with sinners: for yon bright sun sheds its radiance upon, and visits every thing under heaven: it chances, then, that impurities also are found lying exposed to it: but that which pours down this radiance is not in the least defiled, even though it shed it on matters so abominable. Our Lord Jesus Christ is the Sun of Righteousness: a wicked man, then, in no way whatsoever defiles Him, though close at His side, and eating with Him.

And thus much, then, we have said respecting Christ the Saviour of us all. It is not, however, perhaps unlikely, that some may object, and say; 'Does not also the new and saving preaching of the Gospel plainly command us to withdraw from the communications of impure men? For most wise Paul also wrote to some: "I have written unto you in the epistle, that ye hold no intercourse with fornicators: If any one called a brother be a fornicator, or a drunkard, or covetous, or an extortioner, or idolater: with such a one no not to eat." It had been fitting, therefore, for Christ to have been the type to us of this behaviour.' Thou hast missed thy measure, my beloved! Thou wishest to vie with thy Master's sovereign dignity: Thou catchest at that which is above thy nature. Consider the infirmity of thy mind. Christ was God: but thou art a man, tyrannized over by fleshly pleasures, with a mind easily beguiled into error, and readily made the prey of sins. If, however, thou feelest confident of thy ability manfully to maintain a blameless course of conduct, and also to admonish others, there is nothing to hinder even thee from wishing to be with the wicked and sinloving. For often the admonitions of spiritually-minded men have profited those who are in sin. If, on the contrary, thou thyself art scarcely saved, even when keeping far away from the company of the evil, maintain thy carefulness in this respect. Call to thy remembrance the writer of the book of Proverbs, who says; "He that walketh with the wise, shall become wise: but he who walketh with fools, shall become known." And again, "He that toucheth pitch shall be defiled." And again also the blessed David: "With the holy, thou wilt become holy; and with the pure, thou wilt become pure: with the elect, thou wilt become elect; and with the crooked, thou wilt be made crooked." In order, then, "that thou mayest be delivered like a roc from the nets," flee from

wicked men; keep apart from those who cannot be restrained from pollution; and supplicate Christ to purify thy corruptions, or rather all thy human weaknesses. For the Word that came from God is God, even though He became flesh, that is, man: by Whom and with Whom to God the Father, be praise and dominion, with the Holy Ghost, for ever and ever, Amen.

Sermon 40

7:36-50. *And a certain Pharisee desired Him to eat with him. And having entered the Pharisee's house, He reclined at his table. And, behold, a woman who was a sinner in the city, when she knew that He was reclining at table in the Pharisee's house, brought an alabaster box of ointment, and stood behind Him at His feet, and, weeping, began to wash His feet with tears, and wiped them with the hair of her head, and kissed, His feet, and anointed them with ointment. When the Pharisee who had bidden Him saw it, he said in himself, If this were a prophet, He would have known who and of what sort the woman is who toucheth Him, that she is a sinner. And Jesus answered and said unto him, Simon, I have somewhat to say unto thee. And he said, Teacher, say on. He saith to him; A certain money-lender had two debtors; the one owed five hundred denarii, the other fifty: and when they could not repay, he forgave them both. Which therefore of them will love him most? and Simon answered and said, I suppose he that had most forgiven him. And He said to him, Thou hast rightly judged. And turning to the woman He said to Simon, Thou seest this woman. I entered into thine house: thou gavest no water for My feet; but she hath, washed My feet with tears, and wiped them with her hair. Thou gavest Me no kiss, but she from the time I came in hath not ceased kissing My feet. My head with oil thou didst not anoint; but she hath anointed My feet with ointment. For this reason, I tell thee, her many sins are forgiven her, because she hath loved much: but he to whom little is forgiven, loveth little. And He said unto her, Thy sins are forgiven thee. And those who were reclining with Him at table began to say in themselves, Who is This That forgiveth sins also? But He said, to the woman, Thy faith hath made thee live: go in peace.*

"ALL ye people, clap your hands, and praise God with the voice of thanksgiving." And what is the cause of the festival? It is that the Saviour hath newly constructed for us a way of salvation, untrodden by them of old time. For the law, which the all-wise Moses ordained, was for the reproof of sin, and the condemnation of offences: but it justified absolutely no one. For the very wise Paul writes, "Whosoever rejected the law of Moses, was put to death without mercy at the mouth of two or three witnesses." But our Lord Jesus Christ, having removed the curse of the law, and proved the commandment which condemns to be powerless and inoperative, became our merciful High Priest, according to the words of the blessed Paul. For He justifies the wicked by faith, and sets free those held captive by their sins. And this He proclaimed to us by one of the holy prophets, saying, "In those days, and at that time, saith the Lord, they shall seek for the sin of Israel, and there shall be none: and for the sin of Judah, and thou shalt not find it: for I will be merciful to those that have been left in the land, saith the Lord." But lo! the fulfilment of the promise came to pass for us at the time of His Incarnation, as we are assured by the purport of the holy Gospels. For he was invited by one of the Pharisees, and being kind and loving unto man, and "willing that all men should be saved, and come to the knowledge of the truth," He consented, and granted the favour to him who requested it. And having entered, He reclined at table: and immediately there entered a

woman defiled with filthy lewdness: who, like one scarcely roused from wine and intoxication, and made sensible of the guilt of her transgressions, offered supplication unto Christ, as able to cleanse her, and deliver her from all fault, and free her from her former sins, as "not remembering iniquities." And this she did, washing His feet with tears, and anointing them with ointment, and wiping them with her hair. Thus a woman, who beforetime had been lewd, and guilty of sensuality, a sin difficult to wash away, missed not the path of salvation; for she fled for refuge to Him Who knoweth how to save, and is able to raise from the depths of impurity.

She then failed not in her purpose. But the foolish Pharisee, the blessed Evangelist tells us, was offended, and said within himself, "If this were a prophet, He would have known who and of what sort the woman is that toucheth Him, that she is a sinner." The Pharisee therefore was boastful, and utterly without understanding. For it was his duty rather to regulate his own life, and earnestly adorn it by all virtuous pursuits; and not to pass sentence upon the infirm, and condemn others. But we affirm of him, that having been brought up in the customs of the law, he gave too wide an influence to its institutions, and required the Legislator Himself to be subject to the commandments of Moses. For the law commanded the holy to keep apart from the impure: and God also blamed those whose lot it was to be the chiefs of the congregation of the Jews, for their unwillingness in this respect. For He thus spake by one of the holy prophets: "they make no distinction between the holy and the profane." But Christ arose for us, not to subject our state to the curses that are by the law, but to redeem those subject to sin by a mercy superior to the law. For the law was instituted "because of transgressions," as Scripture declares, "that every mouth might be stopped, and all the world become guilty before God, because by the works of the law no flesh is justified." For there was no one so far advanced in virtue, spiritual virtue I mean, as to be able to fulfil all that had been commanded, and that blamelessly. But the grace that is by Christ justifieth, because, doing away with the condemnation of the law, it frees us by means of faith.

That proud and foolish Pharisee therefore did not even deem Jesus to have attained to the measure of a prophet: but He made the woman's tears an opportunity for clearly instructing him in the mystery. For He taught the Pharisee, and all who were assembled there, that the Word being God, "came into the world in our likeness, not to condemn the world, but that the world might be saved by Him." He came that He might forgive the debtors much and little, and shew mercy upon small and great, that there might be no one whatsoever who did not participate in His goodness. And as a pledge and plain example of His grace, He freed that unchaste woman from her many iniquities by saying, "Thy sins are forgiven thee." Worthy indeed of God is a declaration such as this! It is a word joined with supreme authority. For since the law condemned those that were in sin, who, I ask, was able to declare things above the law, except Him only Who ordained it? Immediately therefore He both set the woman free, and directed the attention of that Pharisee, and those who were dining with him, to more excellent things: for they learned that the Word being God, was not as one of the prophets, but rather far beyond the measure of humanity, even though He became man. And one may say to him who invited Him, Thou was trained up, O Pharisee, in the sacred Scriptures; thou knowest I suppose of course the commands given by most wise Moses: thou hast examined the words of the holy prophets: Who then is This That walking in a path contrary to the sacred commands, hath delivered from guilt? Who That hath pronounced them free who have boldly broken the things ordained? Recognise therefore by the facts themselves One superior to the prophets and the law: remember that one of the holy prophets proclaimed these things in old time of Him, and said, "They shall be in wonder at our God, and shall be afraid of Thee. Who

is a God like unto Thee, That forgiveth the transgressions, and passeth over the iniquities of the remnant of His inheritance, nor retaineth His anger unto the end, because He willeth mercy?"

Those therefore who were at meat with the Pharisee, were astonished and wondered at seeing Christ the Saviour of all possessed of such godlike supremacy, and using expressions above the right of man. For they said, "Who is This That forgiveth sins also?" Dost thou wish me to tell thee Who He is? He Who is in the bosom of God the Father, and was begotten of Him by nature: by Whom every thing was brought into being: Who possesses supreme sovereignty, and is worshipped by every thing in heaven and in earth. He submitted Himself to our estate, and became our High Priest, in order that He might present us unto God, pure and clean, having put off the ill savour of sin, and having Him instead in us as a sweet savour. For, as most wise Paul writes, "We are a sweet savour of Christ unto God." This is He Who spake by the voice of the prophet Ezechiel, "And I will be to you a God, and I will save you from all your uncleannesses." See therefore, that the actual accomplishment agreed with what had before been promised by the holy prophets. Acknowledge Him as God---Him so gentle and loving unto men. Seize upon the way of salvation: flee from the law that killeth: accept the faith which is above the law. For it is written, "That which is written killeth," even the law: "but the spirit giveth life," even the spiritual purification that is in Christ. Satan had bound the inhabitants of earth with the cords of sin: Christ has loosed them; He has made us free, has abolished the tyranny of sin, has driven away the accuser of our infirmities; and the Scripture is fulfilled, that "all iniquity shall stop its mouth;" "for it is God That justifieth: 'Who is he that condemneth?' This the divine Psalmist also prayed might be accomplished, when thus addressing Christ the Saviour of all. "Let sinners perish from off the earth: and the wicked, so that they may not be found." For verily we must not say of one clothed with the Spirit, that he curseth those who are infirm and sinful:---for it is not fitting for the saints to curse any:---but rather that he prays this of God. For before the coming of the Saviour we all were in sin: there was no one who acknowledged Him Who by nature and verily is God. "There was no one doing good, no not one; but they all had turned aside together, and become reprobate." But because the Only-begotten submitted Himself to emptiness, and became flesh, and was made man, sinners have perished, and exist no longer. For the dwellers upon earth have been justified by faith, have washed away the pollution of sin by holy baptism, have been made partakers of the Holy Ghost, have sprung out of the hand of the enemy; and having bidden as it were the hosts of devils to depart, dwell under the yoke of Christ.

Christ's gifts therefore raise men to a hope long looked for, and to a most dear joy. The woman who was guilty of many impurities, and deserving of blame for most disgraceful deeds, was justified, that we also may have confidence that Christ certainly will have mercy upon us, when He sees us hastening to Him, and endeavouring to escape from the pitfalls of wickedness. Let us too stand before Him: let us shed the tears of repentance: let us anoint Him with ointment: for the tears of him that repenteth are a sweet savour to God. Call him to mind who saith, "Awake, they who are drunken with wine: weep and howl all they who drink wine to drunkenness." For Satan intoxicates the heart, and agitates the mind by wicked pleasure, leading men clown to the pollutions of sensuality. But while there is time, let us awake; and as most wise Paul says, "Let us not be constantly engaged in revels and drunkenness, nor in chambering and wantonness; but rather let us work what is good: for we are not of the night, nor of darkness, but children of light and of the day. Let us therefore cast off the works of darkness, and clothe ourselves with the works of light." Be not troubled when

thou meditatest upon the greatness of thy former sins: but rather know, that still greater is the grace that justifieth the sinner, and absolveth the wicked.

Faith then in Christ is found to be the pledge to us of these great blessings: for it is the way that leadeth unto life: that bids us go to the mansions that are above: that raises us to the inheritance of the saints: that makes us members of the kingdom of Christ: by Whom and with Whom, to God the Father be praise and dominion with the Holy Ghost, for ever and ever, Amen.

Sermon 41

8:4-8. And when a large multitude was gathered together, and some of every city were come to Him, He spake by a parable. The Sower went out to sow his seed; and as he sowed, some fell by the way side, and was trampled upon, and the birds of heaven devoured it. And other fell upon the rock, and, when it had sprung up, it withered away because it had no moisture. And other fell among the thorns, and the thorns grew up with it, and choked it. And other fell upon the good ground, and it grew up, and brought forth fruit a hundredfold. While saying these things He cried out, He that hath ears to hear let him hear.

The blessed prophets have spoken to us in manifold ways respecting Christ the Saviour of us all. For some proclaimed Him as a Light that was to come: and others as One of royal rank and greatness. For one of them even says, "Blessed is he who hath seed in Zion, and kinsmen in Jerusalem: for lo! her just king shall reign, and princes shall bear rule with judgment. And That Man shall be One That hideth His words." For the word of the Saviour is constantly, so to speak, hidden. So also the blessed Psalmist has brought Him before us saying, "I will open My mouth in parables." See therefore that that which was spoken by Him in old time has come to pass. For a large multitude was assembled round Him of people from all Judaea, and He spake to them in parables. But inasmuch as they were not worthy to learn the mysteries of the kingdom of heaven, the word was wrapt for them in darkness: for they had killed the holy prophets, and being guilty of much blood of the righteous, heard themselves thus plainly addressed: "Which of the prophets have not your fathers killed?" And again, "O Jerusalem, Jerusalem, that killeth the prophets, and stoneth them that are sent unto her; how often would I have gathered thy children, as a hen gathereth her chickens under her wings, and ye would not. Behold your house is left unto you."

But their wicked acts did not extend merely to the holy prophets, but even mounted up to Him Who is Lord of the prophets: that is Christ. For being insolent, and setting up against Him, so to speak, their haughty neck, they gave not the slightest heed to the duty of receiving faith in Him: and even wickedly resisted His public teaching, and rebuked those who wished to be constantly with Him, and thirsted for His instruction, impiously saying, "He hath a devil and is mad: why hear ye Him?" To them therefore it was not granted to know the mysteries of the kingdom of heaven, but rather unto us, who are more ready to embrace the faith. For He hath given unto us, as being perfect wisdom, the ability "to understand parables, and the dark saying, the words of the wise, and their riddles." For parables we may say are the images not of visible objects, but rather of those cognizable by the intellect and spiritual. For that which it is impossible to see with the eyes of the body, the parable points out unto the eyes of the mind, beautifully shaping out the subtilty of things intellectual, by means of the things of

sense, and which are as it were palpable to the touch. Let us see therefore what benefit the Saviour's word weaves for us.

The Sower, He says, went out to "sow his seed, and so forth." Concerning whom then did He thus speak? Evidently concerning Himself. For He verily is the Sower of all that is good, and we are His husbandry: and by Him and from Him is the whole harvest of spiritual fruits. And this He taught us when saying, "Without Me ye can do nothing."

In the imaginations therefore of the mind, see, I pray, a husbandman walking along, and everywhere casting seed in the fields: of which some falls on the pathways, and some on the rocks; and some on thorny places: and again some on good, that is, on fertile ground. That however on the pathways was snatched away: and that on the rocks, when it had just sprouted, and scarcely shot up, quickly withered of drought: and that among thorns was choked: but that which fell on good ground prospered, for it bore fruit, He says, a hundredfold.

Now what the aim is of the discourse, and what the profounder teaching of the parable, we shall learn from Him Who framed it. Before us even the blessed disciples found these things hard to understand, and drew near unto the Revealer of mysteries, supplicating Him and saying, "What is the parable? And what was Christ's reply? "The seed is the word of God: those on the way are they who have heard, and afterwards the devil cometh, and taketh away the word from their heart, that they may not believe and be saved." And as to the cause of the seed on the pathways being snatched away, we see in a moment that it is the hardness of the ground. A pathway always is hard and untilled, because it is exposed to every one's feet, nor is any seed admitted into it, but lies rather upon the surface, ready for any birds that will to snatch it away. All those therefore, whose mind is hard and unyielding, and so to speak, pressed together, do not "receive the divine seed: for the divine and sacred admonition finds no entrance into them, nor do they accept the words that would produce in them the fear of God, and by means of which they could bring forth as fruits the glories of virtue. They have made themselves a beaten and trampled pathway for unclean demons, yea, and for Satan himself, such as never can bear holy fruit. Let those therefore awake, whose heart is sterile and unfruitful: open your mind, receive the sacred seed, be like productive and well-tilled soil, bring forth unto God the fruits that will raise you to an incorruptible life: guard your mind, shut the entrance against the thief, drive away from your hearts the flocks of birds, in order that the seed may abide with you; that ye may be ground luxuriant in corn, and very fertile, and rich abundantly in bringing forth fruit.

And next, let us also consider those others of whom Christ said, "And those upon the rock are they who, when they hear, receive the word with joy, and they have no root: these for a while believe, and in time of temptation depart away." For there are verily men whose faith has not been proved, depending on words simply, and not applying their mind to the examining of the mystery: of such the piety is sapless and without root. For when they enter the churches, they feel pleasure often in seeing so many assembled, and joyfully receive instruction in the mysteries from him whose business it is to teach, and laud him with praises: but this they do with no discretion or judgment, but with unpurified wills: and when they have gone out of the churches, at once they forget the sacred doctrines, and proceed in their customary course; not having stored up within them any thing for their future benefit. And if the affairs of Christians go on peacefully, and no trial disturb them, they even then scarcely maintain in them the faith, and that, so to speak, in a confused and tottering state. But if persecution trouble them,

and the enemies of the truth attack the churches of the Saviour, their heart loves not the battle, and their mind throws away the shield and flees, being devoid of zeal, and destitute of love towards God, and ready for desertion. But O ye fearful and infirm, one may well say, why do ye flee from that which would be your glory? and escape from conflicts to which ye have been trained? For hereby those who wish may win for themselves the trophy of victory. Do ye also struggle: twine the chaplet of manliness, thirst for the rewards of perseverance, for the honours of patience.

I think too that I may rightly bring forward the following argument: they who glitter on lofty thrones, and govern earthly things, when is it they see the steadfast soldier, whose desire is set on victory? Is it in times when peace smiles, and the din of arms is still? Or is it rather when he goes courageously against those who are marshalling for the attack? As I imagine, it is the latter case that is true rather than the former. Therefore as the prophet Jeremiah has said, "Take up arms and shields." Especially as the right hand of God our Saviour is invincible in the battle, and as most wise Paul has said, "He does not permit men to be tried more than they can bear, but with the trial will make also the way of egress, that they may be able to endure patiently."

But even if it possibly be our lot to suffer when contending in defence of piety towards Christ, then altogether and in every way are we worthy of envy, and glorious, and possessed of splendid hopes. Moreover, a praised death is incomparably better than an ignominious life. For so also the Saviour said to the holy apostles, "Fear not them who kill the body, but are not able to kill the soul. But rather fear Him Who is able to destroy both soul and body in hell." Did He therefore command us thus entirely to disregard these extreme dangers, while He Himself remained aloof from similar trials? But lo! He laid down His life for us, and with His blood purchased the world. We are therefore not our own, but His Who bought and redeemed us, and to Whom we owe our lives. For as the divine Paul said, "For this reason Christ died and lived, that He might be Lord of the dead and the living." We ought therefore to possess a mind incapable of being shaken, that especially whenever temptation arrive, we may shew ourselves approved and victorious in the power of patience: and ready with joy to undergo conflicts, and seize the opportunity of suffering for piety's sake towards Christ.

