

GOSPEL ACCORDING TO JOHN.

BOOK IX.

[Introduction]

S. John xii. 49, 50. *For I spake not from Myself; but the Father Which sent Me, He hath given Me a commandment, what I should say, and what I should speak. And I know that His commandment is life eternal: the things therefore which I speak, even as the Father hath said unto Me, so I speak.*

He reminds the people of the Jews of the things that had been aforetime proclaimed concerning Him by Moses, and by this means skilfully rebukes them; and, exposing the impiety that was in them, He clearly proves that they were caring nothing for having insolently outraged even the Law itself, although it was believed to have been given from God. For what God said concerning Christ by Moses is well known to all men, but still I will quote it because of the necessity of perceiving the exact idea; *I will raise them up a Prophet from the midst of His brethren, like unto thee;* that is to say, a lawgiver, and a mediator between God and men: *and I will put My word in His mouth, and He shall speak unto them according as I may command Him; and the man who will not hearken to whatsoever the Prophet may speak in My Name, I will take vengeance on him.* At one and the same time therefore our Lord Jesus the Christ censures the boastful temper of the Jewish people, displayed in their fighting even, against God the Father; and, by saying that He has received a commandment from the Father and speaks not of Himself, clearly proves that He Himself is the Prophet fore-announced by the Law and heralded by the voice of God the Father from ages long before. And in a way He calls to their remembrance, although their minds were sluggish in comprehending it, that if they refused to be persuaded by the words that came from Him, they would certainly fall a prey to inevitable punishment, and would endure all that God had said. For they who transgress the Divine commandment of God the Father, and thrust away from themselves the life-giving word of God our Saviour Christ, shall surely be cast down into most utter misery, and shall remain without any part in the life that comes from Him; with good reason hearing that which was spoken by the voice of the prophet: *O earth, earth, hear, O hear the word of the Lord. Behold, I bring evils upon this people, as the fruit of their turning away, because they obeyed not My Law, and ye rejected My word.* For we shall find that the Jews were liable to a twofold accusation: for they failed to honour the Law itself, although it was generally held dear and accounted an object of reverence, in that they refused to believe on Him Whom the Law proclaimed; and they turned a deaf ear to the words of our Saviour Christ, although He announced openly that He was certainly the Prophet spoken of in the oracles of the Law, when He declared that it was from God the Father that He was supplied with His words.

And let no one suppose that the saying of the Lord----that nothing is spoken by Himself, but that all comes from the Father----can do Him injustice in any way at all, as regards the estimate either of His Essence or of His God-befitting dignity; but first let the matter be thought over again, and let an answer be given to this question of ours:----"Can any one really suppose that the name and exercise of the prophetic office befit Him Who altogether is and is regarded as being in His Nature God?" Surely, I think, every one, however simple he may be, would answer in the negative, and say that it is incredible that the God Who speaks in

prophets should Himself be called a prophet: for He it was Who *multiplied visions*, as it is written, *and was likened to similitudes by the hands of the prophets*. Since however He assumed the name of servitude and the outward fashion of resemblance to ourselves and with regard to His resemblance to us was called a Prophet, it necessarily follows also that the Law has endued Him with the attributes befitting the prophet, that is to say, the privilege of hearing somewhat from the Father and of receiving *a commandment, what He should say and what He should speak*. And moreover I shall feel obliged to say this much also. The Jews, possessed with a strong prejudice concerning the Law, believing that it had been spoken from God, could not have been expected to accept the words of the Saviour when He changed the form of the ordinances of old into a spiritual service.

And what cause had they to allege for being unwilling to accept the transformation of the types into their veritable significance? They were not aware that He was by Nature God, nor did they even admit the supposition that the Only-Begotten, being the Word of the Father, had borne our flesh for our sakes: for else, in immediate submission to God, they would have changed their opinion in any way whatever without hesitation, and would have faithfully revered His Divine glory. But the wretched men rather thought that He was altogether one like ourselves, and that, although a mere man, He had thought so highly of Himself as even to attempt to put an end to the very laws which came from God the Father. For instance they once said to Him plainly: *For a good work we stone Thee not, but for blasphemy; because Thou, being a Man, makest Thyself God*. Our Lord Jesus therefore, by much wisdom and with a definite design, seeking to turn His hearers from the idea that had taken possession of their minds, changes the subject of His discourse from that which was simply and solely the human personality to Him Who was the object of acknowledged and undisputed adoration, I mean of course God the Father; thinking it right to use every means of importunately pleading with the uneducated heart of the Jews, and striving by every possible method to lead on their dull minds to the desire to learn true and more befitting doctrines. So much then may suffice in the way of argument and speculation for any one who would get rid of the carping criticisms of the unholy heretics, when they suppose that the Son will make Himself in any respect whatever inferior to His own Father by saying that He speaks nothing of Himself, but that a commandment has been given Him, and that He speaks according as He has heard.

And I think that this would really suffice: yet I will also say something else by way of exposing the insolence of their loquacity. For come now, if it seems good to thee, and let us, having summarized for the present occasion in few words the doctrine of the Incarnation, shew concerning the Only-Begotten Himself that it was well and rightly said: *I speak not from Myself; but the Father which sent Me, He hath given Me a commandment what I should say and what I should speak*. For being Himself the Living and Personal Word of God the Father, He is necessarily the medium of interpreting what is in the Father; and in bringing to light that which is, as it were, the set will and purpose of His own Father, He says He has in effect received a commandment: and any one might see even in the case of ourselves that the fact is truly so and could not be otherwise. For the language of utterance, which consists in the putting together of words and phrases, and which makes itself heard externally by means of articulate speech, reveals that which is in the intellect, when our intellect gives a commandment as it were to it; although indeed the whole process does not take much time. For, the moment it has decided upon anything, the mind at once delivers it over to the voice; and the voice, passing outwards, interprets what is in the innermost depth of the mind, altering nothing of what it has been commanded to utter. "Where then is the strange part of the matter, sirs," any one might very well say to our opponents, "if the Son, being the Word of

God the Father, does (in a manner not indeed exactly like ours, for the ways of God transcend all comparison,) interpret the will of Him Who begat Him?" For does not the prophet speak of Him as called by a title most fitting for Him: "*Angel of great counsel?*" But this I think is quite clear. The Only-Begotten therefore will suffer no detraction as regards His Essence or His dignity, even though He is said to have received a *commandment* from God the Father: for we ourselves also are often commanding others and ordering them to do something, but they will not on this account deny their community of nature with us, nor will they lose their likeness to us or be less consubstantial with us, whether before or after the utterance of the command.

But thou wilt say that while they remain consubstantial with us, their dignity suffers from their submission to us.

And I say this to thee on this point, concerning the Only-Begotten: "If it were not written concerning Him that *being in the form of God He counted it not a prize to be on an equality with God, but emptied Himself, taking the form of a servant, and being found in fashion as a man, He humbled Himself*,---the form of thy objection might really have had a not invalid significance: but since the manner of His submission and humiliation is clear, why dost thou recklessly rail at Him Who endured to suffer even this for our sakes?" Making therefore our argument on every side to conform to accuracy of doctrine, we maintain that our Lord Jesus Christ has spoken the words of the phrase before us in full agreement with the scheme of His Incarnation.

xiii. 1 *Now before the feast of the passover, Jesus knowing that His hour was come that He should depart out of this world unto the Father, having loved His own which were in this world, He loved them unto the end.*

The meaning contained in the words before us seems to most men somewhat obscure and not very capable of exact explanation, nor indeed to possess (as any one might suppose) any simple signification. For what can be the reason why the inspired Evangelist at this point notifies to us particularly, and (so to speak) as a necessary sequence of things, that: *Before the feast of the passover, knowing that His hour was come that He should depart out of this world unto the Father*, Christ acted as He did? And again, what is the meaning of: *Having loved His own that were in the world, He loved them unto the end*? Allowing therefore that the uncertainty involved in this passage is by no means slight, I suppose it to imply something of this sort, namely, that the Saviour, before enduring His suffering for our salvation, although aware (says the Evangelist) that the time of His translation to heaven was now close *even at the doors*, gave a proof of the absolute perfection of His love for His own that were in this world. And if there is any necessity for conceiving a wider meaning for the passage, I will only repeat once more what I was saying just now. To Christ our Saviour peculiarly belong as His own possessions all things made by Him, all intellectual and reasonable creatures, the powers above, and thrones, and principalities, and all things akin to these, in so far as regards the fact of their having been made [by Him]; and again, to Him peculiarly belong also the rational beings on earth, inasmuch as He is Lord of all, even though some refuse to adore Him as Creator. *He loved therefore His own that were in the world. For not of angels doth He take hold*, according to the voice of Paul; nor was it for the sake of the angelic nature, that, *being in the form of God the Father, He counted it not a prize to be on an equality with God*: but rather for the sake of us who are *in the world*, He the Lord of all has emptied Himself and assumed the form of a servant, called thereto by His love for us. *Having therefore loved His own which were in this world, He loved them unto the*