Thus much then being disposed of and explained, let us next consider the thorns among which the divine seed is choked. What again says the Saviour? "But that which fell among the thorns are they who have heard, and by cares, and wealth, and pleasures of the world, go and are choked, and yield no fruit." For the Saviour scatters the seed, which having obtained a firm hold in the souls that have received it, and already, so to say, shot up, and just begun to be visible, is choked by worldly cares, and dries up, being overgrown by empty occupations, and as the prophet Jeremiah said, "it becomes a handful, that can produce no meal." In these things therefore we must be like skilful husbandmen: who having perseveringly cleansed away the thorns, and torn up by the root whatever is injurious, then scatter the seed in clean furrows; and therefore one can say with confidence, "that doubtless they shall come with joy, bearing their sheaves." But if a man cast his seed in ground that is fertile in thorns, and fruitful in briars, and densely covered with useless stubble, he sustains a double loss: of his seed first, and also of his trouble. In order therefore that the divine seed may blossom well in us, let us first cast out of the mind worldly cares, and the unprofitable anxiety which makes us seek to be rich, "For we brought nothing into the world, nor can we take any thing out." For what profit is there in possessing superfluities? "Treasures profit not the wicked," as Scripture saith, "but righteousness delivereth from death." For immediately upon the possession of

affluence, there run up, and, so to speak, forthwith hem us in, the basest wickednesses; profligate banquets, the delights of gluttony, and carefully prepared sauces; music, and drunkenness, and the pitfalls of wantonness; pleasures and sensuality, and pride hateful to God. But as the disciple of the Saviour has said, "Every thing that is in the world is the lust of the flesh, and the lust of the eye, and the pride of the world; and the world passeth away, and its lust; but he that doeth the will of God abideth for ever."

This is the good seed, and worthy of admiration: the land rich and well productive, that bringeth forth fruit a hundredfold. For men say, that the best soils do sometimes under cultivation produce a hundredfold; so that this is a mark of every fertile and productive spot. And of such it has been very justly said by one of the holy prophets at the mouth of God, "And all nations shall congratulate you; because ye are a desirable land." For when the divine word falls upon a mind pure and skilful in cleansing itself from things hurtful, it then fixes its root deeply, and shoots up like an ear of corn, and so to speak, being strong in blade, and well flowered, brings its fruit to perfection.

But I think it may be useful to mention this to you, who wish to learn what is good. For Matthew, when relating this chapter to us, said that the good ground brought forth, fruit in three degrees. "For one, he says, brought forth a hundred, and one sixty, and one thirtyfold." Observe therefore, that just as Christ described three degrees of loss, so similarly the degrees of success are equal in number. For those seeds that fall upon the pathway are snatched away by the birds: and those upon the rocks, having merely shot up, within a little while wither away: and those among the thorns are choked. But that desirable land brings forth fruit in three several degrees, as I said: a hundred, sixty, and thirtyfold. For as most wise Paul writes, "Each one severally of us has his own gift from God, one in one manner, and another in another." For we do not at all find that the successes of the saints are in equal measure. On us however it is incumbent to emulate these things that are better and superior to those of meaner kind; for so will Christ bountifully bestow happiness upon us: by Whom and with Whom, to God the Father be praise and dominion with the Holy Ghost, for ever and ever, Amen.

Sermon 42

8:19-21. *And there came to Him His mother, and His brethren, and were not able to speak with Him because of the multitude. But it was told Him, Thy mother, and Thy brethren stand without, wishing to see Thee. But He answered and said unto them, My mother and My brethren are these who hear the word of God and do it.*

ONCE again let the words of praise in the book of Psalms be quoted by us; "What shall I render unto the Lord for all He hath rendered unto me?" For what can we offer Him that is equal to His love towards us? Shall we choose for our guidance the commands of the law, and honour Him with sacrifices of blood? Does He feel pleasure in the slaughter of bullocks and goats? No certainly: for they are an abomination unto Him. For by one of His holy prophets He even plainly declared to those who were rendering Him the legal service, "I hate, I abominate your feast days: nor will I smell at your festivals: because though ye bring Me whole burnt offerings and sacrifices, I will not accept them; nor regard your displays for salvation." What therefore ought to be the spiritual sacrifice which we offer Him, the wise Psalmist again teaches us saying, "I said unto the Lord, Thou art my Lord; because my good

things Thou needest not." When thus we approach Him, He will accept us: if this be the offering we make Him it will be dear and agreeable: this is the spiritual sacrifice, according as it is written, "Hath the Lord delight in whole burnt offerings and sacrifices, as in our hearkening to His voice? Behold! to hearken is better than sacrifices; and to listen than the fat of rams." For that obedience and the hearkening unto God, is the cause of every blessing, the present lesson teaches us. For some entered and told Christ respecting His holy mother and His brethren. And He, it says, answered in these words, "My mother and My brethren are they who hear the word of God and do it."

Now let not any one imagine that Christ spurned the honour due to His mother, or contemptuously disregarded the love owed to His brethren: for He it was Who spake the law by Moses, and clearly said, "Honour thy father and thy mother, that it may be well with thee." And how I pray could He have rejected the love due to brethren, Who even commanded us to love not merely our brethren, but those who stand in the relation to us of foes? For He says, "Love your enemies." What therefore does Christ wish to teach? His object then is highly to exalt His love towards those who are willing to bow the neck to His commands: and in what way I will explain. The greatest honours; and the most complete affection is that which we all owe to our mothers and brethren. If therefore He says that they who hear His word and do it are His mother and brethren, is it not plain to every one, that He bestows on those who follow Him a love thorough and worthy of their acceptance? For so He would make them readily embrace the desire of yielding themselves to His words, and of submitting their mind to His yoke, by means of a complete obedience.

But that God greatly rejoices in those whose minds are thus disposed, He assures us by one of the holy prophets, thus saying, "And on whom shall I look, except upon the humble and meek, and that trembleth at My words?" For just as our fathers after the flesh feel pleasure in those sons whose choice it is to perform the things that are good and agreeable to them, and who wish to accord with them in mind, so also the God of all loves the obedient, and deigns His mercy to him who thoroughly hearkens to Him. And the converse also is true: that he rejects him who is disobedient and untractable. For He also blamed the Jews who fell into this wickedness, saying, "A son honoureth his father, and a servant his master: if I then am a father, where is My honour? and if I am a master, where is My fear? saith the Lord Almighty." For either we ought to fear the Lord of all as a master, or to honour Him at least as a father,---a thing which is far greater and better than the former: for love casteth out fear.

For that there is no obedience without reward, and on the other hand, no disobedience without penalty, is made plain by what God spake by His holy prophet to those who disregarded Him: "Behold, they who serve Me shall eat, but ye shall suffer hunger: behold, they who serve Me shall drink, but ye shall suffer thirst: behold, they who obey Me shall rejoice, but ye shall lament: behold, they who serve Me shall exult in happiness, but ye shall groan, and wail from contrition of your heart." For let us see, if you will, even from the writings of Moses, the grief to which disobedience has brought us. We have been driven from a paradise of delights, and have also fallen under the condemnation of death; and while intended for incorruption:----for so God created the universe:----we yet have become accursed, and subject to the yoke of sin. And how then have we escaped from that which befel us, or Who is He that aided us, when we had sunk into this great misery? It was the Only-begotten Word of God, by submitting Himself to our estate, and being found in fashion as a man, and becoming obedient unto the Father even unto death. Thus has the guilt of the disobedience that is by Adam been remitted: thus has the power of the curse ceased, and the

dominion of death been brought to decay. And this too Paul teaches, saying, "For as by the disobedience of the one man, the many became sinners, so by the obedience of the One, the many became righteous." For the whole nature of man became guilty in the person of him who was first formed; but now it is wholly justified again in Christ. For He became for us the second commencement of our race after that primary one; and therefore all things in Him have become new. And Paul assures of this, writing, "Therefore every man who is in Christ is a new creation; and the former things have passed away: behold, they have become new."

In order then that Christ may win us all unto obedience, He promises us surpassing honours, and deigns us the highest love, saying, "My mother and My brethren are those who hear the word of God and do it." For who among men is so obdurate and ungentle, as to refuse to honour, and accord the most complete love to his mother and brethren? For the all-powerful law of nature, even without our will, obliges us to this. When therefore, bowing our neck to the Saviour's commands, we become His followers, and so are in the relation of a mother and brethren to Him, how does He regard us before God's judgment seat? Is it not with gentleness and love? What doubt can there be of this? And what is comparable to this honour and goodness? What is there worthy of being matched with a gift thus splendid and desirable? For He takes us unto Him, that where He is, there we also may be with Him. For this He even deigned to promise us, saying, "I will go, and make ready a place for you: and return again and take you with Me, that where I am, there ye also may be with Me."

Servitude, therefore, is a thing worth our gaining, and the pledge of noble honours. And this, we say, is fulfilled not by our merely hearing the words of God, but by our endeavouring to perform what is commanded. This thou learnest from what one of the holy Apostles declares: "But become doers of the law, and not hearers only. If any be a hearer of the law, and not a doer, he is like a man regarding his natural face in a mirror. For he has regarded himself, and gone away: and at once forgotten what manner of person he was. But he who hath, looked into the perfect law of liberty, and wrought: not being a forgetful hearer, but an active doer, he shall be blessed in his doing."

Now though the argument already brought forward is sufficient for the persuasion of right-thinking men, yet I will add for their advantage that also which is correctly said in the words of the blessed Paul: "For the land that hath drunk in the rain that hath come oft upon it, and bringeth forth the root serviceable for them for whose sake it is tilled, receiveth a blessing from God. But if it bring forth thorns and thistles, it is rejected, and is nigh unto cursing: and its end is to be burnt." For like rain, the Saviour sendeth down upon the hearts of those who hear, the word of spiritual consolation; even the sacred doctrine of salvation. If then a man be possessed of understanding, he will bring forth the fruits of an abundant intellectual harvest: but if he be careless and negligent, he of course has no claim to the praises of virtue, and instead of grapes will bring forth thorns. And what his end will be, we learn from the words of Isaiah. For he says: "For the vineyard of the Lord of Hosts is the man of Judah: a plant new and well-beloved: and I looked that it would bring forth grapes, but it brought forth iniquity, and not righteousness, but a cry." And that Israel was thus punished for its neglect of that fruitfulness which was both fitting for itself and well pleasing to God; having neither obeyed His commands, nor consented to perform them; we learn again from His words, where He says: "But now I will shew you what I will do to My vineyard. I will take away its fence, and it shall be wasted: and I will rend its wall, and it shall be trampled under foot. And I will abandon My vineyard: and it shall not be pruned, nor tilled: and thorns shall grow up in it as on waste ground; and I will command the clouds to rain no rain upon it." It is plain, therefore,

to every man, that God hath no respect for the wicked soul that beareth thorns. For it is left unprotected, and without a wall, and exposed to the depredations of whoever will; a place for thieves and wild animals; and sharing in no spiritual consolation. For this I consider, and this only, is the meaning of there falling upon it no rain. When Israel suffered these things, the Psalmist so to speak wailed over him, and said to the God of all: "The vine that Thou broughtest out of Egypt, Thou castedst out the nations and plantedst it." And again thus proceeds: "Its shade covered the mountains; and its boughs were as the cedars of God: it sent forth its branches to the sea, and its foliage to the river." He made too supplications for what they had suffered, saying; "Why hast Thou broken down her hedges, and all the wayfarers pluck her? The boar out of the wood destroyeth her: and the ass of the desert feedeth upon her." For the soul that is undefended, and deemed unworthy of protection from on high, becomes a pasture ground for evil beasts. For it is plundered by Satan and his angels.

In order, therefore, that we may not fall into such severe tribulations, let us bow the neck of our mind to Christ the Saviour of all. Let us receive the Word of God and do it: for if our choice be so to act, He will crown us with lofty honours; for He is the distributor of the crowns; by Whom and with Whom to God the Father be praise and dominion with the Holy Ghost, for ever and ever, Amen.

Sermon 43

8:22-25. *But it came to pass on a certain day that He went into a ship with His disciples. And He said unto them, Let us go over to the other side of the lake: and they went. But as they were sailing, He fell asleep: and there came down a storm of wind upon the lake, and the ship was filled and they were in danger. And they drew near, and awoke Him, saying, Master, Master, we perish. Then He arose, and rebuked the winds, and the raging of the waters, and they were still: and there was a great calm. But He said to them, Where is your faith? And they were afraid, and wondered among themselves, saying, Who, then, is This, that He commandeth even the winds, and waters, and they obey Him?*

ONCE again draw near, that as with the Psalmist's harp we may cry aloud: "I will bless the Lord at all times: and at all times shall His praise be in my mouth." For He ever doeth wonderful things; and giveth occasions thick and closely pressing one upon another for His praise: and every word falls short of His power, and of His majesty far exalted above all. For true is it that "the glory of the Lord covereth over the Word." But we must not on this account forget the glory that is His due and fitting right: but rather must hasten joyfully to offer such fruits as are proportionate to our power. For certainly there is nothing whatsoever that a man can affirm to be better than praise, even though it be but little that we can offer. Come, therefore, and let us praise Christ the Saviour of all: let us behold the supremacy of His might, and the majesty of His godlike dominion.

For He was sailing, together with the holy Apostles, across the sea, or rather lake of Tiberias, and an unexpected and violent tempest arose upon the vessel; and the waves, piled up high by the gusts of the winds, filled the disciples with the fear of death. For they were terrified not a little, although well acquainted with seamanship, and by no means inexperienced in the tumults of the waves. But inasmuch as the greatness of the clangor made their terror now unendurable, as having no other hope of safety except Him only Who is the Lord of powers even Christ, they arouse Him, saying, Master, Master, save us, we perish: for the Evangelist

says that He was asleep. With most wise purpose, as it seems to me, was this also done. For some one, I imagine, may say, Why did He fall asleep at all? To which we reply, that the event was so arranged as to be good and profitable. For that they might not ask aid of Him immediately when the tempest began to dash upon the ship, but when, so to speak, the evil was at its height, and the terrors of death were troubling the disciples; that so the might of His godlike sovereignty might be more manifest, in calming the raging sea, and rebuking the savage blasts of the wind, and changing the tempest to a calm, and that the event might thus become a means of improvement to them that were sailing with Him, He purposely fell asleep.

But they, as I said, wake Him, saying: Save me, We perish. See here, I pray, smallness of faith united with faith. For they believe that He can save; and deliver from all evil those who call upon Him. For had they not so far had a firm faith in Him, they certainly would not have asked this of Him, And yet as having but little faith, they say, Save me, we perish. For it was not a thing possible, or that could happen, for them to perish when they were with Him Who is Almighty.

The vessel, then, was severely tossed by the violence of the tempest, and the breaking of the waves: and along with the whip the faith of the disciples also was tossed, so to speak, by similar agitations. But Christ, Whose authority extends over all, immediately arose, and at once appeased the storm, restrained the blasts of wind, quieted their fear, and yet further proved by deeds that He is God, at Whom all created things tremble and quake, and to Whose nod is subject the very nature of the elements. For He rebuked the tempest: and Matthew says that the manner of the rebuke was with godlike authority. For he tells us, that our Lord said to the sea: "Peace, be thou still." What can there be more grand than this in majesty? or what can equal its sublimity? Right worthy of God is the word, and the might of the commandment, so that we too may utter the praise written in the book of Psalms: "Thou rulest the power of the sea: and stillest the turbulence of its waves." He too has Himself said somewhere by one of the holy prophets: "Why fear ye not Me, saith the Lord? nor tremble at My presence? I Who have set the sand as the bound of the sea, a commandment for ever, and it hath not passed it." For the sea is subject to the will of Him Who made all creation, and is, as it were, placed under the Creator's feet, varying its motions at all times according to His good pleasure, and yielding submission to His lordly will.

When, therefore, Christ had calmed the tempest, He also changed into confidence the faith of the holy disciples, which had been shaken along with the ship, no longer permitting it to be in doubt; and wrought in them, so to say, a calm, smoothing the waves of their weak faith. For He said, "Where is your faith?" Another Evangelist, however, affirms of Him, that He said, "Why are ye fearful, O ye of little faith?" For when the fear of death unexpectedly befalls, it troubles sometimes even a well-established mind, and exposes it to the blame of littleness of faith; and such also is the effect of any other trouble too great to bear upon those who are tried by it. For this reason there once drew near certain unto Christ, and said: "Increase our faith." For the man who is still exposed to blame for littleness of faith falls short of him who is perfect in faith. For just as gold is tried in the fire, so also is faith by temptations. But the mind of man is weak, and altogether in need of strength and help from above, in order that it may be well with him, and that he may be able to maintain a steadfast course, and be strong, manfully to endure whatsoever befall. And this our Saviour taught us, saying; "Without Me ye can do nothing." And the wise Paul also confesses the same, where he writes; "I am able to do all things through Christ, That strengtheneth me."

The Saviour, therefore, wrought miracles, changing by His all-prevailing nod the tempest into a calm, and smoothing the raging storm into a settled peace. But the disciples wondering at the divine sign, whispered one to another, saying: "Who, then, is This, that He commands even the winds and the waters, and they obey Him?" Did the blessed disciples, then, thus say to one another, "Who is This?" from not knowing Him? But how is not this utterly incredible? For they knew Jesus to be God, and the Son of God. For also Nathaniel plainly confessed, "Rabbi, Thou art the Son of God, Thou art the King of Israel." Yes, and Peter too, that chosen one of all the Apostles, when they were in the neighbourhood of Caesarea Philippi, and Christ put a question to them all, and said, "Whom do men say that the Son of man 'is?' and certain had answered, " Some, indeed, Elias; but others, Jeremiah, or one of the prophets"----made a correct and blameless confession of faith in Him, saying, "Thou art the Christ the Son of the living God." And Christ praised him for thus speaking, honoured him with crowns, and counted the disciple worthy of surpassing honours: for He said, " Blessed art thou, Simon, son of Jonah: for flesh and blood hath not revealed it to thee, but My Father in heaven." And how could Peter, who was taught of God, not know Him Whom he plainly said was the Son of the living God? It was not then as being ignorant of His glory, that the wise disciples say, Who is This? but rather as wondering at the immensity of His power, and at the lofty and incomparable greatness of His sovereignty. For the wretched Jews, either as being entirely ignorant of the mystery of Christ, or as not deigning Him, in their great wickedness, any regard, rebuked Him, and threw stones at Him, when He called God His Father. For they ventured even to say, "Why dost Thou, being a man, make Thyself God?" For they did not comprehend in their mind the depth of the mystery. God was in visible form like unto us: the Lord of all bore the likeness of a slave: He Who is high exalted was in lowliness: and He who surpasses all intellectual comprehension, and transcends every created being, was in the measure of us men. And as the disciples knew this, they wonder at the glory of the Godhead; and as they view It present in Christ, and yet see that He was like unto us, and visible in the flesh, they say, "Who is This?" instead of, How great He is! and of what nature! and with how great power, and authority, and majesty. He commands even the waters and the wind, and they obey Him!