end, although indeed *before the feast*, even *before the passover*, He knew *that His hour was come that He should depart out of this world unto the Father*. For it would have been the manner of one who loved them, but not *unto the end*, to have become man, and then to have been unwilling to meet danger for the life of all; but He did love *unto the end*, not shrinking from suffering even this, although knowing beforehand that He would so suffer. For the Saviour's suffering was not by Him unforeseen. While therefore, says the Evangelist, He might have escaped the rude insolence of the Jews and the unholiness of those who were meditating His Crucifixion, He gave a proof of the absolute perfection of His love towards *His own which were in the world*; for He did not shrink in the least from being offered up for the life of all mankind. For that herein especially we may see the most perfect measure of love, I will bring forward our Lord Jesus Christ Himself as witness, in saying to His holy disciples: *This is My commandment, that ye love one another, even as I have loved you. Greater love hath no man than this, that a man lay down his life for his friends*. And for another reason the holy Evangelists always set themselves purposely to shew that our Lord Jesus the Christ foreknew the time of His suffering, namely, lest any of those who are wont to be heterodox should disparage His Divine glory by saying that Christ was overpowered through weakness on His part, and that it was against His will that He fell into the snares of the Jews and endured that death which was so very awful. Therefore the language of the holy men is in accordance with the Divine system and profitable for our instruction.

2, 3, 4, 5 And during supper, the devil having already put into the heart of Judas Iscariot, Simon's [son], to betray Him, [Jesus,] knowing that the Father had given all things into His hands, and that He came forth from God, and goeth unto God, riseth from supper, and layeth aside His garments; and He took a towel, and girded Himself. Then He poureth water into the bason, and began to wash the disciples' feet, and to wipe them with the towel wherewith He was girded.

The Saviour strives to eradicate utterly from our thoughts the vice of pride, as the basest of all human failings, and worthy of universal and utter abomination. For He knows that nothing so commonly injures the soul of man as this most loathsome and detestible passion, to which even the Lord of all Himself stands in just opposition, after the manner of an open foe; for *the Lord resisteth the proud*, according to the voice of Solomon. The holy disciples therefore especially stood in need of a sober and submissive temper, and of a mind that reckoned empty honour as no high ambition. For they possessed in no slight degree the germs of this sad infirmity, and would have easily glided down into subjection to it, if they had not received great help. For it is always against those who occupy an illustrious position that the malignant monster vainglory directs its attacks. Think then, what position can be more brilliant than that of the holy Apostles? or what more attractive of attention than their friendship with God? A man who is of little account in life would not be likely to experience this passion: for it always avoids one who possesses nothing that others can envy and nothing that is inaccessible to those whose lot is of no consequence in the world; for how could such a one possibly exhibit vainglory on any subject whatever? But pride is a feeling dear to a man when he is in an enviable position, and when for this reason he thinks himself better than his neighbour; foolishly supposing that he differs very greatly from the rest of mankind, as having achieved some special and surpassing degree of excellence, or as having followed a path of policy unfamiliar to and untrodden by the rest of the world. Since therefore it has come to be regularly characteristic of all who hold brilliant positions to be liable to attacks of the infirmity of pride, it was surely needful for the holy Apostles to find in Christ a Pattern of a modest temper; so that, having the Lord of all as their model and standard, they themselves also

might mould their own hearts according to the Divine will. In no other way therefore (as it seems) could He rid them from the infirmity, except by teaching them clearly that each one should regard himself as inferior in honour to the rest, even so far as to feel bound to undertake the part of a servant, without shrinking from discharging even the lowest of menial offices; [and this He taught them] by both washing the feet of the brethren and girding on a towel in order to perform the act. For consider what utterly menial behaviour it is, I mean according to the world's way of thinking and outward practice. Therefore Christ has become a Pattern of a modest and unassuming temper to all living men, for we must not suppose the teaching was meant for the disciples alone. Accordingly the inspired Paul also, taking Christ as a standard, exhorts to this end, saying: *Let each one of you have this mind in himself, which was also in Christ Jesus.* And again: *In lowliness of mind each counting other better than himself.* For in a lowly temper there is established a settled habit of love and of yielding to the will of others. Moreover, in order to highly exalt the significance of what was done, and to prevent us from supposing that Christ's action was a commonplace one, the inspired Evangelist again cannot help being astounded at the thought of the glory and the power that were in Christ, and His supremacy over all; as he shows by saying: *Knowing that the Father had committed all things into His hands.* For although, he says, Christ was not ignorant that He possessed authority over all, *and that He came forth from God*, that is, was begotten of the Essence of God the Father, *and goeth unto God*, that is, returns again to the heavens, there sitting as we know by the side of His own Father; yet so excessive was the humiliation He underwent that He even girded Himself with a towel and washed the feet of His disciples. As therefore we have in this act of Christ a very excellent pattern of affectionate care, and a most conspicuous standard for our love for each other to imitate, let us be modest in mind, beloved, and let us consider that, whatever may be our own goodness, our brethren have attained to greater excellences than those to be found in ourselves. For that we may both think and be willing to think in this way, is the wish of Him Who is our great Pattern.

*6, 7 So He cometh to Simon Peter, and he saith unto Him, Lord, dost Thou wash my feet?
Jesus answered and said unto him, What I do thou knowest not now, but thou shalt
understand hereafter. Peter saith unto Him, Thou shalt never wash my feet.*

The fiery and impulsive character of Peter, always far more eager than the other disciples to display devotion, can be observed, one might almost say, throughout all the records that are written of him. And so it happens that on this occasion also, following the bent of his peculiar character and usual tone of mind, he thrusts aside the lesson of extreme humility and love, the record of which has been preserved in this passage,----remembering on the one hand who he is himself by nature, and on the other hand Who He is that is bringing the bason to him, and shrinking not from fulfilling the duty of a menial servant. For he is dismayed not a little at the action, which is in a manner hard of acceptance to faith, even though it happened to be seen by many eyes. For who is there who would not have shuddered at learning that He Who with the Father is Lord of all had shown His devotion to the service of His own disciples to be so intensely compassionate, that the very thing that seems to be the work of the lowest grade among servants, He willingly and of deliberate intention performed, to furnish a pattern and type of modesty in temper? Therefore the inspired disciple is dismayed and distressed at the circumstance, and makes the refusal as a natural result of his accustomed and habitual devotion. Moreover, not yet understanding the cause of the action, he supposes that the Lord is doing it with no special motive, and thinking only of the refreshment of their bodies; for that is the sole object of washing the feet, and not a little does it relieve their condition after walking. On this account he insists even very earnestly, saying: *Lord, dost Thou wash my*

feet? For surely, he says, surely this ought to be done by us who are by nature in the condition of "servants," not by Thee, the "Lord" of all. Christ however defers for a while the explanation of the event; yet, to make him account its cause more weighty, He tells Peter that he should understand what the action meant *hereafter*, meaning of course at the time when He should give a fuller explanation of it.

And this point again, taken in connection with the others, will profit us not a little. For notice how, when the occasion calls for action, He defers His discourse; and again, when the occasion calls for discourse, He postpones action: for He was ever wont to assign all things to their fit and proper seasons. When therefore Peter made a sign of dissent, and plainly asserted that Christ should *never wash his feet*, the Saviour at once lays clearly before him the loss he would suffer in consequence, saying as follows:

Jesus answered him, If I wash thee not, thou hast no part with Me.

Inasmuch therefore as He had come to what manifestly and obviously is the central point of the incident before us, He says: "If thou shouldst refuse to receive this strange and novel lesson of humility, thou wouldst find *no part* or lot *with Me*." And since oftentimes our Lord Jesus the Christ, taking small matters as the suggestive occasions of His discourses, makes His exposition of general application; and, drawing out to a wide range the lessons arising out of a single event or the words spoken solely with regard to some individual circumstance, introduces into the discussion of the matters in hand a rich abundance of profitable illustrations: we shall suppose that in this also He meant to say that unless through His grace a man washes away from himself the defilement of sin and error, he will have no share in the life that proceeds from Him, and will remain without a taste of the kingdom of heaven. For the uncleansed may not enter the mansions above, but only they who have their conscience cleansed by love to Christ, and have been sanctified in the Spirit by Holy Baptism.