There is also in this much for the admiration and improvement of those who hear: for creation is obedient to whatsoever Christ chooses to command. And what excuse can avail us, if we do not submit to do the same? or can deliver from the fire and condemnation him who is disobedient and untractable, setting up, so to speak, the neck of his haughty mind against Christ's commands, and whose heart it is impossible to soften? It is our duty, therefore, understanding that all those things that have been brought into existence by God entirely agree with His will, ourselves to become like the rest of creation, and avoid disobedience as a thing that leads to perdition. Let us rather, then, submit to Him Who summons us to salvation, and to the desire of living uprightly and lawfully, that is, evangelically: for so Christ will fill us with the gifts that come from above, and from Himself: by Whom and with Whom to God the Father be praise and dominion, with the Holy Ghost, for ever and over, Amen.

Sermon 44

8:26-36. *And they went to the country of the Gerasenes, which is over against Galilee. And when He went out on land, there met Him a certain man who had devils, and for a long time had not worn clothing, nor abode in a house, but in the tombs. And when he saw Jesus, he cried out, and fell down before Him, and with a loud voice said, What is there between me and Thee, Jesus, Son of God*

Most High? I beseech Thee, Torment me not. But He had commanded the unclean spirit to go out of the man: for from a long time it had seized him, and he was kept bound with chains and fetters, and was watched: and breaking his bonds, he was driven, by the devil into the wilderness. And Jesus asked him, saying, What is thy name? And he said, Legion: because that many devils had entered into him. And they besought Him not to command them to go into the abyss. But there was there a herd of many swine feeding on the mountain: and they besought Him to suffer them to enter into them. And He suffered them. But when the devils had gone out of the man, they entered into the swine. And the herd rushed over the precipice into the lake, and was drowned. When then the keepers saw what had happened, they fled, and told it in the city and villages. And they went out to see what had happened, and came to Jesus, and found the man out of whom the devils had gone sitting at the feet of Jesus clothed, and sober-minded. And they were afraid. But they who saw it told them in what manner the demoniac had been saved.

THE prophet Habakkuk foresaw the glory of the Saviour, and, overcome by His wonderful deeds, he offered up praises unto Him, saying: "O Lord, I have heard Thy hearing, and been afraid: I have considered Thy doings, and been astonished." For of which of the deeds wrought by our common Saviour Christ can any one say, that it is not worthy of all admiration? which of them is not great, and highly to be praised, and a proof of His godlike authority? And this we can very clearly see in what has been here read to us from the evangelic Scriptures. Let us behold, then, the tyranny of the enemy shaken by Christ, and the earth set free from the wickedness of demons: let us see the heads of the serpent bruised by Him, and the swarm of venomous reptiles driven away overpowered and in terror: and those who in old time had been full of cunning and audacity; who had held subject to their sway all that lies beneath the heavens; who had prided themselves upon their temples of vast cost, and on their beautifully sculptured altars; who had been honoured with sacrifices; and crowned with universal praises; fall from their former glory, and as though retaining sovereignty over no one single man, beg for a herd of swine! A very plain proof is this of the unexpected misery that had befallen them, and of their being broken utterly.

But no more: for I perceive that in my discourse I have taken a leap, as it were, from what we began with, and have hurried to the latter part of the lesson. Come, therefore, that, like a fleet and strong-limbed horse, we may as with a bridle, turn it back to the beginning. For the Saviour, in company with the holy disciples, had landed in the country of the Gerasenes; and immediately a man met them, in whom dwelt many unclean spirits: and he was void of mind and understanding, and in no respect different from those already dead, and laid in the earth: or rather, perhaps, even in a more miserable state. For they, carefully wrapped in their grave-clothes, are laid in the earth, like one on his mother's bosom: but he, in great misery and nakedness, wandering among the graves of the dead, was in utter wretchedness, leading a disgraceful and ignominious life: and so was a proof of the cruelty of the demons, and a plain demonstration of their impurity. And besides this, it is a charge and accusation against them of hatred unto mankind: for they would have no man whatsoever upon earth sober, but wish them like one intoxicated, and crazed, to know nothing to their profit, but be left in ignorance even of Him Who is the Maker of all. For of whomsoever they have possession, and have subjected to their power, him at once they make an example of great misery, deprived of every blessing, and destitute of all sobriety, and bereft moreover entirely even of reason itself.

But why, say some, have they possession of men? To such, then, as wish to have this explained, I answer, that the reason of these things is very deep: for so somewhere God is addressed by one of His saints, "Thy judgments are a vast abyss." But as long as we bear this in mind, we shall perchance not shoot beside the mark. The God of all, then, purposely permits some to fall into their power, not so much that they may suffer, as that we may learn by their example in what way the demons treat us, and so may avoid the wish of being subject to them. For by the suffering of one, many are edified.

But the Gerasene, or rather the herd of demons lying concealed within him, fell down before Christ's feet, saying, "What is there between me and Thee, Jesus, Son of God Most High? I beseech Thee, torment me not." Here observe, I pray, the mixture of fear with great audacity, and overweening pride: and that the words which he is forced, as it were, to ejaculate, are coupled with inflated haughtiness! For it is a proof of the pride of the enemy, that he ventures to say, "What is there between me and Thee, Jesus, Son of God Most High? Thou knowest, then, for certain, that He is the Son of God Most High: thou therefore confessest that He is also God, and Lord of heaven and earth, and of all things therein: and how, then, having usurped that which is not thine, or rather that which is His, and assumed to thyself a glory which in no possible way is thy right:----for thou claimedst to be worshipped:----didst thou affirm that He had nothing to do with thee, Whom, as far as thy endeavours went, thou causedst to be expelled from that dignity which most fitly is His alone? All men upon earth are His; and these thou wickedly corruptedst, removing them far from the knowledge of Him Who truly is the Lord and Maker of all, and plungedst them into the mire of sin, making them thy worshippers:----and afterwards dost thou say, "What is there between me and Thee?" What earthly king would endure to have those placed under his sceptre harrassed by barbarians? Or what shepherd is so unfeeling and indifferent, as when savage beasts attack his flocks, to take no heed of the calamity, nor endeavour to aid his sheep? Confess, even though against thy will, who thou art, and to Whom thou speakest. Utter words such as befit thee: such namely as, "I pray Thee, torment me not." "For He had commanded, it says, the spirit to go out of the man."

Observe, I pray again, the incomparable majesty of Him Who transcends all, even of Christ. With irresistible might and unequalled authority He crushes Satan by simply willing that so it should be. He does not permit him to venture to give one look of opposition to His commands. Fire and flames unto him was Christ's will: so that it is true as the blessed Psalmist said, that "the hills melted like wax before the face of God." And again elsewhere, "Touch the hills, and they shall smoke." For he compares to the hills those high and boastful powers of wickedness; which nevertheless, as though in contact with fire, melt like wax before the might and sovereignty of our Saviour. And besides this they smoke: now smoke is an indication of fire about to burst into a blaze; and this it is the lot of the impure spirits to suffer.

But Christ asked him, and commanded him to tell, What was his name. And he said, "Legion, because that many devils had entered into him." Did Christ then ask because He did not know it, and like one of us, wished to learn it as something that had escaped Him? But how is it not perfectly absurd for us to say or imagine any thing of the kind? For as being God, "He knoweth all things, and searcheth the hearts and reins." He asked therefore for the plan of salvation's sake, that we might learn that a great multitude of devils shared the one soul of the man, engendering in him a wretched and impure madness. For he was their work, and they indeed are "wise to do evil," as the Scripture saith, but to do "good they have no knowledge."

As therefore the Psalmist said, "let us keep the feast with flowers." And "Let all the people clap their hands." For let us bear in mind what was the character of our enemies; and who were those princes of all beneath the heavens before the coining of our Saviour: bitter were they, impure, murderers, and full of all immorality. But Christ setteth us free from the hatred of these noxious beings. Let us therefore with exultation and gladness in our great joy exclaim, "We will cut asunder their cords, and cast away their yoke from us." For we have been set free, as I said, by the might of Christ, and delivered from those bitter and iniquitous beings, who in old time had the dominion over us.

The herd then of impure spirits asked for a herd----worthy of and like itself----of swine! And Christ purposely gave them leave, though He well knew what they would do. And I can imagine some one saying, Why did He grant their request? To which we answer, That He gave them the power, in order that this, like all His other conduct, might be a means of benefit to us, and inspire us with the hope of safety. But perhaps thou wilt say, How, and in what manner? Listen therefore. They ask for power over swine: plainly as something which they do not possess. For what possible doubt can there be, that they would not have asked it, if it had been in their power to take it without hindrance? But those who have no power over things thus trifling and valueless, how can they injure any one of those whom Christ has scaled, and who place their hope on Him? Comfort therefore thy heart: for perhaps thou wast terrified at hearing that a crowd of wicked spirits dwelt in one man, and made him wander among the graves of the dead in shame and nakedness, and bereft of mind and understanding. Inasmuch as thou too art a man exposed to temptations, thou fearedst a misery thus bitter and unendurable, should Satan attack thee. Rouse therefore thy heart to confidence: do not suppose that any such thing can happen while Christ surrounds us with protection and love. It is certain that they possess no power even over swine. So great is the providence which the Almighty Governor of our affairs deigns to bestow on human things. For He even said to the holy apostles, "Are not two sparrows sold for a farthing? and not one of them falleth to the ground without your Father. And even the hairs of your head are all numbered. Fear not therefore, ye are of more value than many sparrows." For if He bestow His protection upon things thus trifling and valueless, how will He not deem us worthy of all regard, for whose sake He Who by nature is God, even became man, and endured the contumelies of the Jews? Away therefore with fear: for God aids, and encircles with the armour of His good pleasure those whose wish it is to live for Him, and who seek to perform those things that are pleasing in His sight.

And this too we may learn, from what befel the herd of swine, that wicked demons are cruel, and mischievous, and hurtful, and treacherous to those who are in their power.

This the fact clearly proves, that they hurried the swine over a precipice and drowned them in the waters. Christ therefore granted their request, that we might learn from what happened, that their disposition is ruthless and bestial, incapable of being softened, and solely intent on doing evil to those whom they can get into their power.

if therefore there be any one among us wanton and swinish, filth-loving and impure, and willingly contaminated with the abominations of sin, such a one by God's permission, falls into their power, and sinks into the abyss of perdition. But it can never happen to those who love Christ, to become subject unto them: nor to us, as long as we walk in His footsteps, and, avoiding negligence in the performance of what is right, desire those things which are honourable, and belong to that virtuous and laudable conversation, which Christ has marked

out for us by the precepts of the Gospel: by Whom and with Whom, to God the Father be praise and dominion with the Holy Ghost, for ever and ever, Amen.

Sermon 45

8:40-48. And when Jesus returned, the multitude received Him; for they were all waiting for Him. And behold there came a man named Jairus, and he was a ruler of the synagogue: and he fell down at Jesus' feet, and besought Him to come to his house; for he had an only daughter, about twelve years old, and she was dying. And as He went, the multitudes thronged Him. A woman who had had an issue of blood twelve years, and had spent all her substance upon physicians, and could be healed of none, came near behind Him, and touched the hem of His garment: and immediately her issue of blood stanch'd. And Jesus said, Who touched Me? And when all denied, Peter and they that were with him said, Master, the multitudes press and throng Thee. But Jesus said, Some one touched Me; for I know that power has gone forth from Me. And when the woman saw that she was not hid from Him, she came trembling, and fell down before Him, and declared before all the people, for what cause she had touched Him, and that she was healed immediately. And He said unto her, My daughter, thy faith hath saved thee: go in peace.

Those who are skilful in elucidating the mystery of the dispensation of the Only-begotten in the flesh, and whose minds are illuminated with divine light, the Spirit commanded, saying, "Declare His praise among the Gentiles, and His miracles among all nations." Did He then command them to declare the praise of our universal Saviour Christ among the multitudes of the Gentiles, to the inhabitants, that is, of the whole world, for no other reason than that He might be admired, or was it not that He might also be believed on by all men? I verily affirm that it was both in order that He might be admired, and also that we might believe that the Word of God the Father is very God, even though, as John says, He was made flesh. For He also somewhere declares unto the Jews, "If I do not the works of My Father, believe Me not: but if I do them, though ye believe not Me, believe the works."

Let us then once again behold Him benefiting multitudes by the miracles He wrought for their good. For there was a ruler and teacher of the synagogue of the Jews, called Jairus; and him the Gospel narrative here announces to us. For he fell down before the feet of Christ our common Saviour, to ask for the unloosing of death, and the annulling of corruption. For his daughter was, so to speak, at the very gates of the grave. Come then, and let us ask Jairus to tell us in what light he regards Him to Whom he offers his request. For if thou drawest near regarding Him as a mere man, and like unto one of us; as one, that is, Who possesses no power superior to ourselves, thou missest thy mark, and hast wandered from the right road, in asking of a man that which requires the power of God. The supreme nature alone is able to give life to the dead. It alone has immortality: and from It every thing that is called into being borrows its life and motion. Ask therefore of men the things that belong unto men, and of God the things that belong unto God.

Moreover thou worshipp'st Him as the Almighty God: and doest so, as certainly knowing and testifying that He is able to give thee the accomplishment of thy requests. What argument therefore is sufficient for thy defence, that once thou stonedst Christ the Saviour of all; and

with the rest didst persecute Him, and most foolishly and impiously say, "For a good work we stone Thee not, but for blasphemy: because that Thou being a man, makest Thyself God."

And not only must we wonder at this, but at the following as well. For Lazarus indeed arose from the dead at the summons of Christ, Who made him come forth from the very grave, when he had been there four days, and corruption had already begun. And those indeed who were spectators of the miracle were astonished at the majesty of the deed. But the rulers of the synagogue of the Jews made the very miracle food for envy, and an act thus great and excellent was stored up in their memory as a seed whence sprung the guilt of murder. For when they had assembled, they took counsel one with another, certainly for no lawful deed, but for one rather that brought upon them their final doom. For they said, "What do we? for This man doeth many miracles. If we let Him thus alone, the Romans will come, and take away both our nation and our place." What then sayest thou to this, O Jairus? Thou sawest death abolished in the case of Lazarus; death which always and to every one before had been stern and unyielding. Thou sawest destruction lose its power, from which no one on earth had escaped. And how then dost thou imagine thou canst make Him subject unto death Who is supreme over death: the Overthrower of destruction, and the Giver of life? How can He Who delivered others from the snares of death, Himself be liable to suffer it, unless He wills so to do for the plan of salvation's sake. The text therefore concerning them is true, "that they are foolish children, and unwise."

But the fate of the damsel was not without profit to her father. For just as sometimes the violence of the reins brings the spirited steed that has bounded away from the road back to its proper course, so also trouble often compels the soul of man to yield obedience to those things which are for its good, and are commanded. To this effect we find the blessed David also addressing God over all, concerning those men who, not being as yet willing to walk uprightly, were led on, so to speak, by the disorderly impulses of their mind to the pit of destruction. "With bridle and bit Thou shalt restrain the jaws of those who draw not near to Thee." For the force of circumstances brings men, as I said, even against their wills to the necessity of bowing their neck to God, as we may see indirectly shewn in the Gospel parables. For Christ somewhere said, that when the banquet was ready, a servant was sent to call them to the supper, and gather those that were bidden: but they, employing fictitious excuses of various kinds, would not come. Then the Lord, it says, spake to that servant: "Go into the highways and hedges, and compel them to come in that My house may be filled." What then is the meaning of men being invited from the hedges,----and that as it were by force,----if it be not what is here referred to? For sometimes misfortunes beyond the power of endurance hedge men into extreme misery: and meeting, it may be, with care and assistance from those who fear Christ, they are thus led on unto faith in Him and love: and being weaned from their former error received by tradition from their fathers, they accept the saving word of the Gospel. And such we may well affirm to be those who are called from the hedges. It is indeed more excellent and praiseworthy, when the withdrawal from former error to hasten to the truth is the fruit of freewill: and such converts gathering the confirmation of their belief from the sacred Scriptures, and enjoying the instruction of such as are skilful in initiating men into the mysteries, will advance onwards to a correct and blameless faith. But those others, who are kindled, if we may so speak, by force and the troubles they meet with to the acknowledgment of the truth, are not upon an equality with the former, but when admitted must be careful to maintain constancy, and flee from a fickle levity: for it is their duty to preserve an unwavering faith, lest they be found reprobate and feeble workers, deserters after the seal, cowards and traitors after taking up arms. Let them not hasten back to their former

deeds, lest that be said of them which was spoken by one of the holy apostles: "For it had been better for them not to have known the way of truth, than having known it to turn back from the holy commandment that was delivered unto them. The case of the true proverb has befallen them: the dog that returns to his vomit, and the sow that was washed to wallowing in the mire."

Not however to make this digression too long, let us return to our original subject. Jairus then drew near; but we deny that his coming was the fruit of freewill; rather it was the fear of death which made him thus act against his will: for it had already, so to speak, assailed his daughter; and she was his only one. He set utterly at nought then the reputation of consistency in his wicked words and thoughts. For he who had oftentimes made the attempt to slay Christ, for raising the dead from the grave, asks of Him the unloosing of death. In order then that his character may be seen to be harsh and abominable, and that he may be convicted of being such by the very facts, Christ accompanied him, and yielded to his request.

But there was also a sort of wise management in what was done. For had He not yielded to his request for grace, both himself and whosoever else suffered under the same ignorance, or rather, want of common sense, would have said forsooth, that He was not able to raise the damsel, nor drive death away from her, even if He had gone to the house: that being then without power, and unequal to the accomplishment of the divine miracle, He made His displeasure at Jairus a pretext for keeping away. To put a stop therefore to the impure and unbridled calumny of the Jews, and restrain the tongues of the numerous persons ever ready for fault-finding, He consents immediately, and promises to raise up her who was in danger. And the promises were followed by the fulfilment, in order that disbelief on their part might be without excuse, and that this miracle, like the rest, might be for their condemnation. For Christ also said of them, "If I had not done among them the works which none other man did, they had not had sin: but now they have both seen and hated both Me and My Father."

The Saviour then went to raise the damsel, and to implant in the dwellers upon earth the sure hope of the resurrection of the dead. But as He was midway on His road, another miracle, not unlike the former, was wonderfully wrought. For there was a woman afflicted with an issue of blood, the prey of a severe and violent malady, which refused to yield to the skill of physicians, and set at nought all the appliances of human remedies. For she could "not be healed, it says, by any," even though she had unsparingly lavished all her substance upon those who promised to deliver her from her disease. When therefore the unhappy woman had given up all hope from men, and now survived only for utter misery, she conceived in her a wise plan. For she had recourse to the Physician Who is from above, from heaven, as One Who is able readily and without effort to effect those things that are beyond our power, and Whose decrees, whatever it be He would accomplish, nothing can oppose.

Her faith in this was perhaps occasioned by seeing Jairus leading Him to his house, to prove Himself mightier than death, by delivering his daughter from its inevitable bonds. For she thought perchance within herself, that if He be mightier than death, and the destroyer of corruption, how much more can He also alleviate the malady that afflicts her, staunching by ineffable power the fountains of her issue of blood! She draws near therefore and touches the hem of His garment; but secretly and not openly: for she hoped to be able to escape notice, and, as it were, to steal healing from One Who knew not of it. But why, tell me, was the woman careful to escape notice? For why should she not draw near to Christ with more boldness than that leper, and ask for the remission of her incurable pain?, For he said, "Lord,

if Thou wilt, Thou canst make me clean." Why should not she act like those blind men, who when Christ passed by called out and said, "Have mercy upon us, Lord Jesus, the Son of David"? What then was it made that sick woman wish to remain hid? It was because the law of the all-wise Moses imputed impurity to any woman who was suffering from an issue of blood, and everywhere called her unclean: and whoever was unclean, might neither touch any thing that was holy, nor approach a holy man. For this reason the woman was careful to remain concealed, lest as having transgressed the law, she should have to bear the punishment which it imposed. And when she touched, she was healed immediately and without delay.