9 Simon Peter saith unto Him, Lord, not my feet only, but also my hands and my head.

He who lately exhibited to us so strongly his opposition to what Christ was doing, and who expressly refused to allow the washing of his feet, now offers not them only, but also hands and head as well. For if, says he, my refusal to assent to Thy wish and Thy deliberate purpose, in the matter of washing my feet, is to be followed by my falling away from my fellowship with Thee, and by my being excluded from the blessings for which I hope; then I will offer Thee my other members also, rather than incur so very frightful a loss. Certainly therefore pious devotion was the motive of the former refusal: it was the behaviour of one who feared to submit to the action because there seemed to be something about it which he could not bring himself to tolerate, and not at all the conduct of one who set himself in opposition to his master's injunctions. For bearing in mind, as I said, both the dignity of the Saviour and the utter unworthiness of his own nature, he at first refused; but on learning the jeopardy in which he had thus put himself, immediately he hastens to change his will so as to conform to the good pleasure of his Master.

But look again closely, and accept what was done as a pattern for our profit. For in spite of having said: *Thou shalt never wash my feet*, he in a moment changes from his purpose thus expressed, not allowing it to be the uppermost thought in his mind that he ought to appear truthful in the eyes of men by adhering to his own words, but rather [influenced by the warning] that he would find a greater and more grievous loss to be the necessary consequence

of holding to what he had said. Therefore every one ought to guard against using rash and hasty words, and no one ought in a spirit of violent energy to hastily urge a course of action, which on account of its very recklessness may be afterwards bitterly regretted. But if anything should ever happen to be said by any one in such a way that by persistence in adhering to it something of great value and importance would suffer harm, let the speaker in such a case learn from the words before us that it is very much better for him not to preserve consistency, and not to vainly carry out an intention merely because he has once given expression to it, but rather to use all his efforts to do what will really be profitable to him. For every one, I imagine, will allow that it is safer to incur an indictment for inconsistency in our words, than to suffer a loss of indispensable blessings. And let swearing be altogether absent from our conversation; for words are often spoken on the spur of the moment and without deliberate intention, and our plans are necessarily liable to occasional change and chance. For surely it may be called a worthy and in very truth an enviable possession, to have a discreet tongue, that very rarely lapses into unbecoming language. And since even the Divine Scripture itself has shown to us that the matter is one for violent and tedious struggling---for, as it is written, *the tongue can no man tame*,---let us keep the utterance of our words free from oaths. For then, if circumstances compel us to refrain from carrying out something we have said, the blame will be less, and our error will be liable to a less severe indictment. And readily will pardon be granted, I think, even by God Himself, for the thoughtless levity of language that is ever besetting us: for *who can understand his errors?* according to that which is written. Else surely man would utterly perish from the face of the earth, since most easily does language fall away into mistakes of all kinds; for it is a work of the greatest difficulty to keep our tongue under due restraint.

10, 11 *Jesus saith to him, He that is bathed needeth not save to wash his feet, but is clean every whit: and ye are clean, but not all. For He knew him that should betray Him; therefore said He, Ye are not all clean.*

He draws His illustration from a common incident of ordinary human life, and opportunely contrives the rebuke to the traitor, teaching the man both to repent of his purpose and to change himself to a better mind. For even if Christ's reproaches do not yet convict him of his meditated treachery, yet the saying must carry with it a stern significance. For in testifying to the perfect cleanness of some [but not all] of the disciples, He thereby makes the one who was not clean feel an uneasy suspicion, and points out the presence of a polluted one. For Christ graciously commends the cleanness of His other disciples, as shown by their willing joy in attending on Him continually, the hardship they underwent in following Him, their firmness in faith, and their fulness of love towards Him. On Judas, however, the reproach of his insatiable covetousness and the feebleness of his affection for our Lord Jesus the Christ are branding the ineffaceable stain, and steeping him in the pollution, of his incomparably hideous treachery. When therefore Christ says: Now *ye are clean, but not all*, though the language is obscure, yet it conveys a profitable rebuke to the traitor. For although He did not speak plainly, as we have just said, still in each man's heart conscience was sitting in judgment, pricking the sinner to the heart, and bringing home to the guilty one the force of the words according to their necessary meaning.

And notice how fully the conduct of Christ is expressive of a certain set purpose and of God-befitting forbearance. For if He had said plainly who it was that would betray Him, He would have made the other disciples to be at enmity with the traitor. Judas might thence perhaps have suffered some fatal mischief, and have undergone a premature penalty at the hands of

one who was spurred on by pious zeal to prevent the murder of his Master by previously putting to death His would-be betrayer. Therefore, by merely giving an obscure hint, and then leaving the conviction to gnaw its way to the conscience, He proved incontestably the greatness of His inherent forbearance. For although He well, knew that Judas had no kindly feeling or wise consideration for His Master, but that he was full of the poison of devilish bitterness and even then devising the means whereby he might effect the betrayal, He honoured him in the same measure as the rest, and washed even his feet also, continually exhibiting the marks of His own love, and not letting loose His anger till He had tried every kind of remonstrance. For thou mayest perceive how this special characteristic also is peculiar to the Divine Nature. For although God knows what is about to happen, He brings His punishment prematurely on no man: but rather, after bearing with the guilty for the utmost length of needful time, when He sees them in no way profiting thereby, but rather remaining in their self-chosen evil ways, then at length He punishes them; showing it to be the actual result of their perverse folly, and not really an effect of His own counsel or of His will. For instance, Ezekiel on this account says: *As I live, saith the Lord, I desire not the death of him that dieth, but rather that he should turn from his evil way and live.* Therefore with long-suffering and forbearance our Lord Jesus the Christ still treats the traitor just as He does His other disciples, although *the devil had already put into his heart to betray Him*, (for this also the Evangelist was constrained to point out at the outset of the narrative;) and washes his feet, thus making his impious conduct absolutely inexcusable, so that his apostasy might be seen to be the fruit of the wickedness which was in him.

12, 13, 14, 15 *So when He had washed the disciples' feet, and taken His garments, and sat down again, He said unto them: Know ye what I have done to you? Ye call Me Lord, and Master: and ye say well; for so I am. If I then, the Lord and the Master, have washed your feet, ye also ought to wash one another's feet. For I have given you an example, that ye also should do as I have done to you.*

He now clearly explains the object of what He has done, and says that this example of incomparable humility had been set forth for the sake of the benefit therefrom derived for us: and in making His reproof of pride unanswerable, He is constrained to put forward the conspicuous example of His Own Person. For in such an act anyone may behold the incomparable greatness of His humiliation. When anything is in itself considered most ignoble, or held to be quite undignified, in what manner could it possibly suffer degradation or pass to a stage of lower esteem? For anyone may see that in such a thing, if in nothing else, there is an original and natural baseness. But when we have been observing an object pre-eminent for its high position, our wonder is excited if we see it suddenly humiliated: for it has descended to a sphere not its own. Therefore it was that our Lord Jesus the Christ felt constrained, in giving the lesson of humility to His disciples, or rather through them to all that dwell on the earth, not merely to say: "As I washed your feet, so also ought ye to do," but rather to bring into conspicuous prominence His peculiar claim to their obedience; and, while setting forth to their minds the glory that was His by natural right, by His action to put to shame the vain-glorious. For He says: *Ye yourselves style Me Lord, and Master; and ye say well, for so I am.* And observe how in the midst of His discourse He showed His watchful care for the edification of those who believe, and was not unaware of the evil-speaking of the unholy heretics. For after saying to His own disciples: *Ye style Me Lord, and Master;* then, lest any should suppose that He is not by nature Lord or Master, but that He holds the title simply as a mark of honour from those who shall be devoted to Him, He has emphatically added, to dispel such suggestions, the words: *And ye say well, for so I am.* For Christ does not