But the miracle did not remain hid; for the Saviour, though knowing all things, asked as if He knew it not, saying, 'Who touched Me?' And when the holy apostles with good reason said, "The multitudes throng Thee and press Thee," He sets before them what had been done, saying, "Somebody touched Me: for I know that power has gone forth from Me." Was it then for love of glory that the Lord did not allow this instance of His godlike working---the miracle, I mean, that had happened to the woman to remain concealed? By no means do we say this, but rather, that it was because He ever keeps in view the benefit of those who are called to grace through faith. The concealment then of the miracle would have been injurious to many, but being made known, it benefited them in no slight degree; and especially the ruler of the synagogue himself. For it gave security to the hope to which he looked forward, and made him firmly trust that Christ would deliver his daughter from the bonds of death.

But it is itself a fit subject for our admiration. For that woman was delivered, being saved from a state of suffering thus bitter and incurable; and thereby we again obtain the firm assurance, that the Emmanuel is very God. How and in what manner? Both from the miraculous event itself, and from the words which with divine dignity He spake. "For, I know, He said, that power has gone forth from Me." But it transcends our degree, or probably that even of the angels, to send forth any power, and that of their own nature, as something that is of themselves. Such an act is an attribute appropriate solely to the Nature That is above all, and supreme. For every created being whatsoever that is endued with power, whether of healing, or the like, possesses it not of itself, but as a thing given it by God. For to the creature all things are given, and wrought in it, and of itself it can do nothing. As God therefore He said "I knew that power has gone forth from Me."

And the woman now made confession; and inasmuch as with her malady, with the disease, I mean, which had afflicted her, she had put off the fear, which made her wish to remain concealed, she proclaimed the divine miracle: and therefore was very fitly deemed worthy of His tranquillizing words, and received security that she should suffer from her malady no more; for our Saviour Christ said unto her, "Daughter, thy faith hath saved thee: go in peace."

And this too was for the benefit of Jairus, though it was indeed a hard lesson. For he learns, that neither the legal worship, nor the shedding of blood, nor the slaying of goats and calves, nor the circumcision of the flesh, nor the rest of the sabbaths, nor ought besides of these temporary and typical matters, can save the dwellers upon earth; faith only in Christ can do so, by means of which even the blessed Abraham was justified, and called the friend of God, and counted worthy of especial honours. And the blessing of God has been given also to those, who according to the terms of the promise were to be his sons: even unto us. "For they are not all Israel; who are of Israel, neither because they are the seed of Abraham, are they all sons: but the children of the promise are accounted as the seed." To us then this grace belongs: for we have been adopted as Abraham's sons, "being justified not so much by the works of the

law, as by faith in Christ;" by Whom, and with Whom, to God the Father be praise and dominion with the Holy Ghost, for ever and ever, Amen.

Sermon 46

8:49-56. And while He is speaking, there cometh one from the ruler of the synagogue's house, saying, Thy daughter is dead: trouble no more the Teacher. But when Jesus heard it, He answered and said, Fear not: believe only, and she shall live. And when He came unto the house, He suffered no one to go in with Him, save Peter, and James, and John, and the father and the mother of the maiden. And all wept and bewailed her. But He said, Weep not: for the damsel is not dead, but sleepeth. And they laughed at Him, knowing that she was dead. But He made them all go out, and took her by the hand, and called, saying, Maid, arise. And her spirit returned, and she arose immediately: and He commanded to give her somewhat to eat. And her parents were astonished. And He commanded them to tell no one what was done.

O COME, all ye who love the glory of the Saviour, and thereby weave crowns for your heads, come once again, that we may rejoice in Him, and as we extol Him with endless praises, let us say in the words of the prophet Isaiah: "O Lord, my God, I will praise Thee; and I will laud Thy name; for Thou hast wrought wonderful works, even a counsel true from the beginning." What then is the counsel and purpose of God the Father, which was from the beginning, and was true? Plainly that respecting us. For Christ foreknew, even before the foundations of the world, His mystery: but it was in the last ages of the world that He arose for the inhabitants of earth, that having borne the sin of the world, He might abolish both it and death, which is its consequence, and was brought upon us by its means. For so He Himself plainly said, "I am the resurrection and the life:" and "he that believeth on Me hath everlasting life, and shall not come into judgment, but hath passed from death unto life." And this then we shall see fulfilled in actual facts. For the ruler of the synagogue of the Jews drew near, and embracing the Saviour's knees, besought Him to deliver his daughter from the bonds of death:----for lo! already she had been brought down unto this, and was in extreme danger. And the Saviour consented, and set out with him, and was even hastening onward to the house of him who asked the favour, as well knowing that what was being done would profit many of those who followed Him, and would also be for His own glory. And thus on the way the woman was saved, who was the victim of a severe and incurable malady. For she had an issue of blood, which no one could stanch, and which set at nought the art of physicians: but no sooner had she touched the hem in faith, than she was forthwith healed; and a miracle thus glorious and manifest was, so to speak, the work merely of Christ's journey.

And afterwards there met them from the ruler of the synagogue's house a messenger, saying: "Thy daughter is dead: trouble not the Teacher." What, then, was Christ's answer, seeing that He possesses universal sovereignty; that He is Lord of life and death; and by the all-powerful determination of His will accomplishes whatsoever He desires? He saw the man oppressed with the weight of sorrow, swooning, and stupefied, and all but despairing of the possibility of his daughter being rescued from death. For misfortunes are able to disturb even an apparently well-constituted mind, and to estrange it from its settled convictions. To aid him, therefore, He gives him a kind and saving word, fit to sustain him in his fainting state, and work in him an unwavering faith, saying, "Fear not: only believe, and she shall live."

And having now come to the house of His supplicant, He quiets their lamentations, silences the musicians, and stops the tears of the weepers, saying, "The damsel is not dead, but rather sleepeth." And they, it says, laughed at Him. Observe here, I pray, the great skill of the management. For though He well knew that the damsel was dead, He said, "She is not dead, but rather sleepeth." For what reason? That by their laughing at Him, they might give a clear and manifest acknowledgment that the damsel was dead. For probably there would be some of that class who always resist His glory, who would reject the divine miracle, and say, that the damsel was not yet dead; and that in being delivered from sickness, there was nothing done by Christ very extraordinary. To have, therefore, the acknowledgment of many that the damsel was dead, He said, that she was rather sleeping. And let no man affirm that Christ spake untruly. For to Him, as being Life by nature, there is nothing dead. And this is the reason why we, having a firm hope of the resurrection of the dead, call them "those that sleep." For in Christ they will arise: and, as the blessed Paul says, "They live to Him," in that they are about to live.

But observe this also. For as if to teach us to avoid vainglory;---- though certainly no such admirable deeds can be wrought by us;----when He came to the house in which the damsel was lying dead, He took in with Him but three of the holy Apostles, and the father and the mother of the damsel.

And the manner in which He wrought the miracle was worthy of God. For having taken her, it says, by the hand, He said, Damsel, arise: and she arose immediately. O the power of a word, and the might of commands that nothing can resist!

O the life-producing touch of the hand, that abolishes death, and corruption! These are the fruits of faith, for the sake of which the law also was given to those of old time by the hand of Moses.

But perhaps some one may say to this: 'But lo! any one can see that the ceremonial ordained by the law is unlike and at variance with faith in Christ: for the law commands us to

make use of bloody sacrifices; but faith rejects everything of the kind, and has brought in for mankind a worship to be offered in spirit and in truth. For even Christ is somewhere found thus speaking by the harp of the Psalmist to God the Father in heaven: "Sacrifices and offerings Thou didst not desire: whole burnt offerings, and for sins, Thou hadst no pleasure in: but a body hast Thou framed for Me. Then said I, Lo! I come: for in the chapter of the books it is written of Me: I delight to do Thy will, O God," Offerings therefore by blood are unavailing; but the sweet savour of spiritual worship is very acceptable to God. And this no man can present unto Him, unless first he possess that faith which is by Christ. And the blessed Paul bears witness to this, where he writes: "Without faith, no man can ever do that which is well pleasing."

It is necessary, therefore, for us to explain in what sense we say that the law was given because of faith. The blessed Abraham then was justified by obedience and faith. For it is written: "That Abraham believed God; and he was called the friend of God, and faith was counted to him for righteousness." And God promised him both that he should be the father of many nations, and that all nations should be blessed in him; that is to say, by the imitation of his faith. One can see, therefore, that the grace that is by faith is prior to the ceremonial enjoined by the law, in that Abraham attained unto it while still uncircumcised. And afterwards, in

process of time, the law entered by the hand of Moses. Did it then thrust away the justification that is by faith,---that I mean which God promised to those who follow the steps of the faith of our father Abraham, which he had while still uncircumcised? But how can this be true? The blessed Paul, therefore, writes: "This I say then, that the covenant, which was confirmed of old by God, the law, which was four hundred and thirty years afterwards, does not disannul, so as to make the promise given to the fathers of no effect." And again: "Is the law then against the promises of God? It may not be." And the same divine Paul further teaches us the reasons for which the law at length entered by the ministration of angels, and the manner in which it confirms the faith in Christ, by having been brought in before the time of the incarnation of the Only-begotten, saying at one time, that "the law entered that sin might abound:" and at another again, "that the Scripture hath included all things under sin:" and again, "The law, therefore, was added, because of transgressions."

Do you wish to learn how the Scripture included all things under sin? If so, I will explain it to the best of my ability. The heathen, then, as those who were without God, and destitute of hope, were in this world as men imprisoned in the pitfalls of baseness, and entangled without hope of escape in the cords of sin. On the other hand, the Israelites possessed indeed the law as a schoolmaster: but no man could be justified by its means. For there is no profit to them that are in their sins in an offering by blood. And to this Paul again bears witness, saying; "For the blood of bulls, and of goats, cannot take away sins." The law is the proof of the infirmity of all men: and therefore the blessed Paul calls it "the ministry of condemnation." Sin abounded by its means: and that, not as though it made any man sin, but rather because it declared the condemnation of him who was subject to offences. It was enacted, therefore, because of transgressions, that as now no man was able to attain to a blameless life, the bringing in of the justification that is by Christ might be altogether necessary. For there was no other way by which the inhabitants of earth could escape from the tyranny of sin. The law, then, entered first for the sake of faith, to declare the guilt of those who were liable to infirmities, and prove them to be sinners. It sent men, therefore, so to speak, to the cleansing that is in Christ by faith. And for this reason the blessed Paul again wrote: "Therefore the law was our schoolmaster unto Christ. But now that faith has come, we are no longer under a schoolmaster." For we are all sons of God by faith in Christ Jesus.

Faith, then, in every way, is the cause of life, as that which slays sin, the mother and nurse of death. Excellently, therefore, said Christ to the ruler of the synagogue of the Jews, when his daughter was dead; "Fear not: only believe, and she shall live." For, as I said, Christ makes those live who approach Him by faith, in that He is life; "for in Him we live and move, and are:" and He will raise the dead "suddenly, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trump," as it is written. And having this hope in Him, we shall both attain to the city that is above, and reign as kings with Him; by Whom and with Whom, to God the Father be praise and dominion, with the Holy Ghost, for ever and ever, Amen.

Sermon 47

9:1-5. And when He had called the twelve Apostles, He gave them power and authority over all the devils, and to heal sicknesses. And He sent them to preach the kingdom of God, and to heal the sick. And He said unto them, Take nothing for the way: no staff: no scrip: neither bread nor money: nor shall ye have two coats. And into whatsoever house ye enter, there abide, and thence

depart. And whosoever will not receive you, when ye depart from that city, shake off the dust from your feet for their testimony.

IT is a true saying, that the fruit of good deeds is honourable. For those who wish to lead lives pure and undefiled as far as is possible for men, Christ will adorn with His gifts, and grant them an abundant recompense for all their saintly deeds, and make them partakers of His glory. For it is impossible that He should ever lie who says: "As I live, saith the Lord, those who honour Me, I will honour."

As a plain and clear proof of this, I take the glorious and noble company of the holy Apostles. Behold them highly distinguished, and crowned with more than human glory, by this fresh gift bestowed by Christ. "For He gave them, it says, power and authority over all the devils, and to heal sicknesses." Observe again, I pray, that the Incarnate Word of God exceeds the measure of humanity, and is radiant with the dignities of the Godhead. For it transcends the limits of human nature, to give authority over unclean spirits to whomsoever He will: as does also the enabling them to deliver from sicknesses such as were afflicted with them. For God, indeed, bestows on whom He will powers of this kind; and on His decree alone it depends that any are able, according to His good pleasure, to work divine miracles, and act as ministers of the grace that is from above: but to impart to others the gift bestowed on them, is altogether an impossibility. For the majesty and glory of the supreme nature is found existing essentially in nothing that has being, except in Itself, and It only. Be it, therefore, angel or archangel, that any one mentions, or thrones and dominions, or the seraphim, which again are higher in dignity, let him wisely understand this: that they indeed possess pre-eminent authority by the powers given them from above, such as language cannot describe, nor nature bestow: but reason altogether forbids the supposition of their imparting these powers to others. But Christ bestows them, as being God therefore, and as out of His own fulness: for He is Himself the Lord of glory and of powers.

The grace then bestowed upon the holy Apostles is worthy of all admiration; but the bountifulness of the Giver surpasses all praise and admiration: for He gives them, as I said, His own glory. Man receives authority over the evil spirits, and reduces unto nothingness the pride that was so high exalted, and arrogant, even that of the devil: his wickedness he renders ineffectual, and, by the might and efficacy of the Holy Ghost, burning him as with fire, he makes him come forth with groans and weeping from those whom he had possessed. And yet in old time he had said: "I will hold the whole world in my hand as a nest, and will take it as eggs that are left: and there is no one that shall escape from me, or speak against me." He missed, then, the truth, and fell from his hope, proud and audacious though he was, and vaunting himself over the infirmity of mankind. For the Lord of powers marshalled against him the ministers of the sacred proclamations. And this verily had been foretold by one of the holy prophets when speaking of Satan and the holy teachers: "That suddenly they shall arise that bite thee: and they shall awake that afflict thee, and thou shalt be their prey." For, so to speak, they bit Satan by attacking his glory, and making his goods a spoil, and bringing them unto Christ by means of faith in Him: for so they attacked Satan himself. Great therefore was the power given unto the holy Apostles by the decree and will of Christ, the Saviour of us all. "For He gave them power and authority over the unclean spirits."

We will, in the next place, also inquire, if it seem good, whence a grace, thus illustrious and famous, descended upon mankind. The Only-begotten Word therefore of God crowned human nature with this great honour by becoming flesh, and taking upon Him our likeness.

And thus, without in one single particular departing from the glories of His majesty;---for He wrought deeds worthy of God, even though He became, as I said, like unto us, and was of flesh and blood;---He broke the power of Satan by His almighty word. And by His rebuking the evil spirits, the inhabitants of earth became able to rebuke them also.

And that what I say is true, I will endeavour to make quite certain. For the Saviour, as I said, was rebuking the unclean spirits: but the Pharisees, opening their mouth to deride His glory, had the effrontery to say, "This man casteth not out devils, but by Beelzebub, prince of the devils." But the Saviour rebuked them for so speaking, as men prone to mockery, and ill-disposed, and utterly without understanding, thus saying; "If I by Beelzebub cast out devils, by whom do your sons cast them out? Therefore shall they be your judges." For the blessed disciples, who were sons of the Jews by their descent according to the flesh, were the terror of Satan and his angels: for they broke their power in the Name of Jesus Christ of Nazareth. And our Lord further said: "But if I by the Spirit of God cast out devils, then the kingdom of God is come upon you." For He, as the Only-begotten Son of the Father, and the Word, both was and is omnipotent, and there is nothing that is not easy to Him: but inasmuch as He rebuked evil spirits while He was man, human nature was triumphant in Him, and crowned with godlike glory; for it was capable of rebuking even the evil spirits with power. By Christ's casting out devils, therefore, the kingdom of God came unto us: for one may affirm that it is the perfection of godlike majesty to be able to beat down Satan in spite of his resistance.

He glorified therefore His disciples by giving them authority and power over the evil spirits, and over sicknesses. Did He then thus honour them without reason, and make them illustrious without any cogent cause? But how can this be true if For it was necessary, most necessary, that having been publicly appointed ministers of the sacred proclamations, they should be able to work miracles, and by means of what they wrought convince men of their being the ministers of God, and mediators of all beneath the heaven, inviting them all to reconciliation and justification by faith, and pointing out the way of salvation and of life that is thereby. For the devout and intelligent need generally only reasoning to make them understand the truth: but those who have wandered without restraint into rebellion, and are not prepared to receive the sound speech of him who would win them for their true profit;---such require miracles, and the working of signs: and scarcely even so are they brought to thorough persuasion.

For we often find that the discourse of the holy Apostles prospered in this way. For, for example, Peter and John delivered from his malady that lame man who lay at the beautiful gate. And upon his entering the temple, they had his aid, as it were, in testimony of the great deed that had been wrought, and spake with great boldness concerning Christ, the Saviour of us all; even though they saw that those whose lot it was to be rulers of the synagogue of the Jews, were still travailling with bitter ill-will against Him. For they said: "Ye men of Israel, why wonder ye at this, or why gaze ye at us, as though by our own might or righteousness we made this man to walk? The God of Abraham, and the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob, the God of our fathers, hath glorified His Son Jesus, Whom ye delivered up and denied in the presence of Pilate, when he would have let Him go. But ye denied the Holy One, and the Just, and asked for a murderer to be granted you. And Him the Prince of Life ye killed; Whom God raised from the dead. And of Him we are witnesses: and His Name, through faith in His Name, hath made this man strong whom ye see and know: and faith in Him hath given him this soundness in the presence of you all." But although many of the Jews were embittered at

a loftiness of speech such as this, yet against their will they put, so to speak, a bridle upon their wrath, being ashamed because of the greatness of the miracle.

And there is another point we must not omit. For having first invested the holy Apostles with powers thus splendid, He then bids them depart with speed, and commence their office of proclaiming His mystery to the inhabitants of the whole earth. For just as able generals, having equipped their bravest soldiers with weapons of war, send them against the phalanxes of the enemy; so too does Christ, our common Saviour and Lord, send the holy teachers of His mysteries, clad as it were in the grace that He bestows, and fully equipped in spiritual armour, against Satan and his angels; that so they may be unconquerable and hardy combatants. For they were about to do battle with those who in old time held mastery over the inhabitants of earth; even against the wicked and opposing powers, who had divided among them all under heaven, and had made those their worshippers who had been created in the image of God. These, then, the divine disciples were about to vex, by summoning to the knowledge of the truth those that were in error, and giving light to them that were in darkness: while those who in old time worshipped them, they rendered earnest followers of such pursuits as become saints.

For this reason very fitly He bade them take nothing with them, wishing them both to be free from all worldly care, and so entirely exempt from the labours that worldly things occasion, as even to pay no regard to their necessary and indispensable food. But manifestly One Who bids them abstain even from things such as these, entirely cuts away the love of riches and the desire of gain. For their glory, He said, and, so to speak, their crown, is to possess nothing. And He withdraws them even from such things as are necessary for their use, by the command to carry nothing whatsoever, neither staff, nor scrip, nor bread, nor money, nor two coats. Observe, therefore, as I said, that He withdraws them from vain distractions, and anxiety about the body, and bids them have no cares about food, repeating to them, as it were, that passage in the Psalm: "Cast thy care upon the Lord, and He shall feed thee." For true also is that which Christ said: "Ye are not able to serve God and Mammon." And again; "For where thy treasure is, there will thy heart be also."

That they may lead, therefore, a consistent and simple life, and, being free from vain and superfluous anxiety, may devote themselves entirely to the duty of proclaiming His mystery, and labour without ceasing in publishing to men everywhere the tidings of salvation, He commands them to be indifferent both as regards clothing and food. And to the same effect the Saviour elsewhere spake: "For let your loins, He says, be girt, and your lights burning." But by their loins being girt, He means the readiness of the mind for every good work: and by their lights burning, that their heart be filled with divine light. And in like manner the law also of Moses plainly commands those who ate of the lamb: "Thus shall ye eat it: your loins shall be girt: and your staves in your hands: and your sandals on your feet." Observe, therefore, that those in whom Christ, the true Lamb, dwells, must be like men girt for a journey: for they must "shoe their feet with the readiness of the Gospel of peace," as blessed Paul wrote unto us; and be clad as becometh wayfarers. For it is not fitting for those charged with the divine message, if they would prosper in their office, to remain stationary; but, as it were, they must constantly be moving forward, and run, not for an uncertainty, but to win a glorious hope. For even those who once had fallen under the hand of the enemy, if by faith they fight for Christ, the Saviour of us all, will inherit an incorruptible crown.

But I can imagine some one saying, O Lord, Thou hast commanded thy ministers to carry with them no supply whatsoever of necessaries for food and raiment: whence, then, will they obtain what is essential and indispensable for their use? This too He at once points out, saying; "Into whatsoever house ye enter, there abide, and thence depart." The fruit, He says, which you will obtain from those you instruct, shall be sufficient. For those who receive from you things spiritual, and gain the divine seed for their souls, shall take care of your bodily needs. And this no one can blame: for the wise Paul also sent word as follows: "If we have sown unto you spiritual things, is it a great thing if we shall reap your bodily things?" So the Lord also commanded, that those who preach the Gospel shall live of the Gospel." And that this same truth is signified by the command of Moses, he clearly shews, saying, "It is written, Thou shalt not muzzle the trampling ox." And what the intention of the law is he again showed, saying, "Doth God care for oxen? or sayeth He it altogether on our account, because it is fit that he who plougheth should plough in hope: and he who trampleth the corn as having hope to share in it?" For the teachers, therefore, to receive from those taught these trifling and easily procurable matters is in no respect injurious.

But He commanded them both to abide in one house, and from it to take their departure.¹ For it was right, both that those who had once received them should not be defrauded of the gift: and that the holy Apostles themselves should not place any impediment in the way of their own zeal and earnestness in preaching God's message, by letting themselves be carried off to various houses by those whose object was, not to learn of them some necessary lesson, but to set before them a luxurious table, beyond what was moderate and necessary.

And that it is by no means without its reward to honour the saints, we learn from our Saviour's words. For He said unto them; "Whosoever receiveth you receiveth Me, and whosoever receiveth Me receiveth Him That sent Me." For He purposely makes His own, and takes unto Himself, the honours paid to the saints, in order that on every side they may have security. For what is there better, or what is comparable unto the honour and love due unto God? But this is rendered by giving honour to the saints. And if he who receiveth them is right blessed, and of glorious hope, how must not also the converse be entirely and absolutely true! For he must be full of utter misery, who is indifferent to the duty of honouring the saints. For this reason He said, "that when ye go out from that house, shake off the very dust from your feet for their testimony."

And next, we must see what this signifies. And it is this: That from those who would not receive them, nor set store by the charge confided to them, nor obey the sacred message, nor receive the faith;----from such they should refuse to receive any thing whatsoever. For it is unlikely that those who despise the master of the house, will shew themselves generous to the servants: and that those who impiously disregard the heavenly summons, will ask a blessing of its preachers, by offering them things of no value, and such as the disciples could without trouble obtain from their own people. For it is written, "Let not the oil of the wicked anoint my head." And besides they ought to feel that their love was due to those only who love and praise Christ; and avoid all others of a different character: for it is written: "Have I not hated, O Lord, them that hate Thee: and been hot exceedingly at Thy enemies? I have hated them with a perfect hatred: they have become my enemies." So is the love proved of earthy soldiers: for it is not possible for them to love foreigners, while paying a due regard to their king's interests. We learn this too by what Christ says: "that he who is not with Me is against Me; and he that gathereth not with Me altogether scattereth."

Whatsoever, therefore, Christ commanded his holy Apostles was exactly fitted for their use and benefit: by Whom and with Whom to God the Father be praise and dominion, with the Holy Ghost, for ever and ever, Amen.

Sermon 48

9:12-17. And the day began to decline: and the twelve drew near, and said unto Him, Send the multitudes away, and let them go into the villages, and fields round about, and lodge, and find victuals: for we are here in a desert place. But He said unto them, Give ye them to eat. But they said, We have no more than five loaves and two fishes: unless we go and buy food for all this people. But they were about five thousand men. And He said to His disciples, Make them sit down in companies of fifty each. And they did so, and made them all sit down. And when He had taken the five loaves and the two fishes, He looked up to heaven and blessed them, and brake, and gave to His disciples to set before the multitudes. And they did eat, and were all filled: and that which remained over unto them was taken up, even twelve baskets of fragments.

THE Jews, in my opinion, have not a single argument that can serve before the tribunal of God as a defence for their disobedience: for their opposition had no appearance of reason on its side. And why so? Because the law of Moses, by shadows and figures, led them unto the mystery of Christ. For the law, or rather the things it contained, was symbolical, and in it the mystery of Christ was depicted by type and shadow as in a painting. And the blessed prophets also foretold long before that in due time there should come One to redeem all beneath the heaven, and further proclaimed the very place of His birth in the flesh, and the signs that He would accomplish. But they were so obdurate, and their mind so indiscriminately set upon that alone which agreed with their prejudices, that they would not receive the words of instruction, nor be brought to obedience even by miracles so splendid and glorious.

Such then was their conduct: but let us, who have acknowledged the truth of His appearing, offer Him our praises for His godlike works; such as that which the passage before us records. For we learn by it, that our Saviour from time to time went out from Jerusalem and other cities and towns, followed by multitudes, some seeking deliverance from the tyranny of devils, or recovery from sickness; but others desiring to receive instruction from Him, and constantly with great earnestness, remaining with Him, that they might be made fully acquainted with His sacred doctrines. When then the day was declining, as the Evangelist says, and evening had all but arrived, the disciples had care of the multitudes, and drew near, offering requests on their behalf. For they said, "Send them away, that they may go into the neighbouring villages and fields, and lodge and find victuals; for we are in a desert place."

But let us carefully inquire what is the meaning of the expression "Send them away." For we shall see by it both the admirable faith of the holy apostles, and also the supernatural and wonderful power of Christ the Saviour of us all, in whatsoever He willeth to perform. For, as I said, some of them followed beseeching Him to deliver them from the evil spirits that oppressed them, while others sought recovery from various maladies. Since, therefore, the disciples knew that by the mere assent of His will he could accomplish for those sick persons what they wanted, they say "Send them away:" not so speaking as though they were themselves at all annoyed, and considered that the proper time had gone by; but seized with love toward the multitudes, and beginning to have a concern for the people, as being already

intent upon their pastoral office: so that we may even take pattern by them ourselves. For to draw near, and make supplication on the people's behalf, is an act becoming to the saints, and the duty of spiritual fathers, and the proof of a mind that has regard not to selfish objects alone, but already considers as its own the interests of others: of which surpassing love this is a clear and very evident instance. And if we may be permitted to carry our argument above the level of human things, we say, for the benefit of such as meet with it, that when in earnest prayer we continue with Christ, whether asking of Him healing for the maladies of our souls, or deliverance from other sicknesses, or desiring to obtain anything whatsoever for our advantage; there is no doubt that when we ask in prayer any thing that is good for us, there supplicate in our behalf both the intelligent powers, and those holy men who have freedom of access unto Him.

But observe the incomparable gentleness of Him Whom they supplicate. For not only does He grant all that they ask Him to bestow on those who followed Him, but also adds thereto of His own bountiful right hand; refreshing in every way those that love Him, and nurturing them unto spiritual courage. And this we may see from what has now been read. For the blessed disciples besought Christ that those who were following Him, having had their requests granted them, might be sent away, and disperse as they best could. But He commanded them to supply them with food. The thing, however, was impossible in the eyes of the disciples, for they had brought nothing with them but five loaves and two fishes: and this they drew near and confessed to Him. To magnify, therefore, the greatness of the miracle, and make it in every way evident that He is in His own nature God, He multiplies that little many times, and looks up to heaven to ask a blessing from above, being intent in this also upon our good. For He is Himself That which filleth all things, being the blessing that cometh from above from the Father. But that we may learn that when we commence a meal, and are about to break bread; it is our duty to offer it to God, placing it, so to speak, upon our stretched out hands, and calling down a blessing upon it from above, He purposely became our precedent, and type, and example in the matter.

But what was the result of the miracle? It was the satisfying a large multitude with food: for there were as many as five thousand men besides women and children, according to what another of the holy Evangelists has added to the narrative. Nor did the miracle end here; but there were also gathered twelve baskets of fragments. And what do we infer from this? A plain assurance that hospitality receives a rich recompense from God. The disciples offered five loaves: but after a multitude thus large had been satisfied, there was gathered for each one of them a basketful of fragments. Let nothing therefore prevent those who are willing from receiving strangers, whatever there may be likely to blunt the will and readiness of men thereunto: and let no one say, "I do not possess suitable means; what I can do is altogether trifling and insufficient for many." Receive strangers, my beloved; overcome that unreadiness which wins no reward: for the Saviour will multiply thy little many times beyond expectation, and though thou givest but little, thou wilt receive much. "For he that soweth blessings shall also reap blessings," according to the blessed Paul's words.

The feeding, therefore, of the multitudes in the desert by Christ is worthy of all admiration; but it is also profitable in another way. For we can plainly see that these new miracles accord with those in old time, and that they are the acts of one and the same power. "He rained manna in the desert upon the Israelites; He gave them bread from heaven; man did eat angels' food," according to the words of praise in the Psalms. But lo! again in the desert He has abundantly supplied those in need of food, bringing it down, as it were, from heaven. For

His multiplying that little many times, and feeding, so to speak, with nothing so large a multitude, is not unlike that former miracle. And to address myself once again to the throng of the Jews, Thou wast in need of the natural water, when thou wast walking in that long wilderness; and God gave thee thy desire beyond thy hopes, and from an unlooked-for quarter. For, as the Psalmist says, "He clave the rock in the desert; He gave them drink as from the vast abyss; and He brought forth water out of the rock, and made water flow like rivers." Tell me then, when thou hadst drunk, didst thou praise the Worker of the miracle? Didst thou raise thy tongue for thanksgiving? or wast thou induced by what had happened to acknowledge the ineffable power of God? Not so: for thou murmuredst against God, saying, "Can God prepare a table in the wilderness? If He smote the rock, and the waters flowed, and He made the streams overflow; can He also give bread, or prepare a table for His people? Thou wast not astonished at seeing the flint rock the source of copious rivers; fountains issuing marvellously from stones, and streams running with rapid force, but imputedst weakness to Him Who is Almighty. And yet how was it not rather thy duty to perceive that He is the Lord of powers? How indeed could He be unable to prepare a table, Who made the flint rock a fountain and a stream, flowing over for that multitude?"

But since thou hast brought thyself to so great folly as to imagine that there is anything impossible with God, and with empty babble hast said that He cannot prepare a table for His people in the wilderness, answer the question we now put to thee: Wilt thou embrace the faith now that thou seest a table prepared by Christ in the wilderness, and an innumerable multitude so abundantly supplied with food that twelve baskets of remnants were collected? or wilt thou still refuse to believe, and ask another sign? When, therefore, wilt thou be found believing? When wilt thou cease from finding fault with the ineffable power of Christ? When wilt thou put a door and bolt to thy tongue? and delivering it from the language of blasphemy, change it to a better use by praising Him, so that thou also mayest be a partaker of the blessings He bestows? For His mercies are revealed upon those who love Him, and He delivers them from all sickness. He supplies them also with spiritual food, by means of which each one attains to manliness in every thing that is praiseworthy. But upon the unbelieving and contemptuous He bestows no such gifts, but rather brings upon them that condemnation which they fitly deserve. For by one of His holy prophets He as it were said unto them, "Behold, they who serve Me shall eat, but ye shall suffer hunger. Behold, they who serve Me shall drink, but ye shall thirst. Behold, they who submit themselves to Me shall rejoice in happiness, while ye shall lament from sorrow of heart, and wail from contrition of spirit." And again it is written, "The Lord killeth not the righteous soul with hunger, but wasteth the life of the wicked."

For the flocks of the believers have, as it were, a pasture full of divers plants and flowers, in the holy Scriptures, which are their wise guides: and filled with spiritual joy at the glorious doctrines and instructions which they contain, they frequent the sacred courts. And this it is which long ago was proclaimed in the words of Isaiah: "And there shall be upon every high mountain, and upon every high hill, running waters upon that day." And again; "And the mountains shall drop sweetness: and the hills flow with milk." For it is the custom of divine Scripture to compare to mountains and hills those set over others, and whose office it is to teach, inasmuch as they are high exalted, in respect, I mean, of their thoughts being occupied with elevated subjects, and withdrawn from things earthly: while the waters and the sweetness and the milk are the instructions which flow from them as from fountains. "There shall be then, He says, at that time from every high mountain, and from every high hill, flowing waters, and sweetness and milk." And these are the spiritual consolations of holy

instructors, offered to the people under their charge. Of these the Jewish congregations are deprived, because they did not receive Christ, the Lord of the hills and mountains, the Giver of spiritual consolation, Who offers Himself as the bread of life to those who believe in Him: for He it is Who came down from heaven, and gave life to the world: by Whom, and with Whom, to God the Father be praise and dominion with the Holy Ghost, for ever and ever, Amen.

Sermon 49

9:18-22. *And it came to pass that as He was alone, praying, His disciples were with Him: and He asked them, saying, Whom do the multitudes say of Me that I am? And they answered and said, Some, indeed, John the Baptist: and others, Elijah: and others, that some prophet of those in old time has risen again. And He said unto them; But whom do ye say that I am? And Peter answered and said, The Christ of God. And He charged and commanded them to tell this to no man, saying, The Son of man is about to suffer many things, and to be rejected of the elders, and chief priests, and scribes: and be slain, and rise again the third day.*

WELL may we call out to those who would search the sacred Scriptures, "Arouse ye, and awake." For it is a thing impossible to perceive the exact meaning of the mystery of Christ, if we use for this end a debauched mind, and an understanding drowned, so to speak, in sleep. Need rather is there of a wakeful mind, and a penetrating eye; for the subject is one difficult to comprehend in the highest degree. And this is apparent now that our discourse has come to the explanation of the passage before us. For what says the Evangelist? "And it came to pass that as He was alone, praying, His disciples were with Him; and He asked them, saying; Whom do the multitudes say of Me that I am? Now the first thing we have to examine is, what it was which led our Lord Jesus Christ to propose to the holy apostles this question, or inquiry, For no word or deed of His is either at an unseasonable time or without a fitting reason; but rather, He does all things wisely and in their season. What therefore do we say, or what suitable explanation do we find for His present acts? He had fed in the desert a vast multitude of five thousand men: and how had He fed them? With five loaves! breaking with them into morsels two small fish! And these so multiplied out of nothing, that twelve baskets of fragments even were taken up. The blessed disciples therefore were astonished as well as the multitudes, and saw by what had been wrought, that He is in truth God and the Son of God. And afterwards, when they had withdrawn from the multitude and He was alone, He occupied Himself in prayer, in this too making Himself our example, or rather instructing the disciples how to discharge efficiently their office as teachers. For it is, I think, the duty of those who are set over the people, and whose lot it is to guide Christ's flocks, constantly to occupy themselves with their necessary business, and openly practise those things with which God is well pleased: even that saintlike and virtuous conduct which gains great admiration, and is certain to profit the people under their charge. For they ought either to be actively engaged in those duties which are to the glory of God: or such as in their retirement bring upon them a blessing, and call down upon them power from on high: of which latter, one and the most excellent is prayer. Knowing which the divine Paul said, "Pray without ceasing."

As I said, then, the Lord and Saviour of all made Himself an example to the disciples of saintlike conversation, by praying alone, with them only in His company. But His doing so might perchance trouble the disciples, and beget in them dangerous thoughts. For they saw Him praying in human fashion, Whom yesterday they beheld working miracles with godlike

dignity. It would not therefore have been entirely without reason, had they said among themselves; Oh, strange conduct! Whom must we consider Him to be? God, or man? If we say man, and like one of us; like one, that is, of the holy prophets; we see from the ineffable miracles which He works, that He far transcends the limits of human nature: for in manifold ways He doeth wonders as God. If we say He is God, surely to pray is unbefitting One Who is God by nature. For of whom can God ask what He wishes to receive? And of what can God at all be in want? To chase away therefore such confusing thoughts, and to calm their faith, which, so to speak, was tempest-tossed, He makes this inquiry; not as though He were at all ignorant of what was commonly said of Him, either by those who did not belong to the synagogue of the Jews, or by the Israelites themselves: His object rather was to rescue them from the general mode of thinking, and implant in them a correct faith, "Whom, therefore, He asks, do the multitudes say that I am?"

Thou seest the skilfulness of the question. He did not at once say, "Whom do ye say that I am?" but refers to the rumour of those that were without, that having rejected it, and shewn it to be unsound, He may then bring them back to the true opinion. Which also happened: for when the disciples had said, "Some John the Baptist, and others Elijah, and others, that some prophet of those in old time has risen up;" He said to them, "But ye, whom do ye say that I am?" Oh! how full of meaning is that "ye!" He separates them from all others, that they may also avoid their opinions, and not conceive an unworthy idea of Him, nor entertain confused and wavering thoughts, themselves too imagining that John had risen again, or one of the prophets. Ye therefore, He says, who have been chosen; who by My decree have been called to the apostleship; who are the witnesses of My miracles; whom do ye say that I am?"

First before the rest Peter again springs forth, and makes himself the mouthpiece of the whole company, pouring forth the expression of love to God, and giving utterance to a correct and faultless confession of faith in Him, saying, "The Christ of God." The disciple is unerring: a thoroughly intelligent explainer of the mystery. For he does not simply say, that He is a Christ of God; but "the Christ" rather: for there are many who have been called "Christ," from having in various ways been anointed of God. For some have been anointed as kings; and some as prophets; while others, having received salvation by That Christ Who is the Saviour of all, even we ourselves, obtain the appellation of christ, as having been anointed by the Holy Ghost. For it is said in the words of the Psalmist, of those in old time, that is, before the coming of our Saviour: "Touch not My christs, and do My prophets no harm." But the words of Habakkuk refer to us; "Thou hast gone forth to the salvation of Thy people: to save Thy christs." Christs therefore there are many, and they have so been called from the fact [of having been anointed]: but He Who is God the Father's Christ is One, and One only: not as though we indeed are christs, and not God's christs, but belonging to some other person: but because He and He alone has as His Father Him that is in heaven. Since therefore most wise Peter, confessing the faith correctly and without error, said, "The Christ of God," it is plain, that distinguishing Him from those to whom the appellation generally belongs, he referred Him to God, as being His sole (Christ). For though He be by nature God, and shone forth ineffably from God the Father as His only begotten Word, yet He became flesh according to the Scripture. The blessed Peter therefore professed faith in Him, lending, as I before said, his words to the whole company of the holy apostles, and acting as spokesman for them all, as being more accurate than the rest.

And this too we ought to observe: that in Matthew's account we find that the blessed disciple said, "Thou art the Christ, the Son of the living God:" but the wise Luke, summing up so to

speak the purport, agrees with him in the thoughts, but using fewer words, tells us that he said, "The Christ of God." Moreover no mention is here made of that which the Saviour spake to him: but in Matthew again we find that He said to Him plainly: "Blessed art thou, Simeon, son of Jonah: for flesh and blood hath not revealed it to thee, but My Father in heaven." The disciple therefore was verily taught of God; nor did he make this profession of faith for us of his own thoughts merely, but because the divine light shone upon his understanding, and the Father led him to a correct knowledge of the mystery of Christ. What therefore do those mistaken innovators say to this, who unwarrantably pervert the great and adorable mystery of the incarnation of the Only Begotten, and fall from the right way, walking in the path of crookedness? For the wise Peter acknowledged one Christ: while they sever that One into two, in opposition to the doctrines of truth. 'But yes, he replies, the disciple acknowledged one Christ; and so do we also affirm that there is one Christ, by Whom we mean the Son, even the Word that, is from God the Father.' To this then what do we reply? Is it not plain then, we say, to every one, that Christ asks the holy apostles, not, Whom do men say that the Word of God is? but, who "the Son of man is?" and that it was of Him that Peter confessed, that He is "the Christ of God?" Let them also explain this to us: How is Peter's confession worthy of admiration, if it contain nothing profound and hidden, and, so to speak, not apparent to the generality? For what verily did God the Father reveal to him? That the Son of man is a man? Is this the God-taught mystery? Is it for this that he is admired, and deemed worthy of such surpassing honours? For thus he was addressed, "Blessed art thou, Simeon, son of Jonah."

The reason, however, for which he was thus admired is a very just one; for it was because he believed that He Whom he saw as one of us, that is, in our likeness, was the Son of God the Father, the Word, namely, That sprang forth from His substance, and became flesh, and was made man. See here, I pray, the profundity of the thoughts, the importance of the confession, the high and weighty mystery. For He Who was there in the likeness of mankind, and as a portion of creation, was God, Who transcends all created things! He Who dwells in the high and lofty place was abased from His glory to be in poverty like unto us! And He Who, as God, is Lord of all, and King of all, was in the likeness of a slave, and in the measure of a slave! This is the faith the Saviour crowns; to those thus minded He extends His bountiful right hand. For when He had praised Peter, and said that he was taught of God, as one who had obtained the revelation from above, from God the Father, He makes him more assured and more abundantly confirmed in the faith he had professed concerning Him, by saying: "And I say unto thee, that thou art a stone; and upon this stone I will build My church: and I will give thee the keys of the kingdom of heaven. Whatsoever thou shalt bind on earth shall be bound in heaven, and whatsoever thou shalt loose on earth shall be loosed in heaven."

For observe how He makes Himself at once the Lord of heaven and of earth. For He promises things that exceed our nature, and surpass the measure of humanity; yea, rather, even that of the angelic rank: and are suitable for that nature only to bestow, Whose glory and sovereignty transcend all. For, first He says that the church belongs to Him; the sacred Scriptures nevertheless distinctly ascribe it rather to God, and to Him only, saying that it is "the church of God." For they say that "Christ presented it to Himself, having neither spot nor stain, but holy rather, and blameless." As being God therefore He says that it is His, and promises moreover to found it, granting it to be unshaken, as being Himself the Lord of powers.

And next He says that He gives him the keys of heaven. Who is it then that thus pours forth language appropriate to God? Is it an angel? or some other intelligent power, whether principality, or throne, or dominion? or those holy seraphs? Not at all: but, as I said before,

such language belongs to Almighty God alone, Whose is the sovereignty of earth and heaven. Let not, then, these innovators divide the one Christ, so as to say that one Son is the Word of God the Father, and that He Who is of the seed of David is another Son. For Peter made mention of one Christ; even the Only-begotten Who became man and was made flesh: and for this confession was counted worthy of these extraordinary honours.

When, however, the disciple had professed his faith, He charged them, it says, and commanded them to tell it to no man: "for the Son of man," He said, "is about to suffer many things, and be rejected, and killed, and the third day "He shall rise again." And yet how was it not rather the duty of disciples to proclaim Him everywhere? For this was the very business of those appointed by Him to the apostle-ship. But as the sacred Scripture saith, "There is a time for everything." There were things yet unfulfilled which must also be included in their preaching of Him: such as were the cross; the passion; the death in the flesh; the resurrection from the dead; that great and truly glorious sign by which testimony is borne Him that the Emanuel is truly God, and by nature the Son of God the Father. For that He utterly abolished death, and effaced destruction, and spoiled hell, and overthrew the tyranny of the enemy, and took away the sin of the world, and opened the gates above to the dwellers upon earth, and united earth to heaven: these things proved Him to be, as I said, in truth God. He commanded them, therefore, to guard the mystery by a seasonable silence until the whole plan of the dispensation should arrive at a suitable conclusion. For then, when He arose from the dead, He gave commandment that the mystery should be revealed to all the inhabitants of the earth, setting before every man justification by faith, and the cleansing efficacy of holy baptism. For He said, "All power is given unto Me in heaven and in earth: Go ye, make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the Name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost, and teaching them to observe all those things which I have commanded you. And lo! I am with you always, even unto the end of the world." For Christ is with us and in us by the Holy Ghost, and dwells in the souls of us all: by Whom and with Whom to God the Father be praise and dominion and honour with the Holy Ghost, for ever and ever, Amen.

Sermon 50: Fit to be read at a time of persecution

9:23-26. And He said to them all, Whosoever will come after Me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross every day, and come after Me. For whosoever will save his life shall lose it, and whosoever will lose his life for My sake shall save it. For what is a man profited, who hath gained the whole world, but hath lost himself, or fallen short? For whosoever shall be ashamed of Me, and of My words, of him shall the Son of man be ashamed when He shall come in His glory, and in His Father's, and of His holy angels.

MIGHTY generals encourage their trained warriors to deeds of courage, not only by promising them the honours of victory, but even by telling them that the very fact of suffering brings them glory, and gains for them all praise. For it is impossible for those who would win fame in battle not sometimes to have to endure wounds also from their opponents. But their suffering is not without its reward, for they are praised as those who bravely assaulted the enemy; and the very wound bears witness to the courage and valour of their mind. And much the same arguments we see our Lord Jesus Christ also using in a discourse, the occasion of which was as follows; He had just shewn the disciples that it was altogether necessary for Him to endure the wicked enterprizes of the Jews, and be mocked by them, and spit upon in the face, and put to death, and the third day rise again. To prevent them, therefore, from

imagining that He indeed for the life of the world would suffer the scorn of those murderers, and the other cruelties which they inflicted upon Him; but that they would be permitted to live quietly, and might without blame avoid the suffering readily for their piety's sake, and the endurance even of death itself in the flesh, should it so befall, and by so doing would incur no disgrace, He of necessity, so to speak, testifies that those who would be thought worthy of the glory He bestows, must attain to it by proportionate acts of bravery, saying, "He that will come after Me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross every day, and come after Me."

Here, too, we must wonder at the love of Christ the Saviour of us all towards the world; for He not only consented Himself to suffer and bear so great ignominy, humbling Himself even to the cross and death for our sakes, but also rouses His chosen followers to the same excellent desire: even those who were to be the instructors of men every where, and hold the post of commanders-in-chief over the people committed to their care. For those who were appointed to so great a ministry must in very deed be thoroughly brave and valiant, armed with an unshaken mind and invincible courage, so as to dread no difficulties, and even if death befall, to deride its terrors, and set at nought every fear. He who thus acts denies himself, since, so to speak, he resigns this temporal life, and deems its concerns worthy of no regard, inasmuch as his choice is to suffer for the blessedness and love that is in Christ. So does a man follow Christ. For the company of the holy Apostles is, as it were, set before us by the Psalmist's harp, as crying out unto Christ the Saviour of all: "For Thy sake we are killed every day; we have been counted as sheep for the slaughter." For in this also they are like unto the Emmanuel, "Who for the joy that He had, endured the cross, having despised the shame."

He would have those, therefore, who were to be the teachers of all beneath the sun superior to timidity and the base love of the world, laying it down as their duty to suffer for love of Him. And He has Himself taught us what is the character of those of His apostles who love Him, where he said to the blessed Peter, "Simeon, son of Jonah, lovest thou Me? Feed My lambs; feed My sheep." "He was the good Shepherd; He laid down His life for the sheep." For He was not a hireling; rather, those that were saved were His own: He saw the wolf coming; He made no attempt to flee; He despised not the flock; but, on the contrary, yielded Himself to be torn by it, that He might deliver and save us: "For by His bruises we have been healed," "and He was afflicted for our sins." Those, therefore, who would follow Him, and earnestly desire to be like Him, and are set over His intelligent flocks, must undergo similar labours. For numerous savage beasts encircle them, violent, and implacable, and that slay cruelly, and hurry souls to the pit of destruction. For the more learned and skilful of the heathen possess great eloquence, and adorn their false doctrine with beautiful language: and thus they pervert some simple-minded men, making them often wish to share their malady, and depart from the God Who is over all, to worship others in His stead which are no gods. These heaped upon the holy Apostles unendurable persecutions, and exposed them again and again to dangers. For the blessed Paul commemorates the things he had been seen to suffer at Iconium and Lystra, and at Ephesus and Damascus, For at one time he says, "In Damascus the chief captain of Aretas the king watched the city of the Damascenes wishing to seize me, and from a window they let me down from the wall in a basket, and I was delivered from his hands." And again at another time, "Alexander the smith caused me much evil." What then is the testimony of this mighty Evangelist, this courageous and valiant champion, who everywhere despised the utmost dangers? "For to me," he says, "that I live is Christ; and that I die is gain." And again, "I am crucified with Christ; but henceforth I no more live, but Christ liveth in me: and that which I live here in the flesh, I live by faith in the Son of God, Who loved me, and yielded up Himself for my sake."

But the violence of the Jews broke forth frequently against the other apostles also: they persecuted them; they summoned them before their synagogues; they scourged them wickedly, commanding them to keep silence, and desist from their sacred preachings: for they said, "Did we not strictly command you not to speak to any man in this Name?---even the Name of Christ, the Saviour of us all;---and behold! ye have filled Jerusalem with your doctrine." But after the disciples had borne their violent accusation for the firm love they had to Christ, they went out "rejoicing that they were counted worthy to suffer shame for the Name." But had they been timid, and abject, and frightened at words, and overpowered by the terrors of death, how would they have been proved? or how have offered as fruits to God those who were called by their means? For, also, the wise Paul whom no difficulty whatsoever could overpower, when on his way to Jerusalem the prophet Agabus loosed his girdle, and bound his own feet, and said, "So shall the Jews at Jerusalem bind that man to whom this girdle belongs," answered and said, "What do ye, that ye weep and break my heart? for I am ready not only to be bound, but also to die for the Name of our Lord Jesus Christ." Excellently, therefore, did He command them manfully to prevail over every persecution, and boldly to undergo trials, as being well assured that if thus they will be zealous in His cause, they will become His friends, and share His glory. If, therefore, a man be ready to endure and despise the terrors of death, has he lost himself and departed, and is there nothing more in store for him? By no means: for in that he loses his life, he especially finds it; while to find it is to bring upon himself destruction. What fear, therefore, can the saints now feel, if that which seemed to be hard proves rather joyous to them that bear it; while that which is dear to men, as being exempt from pain, leads them especially downwards to destruction and the snare of hell, according to the Scripture.

But ^z that it is incomparably better, far above the splendour and pleasure of the world, to excel in the love of Christ, He shows us by saying, "For what is a man profited who hath gained the whole world, but hath lost himself, or fallen short?" For when a man looks chiefly to that which is pleasant and profitable for the moment, and therefore avoids suffering, and desires to live joyously, even though he have wealth and abundance of possessions, yet what profit hath he therefrom when he has lost himself? "Treasures profit not the wicked," but "the fashion of this world passeth away:" and "like clouds those pleasures recede," and riches flies away from those that possess it: "but righteousness delivereth from death."

And further, to set plainly before us the reward of our being willing to labour, He says: "For whosoever shall be ashamed at Me and at My words, at Him shall the Son of man be ashamed when He shall come in His glory, and of His Father, and of His holy angels." Much that is both useful and necessary does He effect by these words. For in the first place He shews that entirely and altogether it follows that those who are ashamed at Him and at His words will meet with the reward they merit. And what could so give us joy as this? For if there are some in whose presence the Judge feels shame, as owing them the reward of obedience, and the dignities and crown due to their love and affection for Him, and the honours won by their bravery, how may we not without fear of contradiction say that they most certainly will henceforth live in never-ending honours and praises who have attained to such splendid blessings?

But, next, He also begets in them fear as well, in that he says that He shall descend from heaven, not in His former lowliness and humiliation, like unto us, but in the glory of His Father; even in godlike and transcendent glory, with the holy angels keeping guard around Him. Most miserable, therefore, and ruinous would it be to be condemned of cowardice and

indolence when the Judge has descended from above, and the angelic ranks stand at His side. But great and most blessed, and a foretaste of final blessedness is it to be able to rejoice in labours already accomplished, and await the recompense of past toils. For such as these shall be praised, Christ Himself saying unto them: "Come, ye blessed of My Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world." May we also be deemed worthy of these rewards by the grace and lovingkindness of Christ the Saviour of us all: by Whom and with Whom to God the Father be praise and dominion, with the Holy Ghost, for ever and ever, Amen.

Sermon 51

9:27-36. But I say unto you truly, there are some of those standing here who shall not taste of death, until they have seen the kingdom of God. And there were after these things about eight days, and He took Peter, and John, and James, and went up to the mountain to pray. And while He was praying, the look of His countenance was altered, and His raiment was white, shining like lightning: and behold! two men talked with Him, who were Moses and Elijah: who having appeared in glory, spake of His departure, that He was about to accomplish at Jerusalem. But Peter and they that were with him were heavy with sleep: but having roused themselves, they both saw His glory, and the two men that stood with Him. And it came to pass, that when they were separating from Him, Peter said unto Jesus, Master, it is good for us to be here: and let us make three tabernacles, one for Thee: and one for Moses: and one for Elijah: not knowing what he said. While he spake these things, there came a cloud, and overshadowed them; and they feared as they entered the cloud. And there was a voice from the cloud, saying, This is My beloved Son, hear Him. And when there was the voice, Jesus was found alone; and they kept silence, and told no man in those days ought of the things they had seen.

THOSE who are skilful in the combat rejoice when the spectators clap their hands, and are roused to a glorious height of courage by the hope of the chaplets of victory: and so those whoso desire it is to be counted worthy of the divine gifts, and who thirst to be made partakers of the hope prepared for the saints, joyfully undergo combats for piety's sake towards Christ, and lead elect lives, not setting store by a thankless indolence, nor indulging in a mean timidity, but rather manfully resisting every temptation, and setting at nought the violence of persecutions, while they count it gain to suffer in His behalf. For they remember that the blessed Paul thus writes, "The sufferings of this present time are not worthy of the glory that is about to be revealed in us."

Observe, therefore, how perfectly beautiful is the method which our Lord Jesus Christ uses here also for the benefit and edification of the holy Apostles. For He had said unto them, "Whosoever will come after Me, let him deny himself and take up his cross every day, and follow Me. For he that will save his life shall lose it; and he that will lose his life for My sake shall find it." The commandment is indeed both for the salvation and honour of the saints, and the cause of the highest glory, and the means of perfect joy: for the choosing to suffer for the sake of Christ is not a thankless duty, but on the contrary makes us sharers in everlasting life, and the glory that is prepared. But as the disciples had not yet obtained power from on high, it probably occasionally happened, that they also fell into human weaknesses, and when thinking over with themselves any such saying as this, may have asked "how does a man deny

himself?" or how having lost himself does he find himself again? And what reward will compensate those who thus suffer? Or of what gifts will they be made partakers? To rescue them therefore from such timid thoughts, and, so to speak, to mould them unto manliness, by begetting in them a desire of the glory about to be bestowed upon them, He says, "I say unto you, there are some of those standing here, who shall not taste of death until they have seen the kingdom of God." Does He mean that the measure of their lives will be so greatly prolonged as even to reach to that time when He will descend from heaven at the consummation of the world, to bestow upon the saints the kingdom prepared for them? Even this was possible for Him: for He is omnipotent: and there is nothing impossible or difficult to His all-powerful will. But by the kingdom of God He means the sight of the glory in which He will appear at His manifestation to the inhabitants of earth: for He will come in the glory of God the Father, and not in low estate like unto us. How therefore did He make those who had received the promise spectators of a thing so wonderful? He goes up into the mountain taking with Him three chosen disciples: and is transformed to so surpassing and godlike a brightness, that His garments even glittered with rays of fire, and seemed to flash like lightning. And besides, Moses and Elijah stood at Jesus' side, and spake with one another of His departure, which He was about, it says, to accomplish at Jerusalem: by which is meant the mystery of the dispensation in the flesh; and of His precious suffering upon the cross. For it is also true that the law of Moses, and the word of the holy prophets, foreshewed the mystery of Christ: the one by types and shadows, painting it, so to speak, as in a picture; while the rest in manifold ways declared beforehand, both that in due time He would appear in our likeness, and for the salvation and life of us all, consent to suffer death upon the tree. The standing, therefore, of Moses and Elijah before Him, and their talking with one another, was a sort of representation, excellently displaying our Lord Jesus Christ, as having the law and the prophets for His body guard, as being the Lord of the law and the prophets, and as foreshown in them by those things which in mutual agreement they before proclaimed. For the words of the prophets are not at variance with the teachings of the law. And this I imagine was what Moses the most priestly and Elijah the most distinguished of the prophets were talking of with one another.

But the blessed disciples sleep awhile, as Christ continued long in prayer:---for He performed these human duties as belonging to the dispensation:---and afterwards on awaking they became spectators of changes thus splendid and glorious: and the divine Peter, thinking perchance, that the time of the kingdom of God was even now come, proposes dwellings on the mountain, and says that it is fitting there should be three tabernacles, one for Christ, and the others for the other two, Moses and Elijah: "but he knew not," it says, "what he was saying." For it was not the time of the consummation of the world, nor for the saints to take possession of the hope promised to them; for as Paul says, "He will change our humble body into the likeness of His,---that is, Christ's---glorious body." As therefore the dispensation was still at its commencement, and not yet fulfilled, how would it have been fitting for Christ to have abandoned His love to the world, and have departed from His purpose of suffering in its behalf? For He redeemed all under heaven, by both undergoing death in the flesh, and by abolishing it by the resurrection from the dead. Peter therefore knew not what he said.

But besides the wonderful and ineffable sight of Christ's glory, something else was done, useful and necessary for the confirmation of their faith in Him: and not for the disciples only, but even for us too. For a voice was given forth from the cloud above, as from God the Father, saying: "This is My beloved Son, hear Him. And when there was the voice," it says, "Jesus was found alone." What then will he who is disputatious and disobedient, and whose heart is

incurable, say to these things? Lo! Moses is there, and does the Father command the holy apostles to hear him? Had it been His will that they should follow the commandments of Moses, He would have said, I suppose, Obey Moses; keep the law. But this was not what God the Father here said, but in the presence of Moses and the prophets, He commands them rather to hear Him. And that the truth might not be subverted by any, affirming that the Father rather bade them hear Moses, and not Christ the Saviour of us all, the Evangelist has clearly marked it, saying, "When there was the voice, Jesus was found alone." When therefore God the Father, from the cloud overhead, commanded the holy apostles, saying, "Hear Him," Moses was far away, and Elijah too was no longer nigh; but Christ was there alone. Him therefore He commanded them to obey.

For He also is the end of the law and the prophets: for which reason He cried aloud to the multitudes of the Jews: "If ye had believed Moses, ye would have believed Me also: for he wrote of Me." But as they persevered even unto the end in despising the commandment given by most wise Moses, and in rejecting the word of the holy prophets, they have justly been alienated and expelled from those blessings that were promised to their fathers. For "obedience is better than sacrifices, and to hearken than the fat of rams," as the Scripture saith. And thus much then of the Jews: but upon us who have acknowledged the revelation, all these blessings have necessarily been bestowed, by means of and as the gift of the same Christ: by Whom and with Whom, to God the Father be praise and dominion, with the Holy Ghost, for ever and ever. Amen.

Sermon 52

9:37-43. *But it came to pass, the day after, as they came down from the mountain, a great crowd met Him. And, behold, a man cried out from the crowd, saying, Teacher, I beseech Thee to regard my Son, for he is my only one. And lo, a spirit taketh him, and he suddenly crieth out, and it convulseth and teareth him, and he foameth; and having bruised him scarcely departeth from him. And I besought Thy disciples to cast him out, and they could not. And Jesus answered, and said: O faithless and perverse generation, how long shall I be with you, and suffer you? Bring thy son hither. And when he was yet coming, the devil threw him down, and convulsed him. But Jesus rebuked the unclean spirit, and healed the child, and gave him to his father. And all wondered at the majesty of God.*

ALL Scripture is inspired of God and profitable: but especially above all besides this is the case with the holy Gospels. For He Who in old time spake the law to the Israelites by the ministry of angels, has in person spoken unto us, when having taken our likeness, He appeared upon earth, and went about among men. For most wise Paul writes: "That while in old time God spake to the fathers by the prophets in manifold parts, and manifold manners, He hath in these latter days spoken unto us by the Son." And by one of His holy prophets, He somewhere Himself saith, "I Who speak am near as the brightness upon the mountains, as the feet of him that proclaimeth tidings of peace; as one that proclaimeth good things." For lo! He frees us from the tyranny of the enemy, that we may in purity follow Him; and that having brought to nought "the world rulers of this darkness," even wicked spirits, He may present us unharmed unto God the Father.

For that it is by Him that we have gained deliverance from the power of unclean spirits, this lesson proves. For we heard read that a man ran towards Him from among the multitude, and related the intolerable malady of his son. For he said that he was cruelly torn by an evil spirit, and suffered violent convulsions. But the manner of his approach was not free from fault: for he made loud outcries against the company of the holy apostles, saying that they could not rebuke Satan: whereas it would have been more fitting, had he honoured Jesus when asking His aid, and imploring grace. For He grants us our request when we honour and confide in Him, as being the Almighty, Whose power nothing can withstand. For He verily is the Lord of powers, and nothing can offer resistance to His will. Yea rather, everything whatsoever that is capable of possessing power obtains entirely from Him the possibility of being what it is. For just as He sheds His light upon those who are capable of being illuminated, as being Himself the true light; and just as in like manner He is the bestower of wisdom upon those who are capable thereof, as being Himself Wisdom, and perfect understanding: so, inasmuch as He is Power, He bestows power on those capable of receiving it. When then by our disbelief we despise His glory, and wickedly scorn His supreme majesty, we can receive nothing from Him: for "we must ask in faith, nothing wavering," as His disciple said.

And that this saying is true, we may perceive even from what takes place among us. For such as present petitions to those who preside over affairs upon earth, and govern mighty thrones, preface their requests with suitable praises, and confess their universal power and majesty; addressing the memorial they present, "To the Lords of earth, and sea, and of every people and race among mankind:" and afterwards they add an account of what they would ask. The father therefore of the demoniac was rude and uncourteous: for he did not simply ask the healing of the child, and in so doing crown the healer with praises, but, on the contrary, spake contemptuously of the disciples, and found fault with the grace given them. "For I brought him, he says, to Thy disciples, and they could not cast it out." And yet it was owing to thy own want of faith that the grace availed not. Dost thou not perceive that thou wast thyself the cause that the child was not delivered from his severe illness?

For that we must have faith when we draw near to Christ, and whosoever have obtained from Him the grace of healing, He teaches us Himself, by everywhere requiring faith of those who approach Him, desiring to be counted worthy of any of His gifts. For, for instance, Lazarus died at Bethany, and Christ promised to raise him. When then one of his sisters doubted of this, and had no expectation that the miracle would take place, Christ said, "I am the resurrection and the life. He that believeth in Me, even though he die, shall live." And we find elsewhere a similar occurrence. For Jairus, a ruler of the synagogue of the Jews, when his only daughter was now breathing her last, being caught, so to speak, in the meshes of death, besought Jesus to deliver the damsel from what had happened: and Christ accordingly promised so to do upon arriving at the house of the supplicant. But as He was on His way, a man met Him from the relatives of the ruler of the synagogue, saying, "Thy daughter is dead: trouble not the Teacher." And what was Christ's reply? "Fear not: only believe, and she shall live."

It was the duty therefore of the father of the lad rather to lay the blame upon his own unbelief, than upon the holy apostles. For this reason Christ justly called out, "O faithless and perverse generation: how long shall I be with you, and suffer you?" He justly therefore calls both the man himself, and those like him in mind a faithless generation. For it is a wretched malady, and whosoever is seized by it is, as He shews, perverse, and utterly without knowledge to walk uprightly. And therefore the sacred Scriptures say of such persons, "that their ways are

crooked, and their paths perverse." From this malady the divine David fled: and in order that he may also benefit us, he reveals the set purpose of his mind thereupon, saying, "A crooked heart hath not cleaved unto me:" that is, one that cannot walk in an upright course. To such the blessed Baptist, as the forerunner of the Saviour, cried, saying, "Prepare ye the way of the Lord, make His paths straight."

The man therefore was thoroughly an unbeliever, and perverse, refusing the straight paths, straying from the mark, and wandering from the right ways. And Christ deigns not to be with such as are thus minded, and have fallen into this wickedness: and if one may speak in the manner of men, He is tired and weary of them. And this He teaches us saying, "How long shall I be with you, and suffer you?" For he who says, that those were powerless for the expulsion of evil spirits, who by Christ's will had received power to cast them out, finds fault with the grace itself, rather than with the receivers of it. it was wicked blasphemy therefore: for if grace be powerless, the fault and blame is not theirs who have received it, but rather belongs to the grace itself. For any who will may see that the grace which wrought in them was Christ's. For, for instance, the lame man at the beautiful gate of the temple was made whole; but Peter ascribed the miracle to Christ, saying to the Jews, "For Him Whom ye crucified, even by Him this man stands before you whole: and the grace which He bestows hath given him this soundness." Elsewhere the same blessed Peter proclaimed to one of those who were healed by Him, "Aeneas, Jesus Christ healeth thee." It is plain therefore in every way that the man wickedly found fault with Christ's power in saying of the holy apostles, "they could not cast it out."

And besides, Christ is angry when wrong is done unto the holy preachers who have been entrusted with the word of His Gospel, and appointed to teach it to all under heaven, inasmuch as witness is borne them by His grace, that they are His disciples, and they shed the light of the true knowledge of God on those who everywhere were convinced by their doctrines, and the wonderful miracles they wrought. For the miracle constantly, so to speak, leads on to faith. It would have been deserved therefore, had the father of the demoniac gone away disappointed, and been refused the bounteous gift. But that no man might imagine that Christ also was unable to work the miracle, He rebuked the unclean spirit, and forthwith delivered the youth from his malady, and gave him to his father. For up to this time he had not been his father's, but the property of the spirit that possessed him: but being now delivered from his violence, he became once again his father's property, as Christ's gift: Who also gave the holy apostles authority to work divine miracles, and rebuke with irresistible might impure spirits, and crush Satan.

And the multitudes, the blessed Evangelist says, wondered at the majesty of God. When Christ then works miracles, it is God Who is glorified, and God only and solely. For He is by nature God, and His majesty is incomparable, and His supremacy without a rival, resplendent with the sovereignty of God the Father. He is therefore to be extolled with praises, and let us say unto him, "O Lord God of powers, Who is like unto Thee? Powerful art Thou, O Lord, and Thy truth is round about Thee." For all things are possible to Him, and easy to accomplish, and nothing whatsoever is too difficult or high: by Whom and with Whom, to God the Father be praise and dominion, with the Holy Ghost, for ever and ever, Amen.

Sermon 53

9:43-45. And while every one wondered at all things which He did, He said unto His disciples, Lay ye these words to your ears: For the Son of man is about to be delivered up into the hands of men. But they knew not this saying, and it was hid from them that they should not understand it: and they feared to ask Him of this saying.

PROFOUND in very deed is the mystery of godliness, according to the expression of the wise Paul: but God the Father reveals it to such as are worthy of receiving it. For the Saviour Himself also, when speaking to the Jews, said, "Murmur not among yourselves: no man can come unto Me, unless the Father Who sent Me draw him." When then the blessed Peter had been counted worthy of a grace thus glorious and wonderful, being in the neighbourhood of Caesarea Philippi, he made a correct and faultless confession of faith in him, saying, "Thou art the Christ, the Son of the living God." And what was the reward of which he was thought worthy? It was to hear Christ say, "Blessed art thou, Simeon, son of Jonah: for flesh and blood hath not revealed it to thee, but My Father in heaven." And he further received surpassing honours: for he was entrusted by Him with the keys of the kingdom of heaven, and the confession of his faith was made the firm foundation for the Church. "For thou," He says, "art a stone: and upon this stone I will build My Church: and the gates of hell shall not overpower it."

That those therefore who were to teach the whole world might know exactly His mystery, He usefully and necessarily explains it clearly to them beforehand, saying, "Lay ye these words to your hearts; for the Son of man is about to be delivered into the hands of men." The reason then which led Christ so to speak is, I think, a subject both useful and necessary for our consideration. He had then led up into the mountain Peter, and James, and John, and been transfigured before them, and His countenance shone as the sun: and He shewed them the glory, with which in due time He will arise upon the world. For He will come, not in humiliation such as ours; nor in the meanness of man's estate, but in the majesty and splendour of the Godhead, and in transcendent glory. And again, when He came down from the mountain. He delivered a man from a wicked and violent spirit. Yet was He certainly about to bear for our sakes His saving passion; and endure the wickedness of the Jews; and, as the minister of His mysteries says, "by the grace of God to taste death for every man." But when this came to pass, there is nothing unlikely in supposing that the disciples would be troubled; and in their secret thoughts perhaps even say, How is One so glorious; Who raised the dead by His godlike power; Who rebuked the seas and the winds; Who by a word crushed Satan; how is He now seized as a prisoner, and caught in the snares of these murderers? Were we then mistaken in thinking that He is God? Have we fallen from the true opinion regarding Him? For that those who knew not the mystery, that our Lord Jesus Christ would endure the cross and death, would find therein an occasion of stumbling, is easy to perceive, even from what the blessed Peter said to Him. For though he had not as yet been witness of His passion, but only had heard beforehand that it would befall Him, he interrupted Him, saying, "That be far from Thee, Lord: this shall not be unto Thee."

In order, therefore, that they might know what certainly would happen, He bade them, so to speak, store up the mystery in their mind. "For lay ye it," He says, "to your hearts." In which words, the "ye" distinguishes them from all others. For He wished indeed that they should themselves know what would happen, but not that they should communicate it to others. For it was not right for the unlearned to be taught simply His future passion, but far better, to convince them at the same time of His having risen divinely from the grave, and abolished

death, and so avoid the danger of their being offended. When therefore the time comes, He says, that I must suffer, ask not, How it is that One so glorious, Who performed all these signs, has fallen like one of us unawares into the hands of His enemies: but, on the contrary, be assured, when reflecting upon the dispensation, that I am not led by human compulsion, but go willingly thereunto. For what is there to hinder one Who knows beforehand and clearly proclaims what is to happen, to refuse to suffer, if He so will? But I submit to suffer, in order that I may redeem all beneath the heavens. For this He plainly teaches us elsewhere, saying, "No man taketh My life from Me, but I lay it down of My own will. I have power to lay it down: and I have power to take it again."

"But they, it says, knew not this saying; and it was hid from them, that they might not perceive it." Now naturally any one may justly wonder, when meditating with himself, how it was that the disciples knew not the mystery of Christ. For though they belonged to the companies of the Jews, yet they were neither slothful nor contemptuous, but on the contrary most earnest and diligent. For though reckoned as handicraftsmen, whose trade was fishing in the lake, yet, as I said, they had been soberly educated, and were far from ignorant of the Mosaic Scriptures: for for this very reason Christ had chosen them. How then were they ignorant of the mystery of Christ, when it had been shadowed forth for them in various places by the law, and beautifully foreshewn in its types as in a painting? For, to shew my meaning by an example, they were not able to flee away from the bondage of Egypt, nor escape from the hand that oppressed them, until they had sacrificed a lamb according to the law of Moses; and when they had eaten its flesh, they anointed the lintels with its blood; and so put the destroyer to shame. But it was not the mere sacrifice of a sheep that made them, superior to death and the destroyer. Types travail with the truth: and this act of theirs was, as I said, a foreshowing, by means of what was done in shadows, of the saving efficacy of the death of Christ, and of the abolition of destruction by His blood: Who also further drives away our cruel tyrant, Satan, and delivers from the mastery of impure spirits those whom they had enslaved, and who, like the Israelites made to serve in bricklaying, had become the victims of earthly cares, and polluted fleshly lusts, and the unprofitable distractions of this world.

The mystery of the passion may be seen also in another instance. For according to the Mosaic law two goats were offered, differing in nothing from one another, but alike in size and appearance. Of these, one was called "the lord:" and the other, the "sent-away." And when the lot had been cast for that which was called "lord," it was sacrificed: while the other was sent away from the sacrifice: and therefore had the name of the "sent-away." And Who was signified by this? The Word, though He was God, was in our likeness, and took the form of us sinners, as far as the nature of the flesh was concerned. The goat, then, male or female, was sacrificed for sins. But the death was our desert, inasmuch as by sin we had fallen under the divine curse. But when the Saviour of all Himself, so to speak, undertook the charge, He transferred to Himself what was our due, and laid down His life, that we might be sent away from death and destruction.

The mystery, therefore, was revealed to the Jews, by what was shadowed in the law, had they only been acquainted with the sacred Scriptures. But, as the blessed Paul wrote, "Blindness in part hath happened unto Israel;" and "even to this day, when Moses is read, the veil is laid upon their heart: nor is it unveiled, because in Christ it is done away." They then boast indeed of the law, but its purpose is entirely hidden from them; for it leads us to the mystery of Christ. But that they were without understanding our Saviour shews, saying; "Search the Scriptures: for in them ye think ye have eternal life: and they it is that testify of Me. And ye

desire not to come unto Me, that ye may have life." For the divinely-inspired Scriptures conduct him who has understanding to an accurate knowledge of the doctrines of the truth: but they do not at all benefit the unwise, the ignorant, and the careless. Not because they cannot do so, but because the infirmity of their mind renders them incapable of receiving the light which the Scriptures give. For just as the light of the solar radiance is useless to those deprived of sight; not as though it cannot shine, but because their eyes are incapable of admitting and receiving it; so the holy Scriptures, though inspired by God, profit nothing the unlearned and foolish.

Our duty, therefore, is to draw near unto God, and say; "Open mine eyes: and I shall perceive the wondrous things of Thy law." So He will reveal Christ to us: by Whom and with Whom to God the Father be praise and dominion with the Holy Ghost, for ever and ever, Amen.

Sermon 54

9:46-48. *And there entered a thought among them, which of them is the greatest. And Jesus, knowing the thought of their heart, took a child, and set him by Him, and said unto them, Whosoever shall receive this child in My name, receiveth Me: and whosoever receiveth Me, receiveth Him Who sent Me. For he that is least among you all, shall be the chief.*

YE who are zealous after spiritual skilfulness, and thirst for the communication of the sacred doctrines, receive once again the things ye love. And it is no earthly teacher Who leads you to the gainful booty, nor one like unto us Whom ye obtain as your guide, but the Word of God, Who came down from above, even from heaven, and is the true light of heaven and earth. For the whole rational creation is illuminated by His means, inasmuch as He is the giver of all wisdom and understanding. From Him we receive all knowledge of virtue, and the perfect ability to perform good works such as become saints. For, as Scripture saith, "we are taught of God." And the passage just laid before us bears witness also to what I have said. "For there entered," it says, "a thought among them:"----that is, among the holy Apostles,----"which of them is chief."

And now let him who thinks that Jesus was a mere man learn that he is in error, and far gone from the truth. For let him know, that though God the Word became flesh, yet that it was not possible for Him to cease to be that which He was, and that He continued to be God. For to be able to search the hearts and reins, and know their secrets, is the attribute of the supreme God alone, and besides Him of no other being whatsoever. But behold, Christ searcheth the thoughts of the holy Apostles, and fixeth the eye of Godhead upon their hidden feelings. Therefore He too is God, as being adorned with honours thus glorious and divine.

But let us just now investigate this question, whether all the blessed disciples in common were seized with this malady? whether this thought entered all at once? But it is, in my opinion, altogether incredible to suppose that all of them at the same moment became the common prey of one malady: but when, as I imagine, it happened to one, the wise Evangelist, that he might not be found framing an accusation against an individual among his fellow disciples, expresses himself indefinitely, saying, "There entered a thought among them, who of them is chief." By this, however, we are permitted to see how very wily Satan is in doing evil. For most versatile and full of contrivance is this snake for mischief, plotting in a diversity of ways against those whose love is fixed upon an honourable life, and who earnestly seek after more

excellent virtues: and if by fleshly pleasures he can prevail over any one's mind, he savagely makes the assault, and sharpens the goad of voluptuousness, and by the very audacity of his attacks, humbles to base lusts even a well-confirmed mind. But if any one be manly, and escape from these snares, he then uses other artifices, contriving baits to tempt him unto mental maladies. For he sows some seed or other displeasing to God: and in those in whom there is something noble, and the praise of an excellent life, he excites the passion of vainglory, exciting them by little and little to an abominable haughtiness. For just as those who in warlike guise are equipped to do battle with invaders, use many contrivances against them; either drawing bows, which discharge arrows, or hurling stones from slings, or manfully charging them with drawn swords: so also Satan uses every artifice in carrying on war against the saints by means of manifold sins.

The passion, therefore, and lust of vainglory attacked some one of the holy Apostles; for the mere disputing who of them is the chief, is the mark of an ambitious person, eager to stand at the head of the rest. But He slept not Who knoweth how to deliver, even Christ; He saw in the disciple's mind this thought, springing up, in the words of Scripture, like some bitter plant: He saw the tare, the work of the wicked sower: and before it grow up high; before it struck its root down deep; before it grew strong, and took possession of the heart; He, so to speak, tears up the evil by the very root. He saw the barbarian's arrow that had found entrance: and before it prevailed, and pierced through the mind, He contrives a medicine. For when passions are but beginning in us, and, so to speak, as yet in their infancy, and not full grown, nor firmly rooted, they are easily overcome. But when they have increased, and grown strong, they are hard to put off, and bear themselves with no little audacity. For this reason one of the wise said: "If the spirit of the ruler rise up against thee, leave not thy place: for yielding heals many sins."

In what way, then, does the Physician of souls amputate the passion of vainglory? How does He deliver the beloved disciple from being the prey of the enemy, and from a thing hateful to God and man? "He took a child, it says, and set it by Him;" and made the event a means of benefiting both the holy Apostles themselves, and us their successors: for this malady as a general rule preys upon all those who are in any respect superior to other men.

But of what did He make the child He had taken a type and representation? Of an innocent and unambitious life. For the mind of a child is void of fraud, and his heart sincere; his thoughts are simple; he covets not rank, and knows not what is meant by one man being higher in station than another: he has even no unwillingness to be regarded as the least, nor sets himself above any other person whatsoever: and though he be of good family by birth, he does not quarrel about dignity even with a slave: nor though he have rich parents, is he aware of any difference between himself and poor children. On the contrary, he likes being with them, and talks and laughs with them without distinction. In his mind and heart there is great frankness arising from simplicity and innocence. For even the Saviour once said to the holy Apostles, or rather to all those who love Him: "Verily I say unto you, that unless ye be converted, and become like these children, ye cannot enter the kingdom of God." And at another time again, when the women were bringing to Him their infants, and the disciples prevented them, He said, "Suffer the little children, and forbid them not, to come unto Me; for of such as they is the kingdom of heaven." And again the most wise Paul desires that those who believe in Christ should be "grown men in understanding, but in malice babes." And another of the holy Apostles said: "As babes just born, love the rational and pure milk, that ye may grow thereby unto salvation, if so be ye have tasted that the Lord is kind."

As I said then, Christ brought forward the child as a pattern of simplicity and innocence, "and set him also by Him;" shewing by him, as in a figure, that He accepts and loves those who are such, and deems them worthy, so to speak, of standing at His side, as being like-minded with Him, and anxious to tread in His steps. For He said, "Learn of Me: for I am meek, and lowly in heart." And if He Who transcends all, and is crowned with such surpassing glories, is lowly in heart, how must it not bring upon such as we are, yea, even upon our very selves, the blame of utter madness, if we do not bear ourselves humbly towards the poor, and learn what our nature is, but love to vaunt ourselves ambitiously above our measure!

And He further says: "He that receiveth this child in My name receiveth Me: and he that receiveth Me receiveth Him that sent Me." Since, therefore, the reward of those that honour the saints is one and the same, whether he who is honoured be, if it so chance, of modest rank, or of exalted station and dignity;---for he receiveth Christ, and by Him and in Him the Father;---how was it not utterly foolish for them to quarrel among themselves, and aim at pre-eminence, and be unwilling to be thought inferior to others, when they were to be accepted on equal terms!

But He makes the purport of this declaration even still more plain by saying: "For he that is least among you all, the same is chief." And how is he the chief, who is regarded as the least? Is the comparison in point of virtue? But how can this be? The foremost place is not assigned to him who is chief in virtue above him who is otherwise. In what way, then, is he chief who is least? Probably, then, He calls him least whom lowly things please, and who, from modesty, does not think highly of himself. Such a one pleases Christ: for it is written, "that every one that exalteth himself shall be abased: and he that humbleth himself shall be exalted." And Christ Himself somewhere says, "Blessed are the poor in spirit: for their's is the kingdom of heaven." The ornament, therefore, of a soul that is sanctified is a poor and humble mind: but the wish to think highly of oneself, and to be at strife with the brethren for the sake of honour and dignity, and foolishly to quarrel with them, is in like manner a disgrace. Such conduct separates friends, and makes even those perhaps great enemies whose dispositions are similar. It overpowers the law of nature, and subverts that innate affection which we owe our brethren. It divides lovers, and sometimes makes even those enemies of one another, who are united by being born from one womb. It fights against and resists the blessings of peace. Miserable is it, and a malady invented by the wickedness of the devil. For what is there more delusive than vainglory? Like smoke it is dispersed; like a cloud it passeth away, and like the vision of a dream changeth into nothingness. It scarcely equalleth the herbage in endurance, and withereth like grass. For it is written, that "all flesh is grass, and all the glory of man as the flower of grass." It is a weakness, therefore, despised even among us, and numbered among the greatest evils. For who does not reckon a vainglorious man, inflated with empty airs, an annoyance? Who does not regard with contempt, and give the name of "boaster," to one who refuses to be on an equality with others, and thrusts himself forward as if claiming to be accounted their superior? Let, then, the malady of vaingloriousness be far from those who love Christ: and let us rather consider our companions as better than we are, and be anxious to adorn ourselves with that humility of mind, which is well-pleasing to God. For being thus simple-minded, as becometh saints, we shall be with Christ, Who honoureth simplicity: by Whom and with Whom, to God the Father, be praise and dominion with the Holy Ghost, for ever and ever, Amen.

9:49-50. And John answered and said: Teacher, we saw one casting out devils in Thy Name, and we forbade him because he followeth not with us. But Jesus said unto him: Forbid him not: for he is not against you. For whosoever is not against you, is on your part.

PAUL requires us to "prove every thing," and says, "Be wise money-changers." But an exact and scrupulous knowledge of each particular matter we can obtain from no other source than from divinely-inspired Scripture. For David in the Psalms, addressing as it were Christ, the Saviour of all, declares; "Thy law is a lamp to my feet, and a light unto my paths." And Solomon also writes, that "the commandment of the law is a lamp and a light." For just as this sensible light that is in the world, by falling on our bodily eyes, dispels the darkness; so also the law of God, when admitted into the mind and heart of man, illuminates it thoroughly, and does not suffer it to fall against the stumblingblocks of ignorance, nor be caught in the wickednesses of sin.

And this I say from admiration of the skilfulness here also displayed in the lessons from the Gospel just set before us, and the purport of which ye doubtless wish to be taught, seeing ye have assembled here from love of the sacred doctrines, and with eagerness have formed the present meeting. What therefore do the wise disciples say, or what do they wish to learn from Him Who endoweth them with all wisdom, and revealeth to them the understanding of every good work? "Teacher, we saw one casting out devils in Thy name, and we forbade him." Has the sting of envy troubled the holy disciples? Do they grudge those highly favoured? Have even they admitted within them a passion so abominable and hateful to God? "We saw one, they say, casting out devils in Thy name, and we forbade him." Tell me, dost thou forbid one who in Christ's name troubles Satan, and crushes evil demons? How was it not thy duty rather to reflect, that he was not the doer of these wonders, but that the grace which was in him wrought the miracle by the power of Christ? How therefore dost thou forbid him who in Christ wins the victory? "Yes," he saith; for he followeth not with us." Oh blind speech! For what if he be not numbered among the holy Apostles, who is crowned with Christ's grace, yet is he equally with you adorned with apostolic powers. There are many diversities of Christ's gifts, as the blessed Paul teacheth, saying; "that to one is given the word of wisdom, but to another the word of knowledge: and to another faith; and to another gifts of healings."

What therefore is the meaning of his "not walking with us," or what is the force of the expression? Look then; for I will tell you as well as I can. The Saviour gave the holy Apostles authority over unclean spirits, to cast them out, and to heal all disease and all sickness among the people. And so they did; nor was the grace given them ineffectual. For they returned with joy, saying; "Lord, even the devils are subject to us in Thy name." They imagined, therefore, that leave was given not to any one else but to themselves alone to be invested with the authority which He had granted them. For this reason they draw near, and want to learn, whether others also might exercise it, even though they had not been appointed to the apostleship, nor even to the office of teacher.

We find something like this also in the ancient sacred Scriptures. For God once said to the hierophant Moses: "Choose thee seventy men of the elders of Israel, and I will take of the Spirit that is upon thee, and give it," He says, "to them." And when those who were chosen had assembled at the former tabernacle, two men only excepted, who had remained in the camp, and the spirit of prophecy descended upon them, not only those who were assembled in the holy tabernacle prophesied, but those also who had remained in the camp. But "Jeshua, it

says, who stood before Moses, said, Eldad and Midad, lo! they prophesy in the camp. My lord Moses forbid them. And Moses said unto Jeshua, Enviest thou me? Would that all the Lord's people were prophets, the Lord putting His Spirit upon them." But it was Christ Who at that time made the hierophant Moses thus speak by the Holy Ghost: and here also in person He saith to the holy Apostles; "Forbid not him who is crushing Satan," that is, in His name, "for he is not against you, He says; for he who is not against you is on your part." For on the part of us who love Christ, are all who wish to act to His glory, and are crowned by His grace. And this is a law to the churches continuing even to this day. For we honour only those who lift up holy hands, and purely and without fault or blame, in Christ's name, rebuke unclean spirits, and deliver multitudes from various diseases: for we know that it is Christ Who worketh in them.

We must, however, examine such things carefully. For there are verily men, who have not been counted worthy of Christ's grace, but make the reputation of being saints and honourable an opportunity of gain. Of such one may say, that they are bold and shameless hypocrites, who seize honours for themselves, even though God has not called them thereto; they praise themselves, and imitate the bold doings of the false prophets of old, of whom God said; "I have not sent the prophets, yet they ran: I have not spoken unto them, yet they prophesied." And so too may He say of these, I have not sanctified them, but they falsely assume the gift for themselves: they have not been counted worthy of My grace, but wickedly seize those things which I bestow on such alone as are worthy to receive them. These, making a show of fasting, walk sadly with downcast looks, while full of fraud and baseness. And often they pride themselves on letting their nails grow long: and are especially fond of their complexion being sallow: and though no one compel them, they delight in enduring such misery as men have to bear in prison, hanging collars on their necks, and putting fetters sometimes on their hands and feet. Such persons the Saviour has commanded us to avoid, saying; "Beware of those who come to you in sheep's clothing: but within are ravening wolves."

To this, however, some one may object, 'But who, O Lord, knows the heart of man? Who sees what is concealed within us, but Thou alone, Who by Thyself didst form our hearts, and tryest hearts and reins? Yes, He says: "By their fruits ye shall know them:" not by appearances, not by outward show, but by fruits. For what is the object of their hypocrisy? Plainly it looks to the love of gain. For they gape at the hands of those who visit them: and if they see them empty, they are greatly distressed, and stung with annoyance. For piety is with them merchandize. If, however, thou lovest wealth, and lusteth after base gains, and hast given a place in thy mind to that most base passion,----the love of money,----put off the sheep's skin; why labourest thou in vain, by making a pretence of an austere and unworldly conduct? Abandon this excessive rigour of life, and aim instead at being one who is contented with little. Ask this of God: seek His righteousness: "Cast thy care upon the Lord: and He shall nourish thee."

But there are even some who use from time to time incantations and certain abominable mutterings, and wickedly make certain fumigations, and command the use of amulets. 'But yet,' says one, 'who has without thought taken part in these practices, in their incantations they use the Name of the Lord of Sabaoth.' Are we, then, to acquit them of blame because they bestow on a wicked and impure devil an expression suitable to God only, and call the wicked Satan the Lord of Sabaoth; asking of him as the reward of blasphemy, aid in the things they request of him? Not that he really aids them, for he is powerless; but rather brings down to

the pit of destruction those that call upon him. For the Lord speaketh not untruly where He says that Satan casteth not out Satan.

It is necessary, therefore, for our salvation and well-pleasing to God, to flee far from every thing like this. But when thou seest one who has been brought up in the church, innocent, simple, without hypocrisy, whose mode of life is worthy of emulation, who is known of many as the companion of holy monks, who flees from the arts of the city, who is fond of desert places, who loves not gain, nor schisms, and, besides all this, has a correct faith, and is made honourable by the grace of Christ, through the operation of the Holy Ghost, so as to be even able to work those things that are by Christ; unto such a one draw near with confidence: he shall pray for thee purely, and his grace shall minister unto thee. For the Saviour and Lord of all grants the requests of those who ask Him: by Whom and with whom to God the Father be praise and dominion, with the Holy Ghost, for ever and ever, Amen.

Sermon 56

9:51-56. And it came to pass that when the days were fulfilled for His being taken up, that He set His face to go to Jerusalem: and sent messengers before His face, and they went and entered into a village of the Samaritans to make ready for Him. And they did not receive Him, because His face was as though He would go to Jerusalem. And when His disciples James and John saw it, they said, Wilt Thou that we bid fire come down from heaven to consume them? But He turned and rebuked them, and went to another village.

Those who are abundantly endowed with vast wealth, and pride themselves on their ample riches, assemble fit persons to their banquets, and set before them a sumptuously furnished table, producing by a diversity of dishes and sauces of various kinds a pleasure superior to the mere satisfying of hunger. But from this no benefit arises, but rather great injury to the banqueters. For more than a sufficiency after the calls of hunger have been satisfied is always hurtful. But those who possess heavenly riches, and know the sacred doctrines, and have been illuminated with divine light, nourish their souls by feasting them on instructive discourses, in order that they may become both fruitful towards God, and skilled in the pathway unto all virtue, and earnest in accomplishing those things by means of which a man attains to a happy issue. To this intellectual and holy table, therefore, the sacred Word invites us; for it says, "Eat and drink, and be drunken, my friends." But friends of whom? evidently of God. And it is worthy of note that we are to be drunken with these things, and that we can never be satiated with that which is to our edification. Let us see, therefore, what kind of profit the lesson from the Gospel sets before us upon the present occasion.

"For when," it says, "the days were fulfilled for His being taken up, He set His face to go to Jerusalem." By which is meant, that as the time had now come when at length having borne for us His saving passion, He should ascend to heaven, and dwell with God the Father, He determined to proceed to Jerusalem. For this is, I think, the meaning of His having set His face. He sends, therefore, messengers to prepare a lodging for Him and His companions. And when they came to a village of the Samaritans, they were not received. At this the blessed disciples were indignant, not so much on their own account as because they did not honour Him Who is Saviour and Lord of all. And what followed? They murmured greatly: and as His majesty and power was not unknown to them, they said, "Lord, wilt thou that we bid fire come down from heaven, and consume them?" But Christ rebuked them for so speaking. And in

these last words lies the purport of the lesson: and therefore let us accurately examine the whole passage. For it is written, "Churn milk, and it becomes butter."

It would be untrue, then, to affirm that our Saviour did not know what was about to happen: for as He knows all things, He knew, of course, that His messengers would not be received by the Samaritans. Of this there can be no doubt. Why, then, did He command them to precede Him? The reason of it was His custom assiduously to benefit the holy Apostles in every possible way: and for this end His practice sometimes was to put them to the proof. As for instance, He was sailing once upon the lake of Tiberias with those named above; and while so doing he fell asleep purposely: and a violent wind having risen upon the lake, a rough and unusual storm began to rage, and the boat was in danger, and the crew in alarm. For He intentionally permitted the storm and the fury of the tempest to rage against the ship, to try the faith of the disciples, and to make manifest the greatness of His power. And this, also, was the result. For they, in the littleness of their faith, said, "Master, save us, we perish." And He at once arose and shewed that He is Lord of the elements; for He rebuked the sea and the tempest, and there was an exceeding great calm. And so also on this occasion: He knew, indeed, that those who went forward to announce that he would lodge with them would not be received by the Samaritans; but He permitted them to go, that this again might be a means of benefiting the holy Apostles.

What, then, was the purpose of this occurrence? He was going up to Jerusalem, as the time of His passion was already drawing near. He was about to endure the contumelies of the Jews; He was about to be set at nought by the scribes and Pharisees; and to suffer those things which they inflicted upon Him when they proceeded to the accomplishment of all violence and wicked audacity. In order, therefore, that they might not be offended when they saw Him suffering, as understanding that He would have them also to be patient, and not to murmur greatly, even though men treat them with contumely, He, so to speak, made the contempt they met with from the Samaritans a preparatory exercise in the matter. They had not received the messengers. It was the duty of the disciples, treading in the footsteps of their Lord, to bear it patiently as becometh saints, and not to say anything of them wrathfully. But they were not yet so disposed; but being seized with too hot indignation, they would have called down fire upon them from heaven, as far as their will went. But Christ rebuked them for so speaking.

See here, I pray, how great is the difference between us and God: for the distance is immeasurable. For He is slow to anger, and long-suffering, and of incomparable gentleness and love to mankind: but we children of earth are quick unto anger, hasty unto impatience, and refuse with indignation to be judged by others when we are found out in committing any wrong act; while we are most ready to find fault with others. And therefore God the Lord of all affirms, saying; "For My thoughts are not as your thoughts, nor your ways as My ways; but as the heaven is far from the earth, so are My ways from your ways, and My thoughts from your thoughts." Such, then, is He Who is Lord of all: but we, as I said, being readily vexed, and easily led into anger, take sometimes severe and intolerable vengeance upon those who have occasioned us some trifling annoyance: and though commanded to live according to the Gospel, we fall short of the practice commanded by the law. For the law indeed said, "Eye for eye; tooth for tooth; hand for hand:" and commanded that an equal retribution should suffice: but we, as I said, though perhaps we have suffered but a trifling wrong, would retaliate very harshly, not remembering Christ, who said: "The disciple is not greater than his teacher, nor the slave than his master;" Who also, "when He was reviled, reviled not again; when suffering, threatened not; but committed His cause to Him Who judgeth righteously." As treading this

path much-enduring Job also is justly admired: for it is written of him, "What man is like Job, who drinketh wrongs like a draught?" For their benefit, therefore, He rebuked the disciples, gently restraining the sharpness of their wrath, and not permitting them to murmur violently against those who sinned, but persuading them rather to be longsuffering, and to cherish a mind immovable by ought of this.

It benefited them also in another way: they were to be the instructors of the whole world, and to travel through the cities and villages, proclaiming everywhere the good tidings of salvation. Of necessity, therefore, while seeking to fulfil their mission, they must fall in with wicked men, who would reject the divine tidings, and, so to speak, not receive Jesus to lodge with them. Had Christ, therefore, praised them for wishing that fire should come down upon the Samaritans, and that so painful a torment should be inflicted upon them, they would have been similarly disposed in many other instances, and when men disregarded the sacred message, would have pronounced their condemnation, and called down fire upon them from above. And what would have been the result of such conduct? The sufferers would have been innumerable, and no longer would the disciples have been so much physicians of the sick, as torturers rather, and intolerable to men everywhere. For their own good, therefore, they were rebuked, when thus enraged beyond measure at the contumely of the Samaritans: in order that they might learn that as ministers of the divine tidings, they must rather be full of longsuffering and gentleness; not revengeful; not given to wrath, nor savagely attacking those who offend them.

And that the ministers of God's message were longsuffering, Paul teaches us, saying, "For I think that God hath set forth us the apostles last, as it were, condemned to death; for we are made a spectacle unto the world, and to angels, and to men. Being reviled, we bless; being defamed, we persuade: we have become the offscouring of the world; the refuse of all men up to this day." He wrote also to others, or rather to all who had not yet received Christ in them, but, so to speak, were still afflicted with the pride of the Samaritans: "We pray you in Christ's stead, be ye reconciled to God."

Great, therefore, is the benefit of the gospel lessons to those who are truly perfect in mind; and may we also, taking them unto ourselves, benefit our souls, ever praising Christ the Saviour of all: by Whom and with Whom to God the Father be praise and dominion, with the Holy Ghost, for ever and ever, Amen.