hold the title *Lord* as an empty name of honour, like we do ourselves when, although we remain by nature mere servants, we are decorated by favour of others with titles that surpass our nature and merit: but He is in His nature "*Lord*," possessing authority over the universe as God; concerning Whom it is said somewhere by the voice of the Psalmist: *For all things serve Thee*. And He is by nature "*Master*" [or "*Teacher*"] also, for *all wisdom cometh from the Lord*, and by Him cometh all understanding. For inasmuch as He is wisdom He makes all intelligent beings wise, and in every rational creature both in heaven and in earth He implants the intelligence that is fitting for it. For just as, being Himself in His nature Life, He vivifies all things capable of receiving life; so also, since He is Himself the wisdom of the Father, He bestows on all the gifts of wisdom, namely, knowledge and perception of all good things. By nature therefore the Son is *Lord* and *Master* of all things. "Since therefore," [He seems to say,] "I, Who am such as this and so mighty in glory, have shown you that I shrink not from condescending to this ill-befitting humiliation, even to *have washed your feet*, how will ye any longer refuse to do the like for one another?" And hereby He teaches them not to be ever scornfully declaiming against the honour bestowed on others, but each one to think his fellow-servant to excel himself and in every possible respect to be superior. And very excellent this teaching is: for I do not think anyone can shew us anything to match a temper that is ever averse to arrogance; and nothing so severs brethren and friends as the unbridled passion for miserable and petty dignities. For somehow we are always grasping after what is greater, and the empty honours of life are ever persuading our easily-yielding minds to vault up towards a more brilliant station. In order therefore that we may save ourselves from this disease, and obtain final relief from so loathsome a passion,----for the passion for vain-glory is a mere fraud, and nothing less,----let us engrave on our inmost hearts the memory of Christ the King of all men washing *His disciples' feet*, to teach us also to wash one another's feet. For by this means every tendency to arrogance will be kept in restraint, and every form of worldly vain-glory will depart from among us. For if He Who is by nature Lord acts the part of a servant, how shall one that is a servant refuse to undergo any of those things that are altogether proper for his condition, without suffering in consequence the worst possible penalty?

16, 17 *Verily, verily, I say unto you, A servant is not greater than his lord; neither one that is sent greater than he that sent him. If ye know these things, blessed are ye if ye do them.*

Christ proceeds to strengthen the effect of His action by [deriving the same lesson from] laws that may be termed necessary, and shows that the transgression of His beneficial commandment would be in the highest degree dangerous. For when a law is confirmed by an oath, the transgressor of it cannot escape a just accusation. He says therefore that it is an offence admitting of no palliation, for servants to refuse to be of the same mind as their own masters: because a passionate longing for greater things, and for things higher than our merits deserve, is really covetousness and nothing else. And just so He would with perfect justice bring the same charge against the Apostles, namely, of seeking to be on a higher level than He Who commissioned them. For the mind of Him Who sent them should suffice for them, as the measure of all their glory. But this is nothing else than to use exactly the following argument:----"You will justly be laughed to scorn before the Divine tribunal if through excess of pride you refuse to do for each other the same things that I have done for you, although you have received as your lot the common name of servants, whereas I have been from the beginning in My nature God and Lord." For it would be truly preposterous, or rather not without indication of a share in the most extreme madness, for those who are servants, and therefore inferior to their Master and Sender, to blush with unsuitable shame at the idea of being servants to one another.

If therefore ye understand *these things*, He saith----that is, "if ye can clearly perceive the meaning of what I am saying,"----*blessed are ye if ye do them*. For it is not the knowledge of virtue, but rather the practice of it, that may well be pronounced worthy of both love and zeal. And I think that perchance it may be even better never at all to have learned, than after so learning to hamper one's mind with the bonds of indolence, and refuse to carry out in action what one knows to be the best and right course; according to the saying of the Saviour: *He that knew not his lord's will, and did it not, shall be beaten with few stripes; but he that knew it, and did it not, shall be beaten with many stripes*. For in the case of a man who has sinned in total ignorance, it would not be at all unseemly for him, if perchance he were being visited with correction for his carelessness, to ask for a partial forgiveness: but in the case of one who knew what he was doing, that knowledge would become grievously weighty towards his condemnation. For though nothing was wanting to enable him, yet he disdained to do what was right and seemly. Knowledge therefore must lead to action: for then, clothed with perfect confidence in our citizenship in Christ, we shall receive in due season our most plenteous reward. As an instance of this, the Saviour said that whosoever did and taught [His commandments] should *be called great in the kingdom of heaven*: and that very justly, for what is wanting to such a man to make his goodness perfect? And whensoever a man can show that he can take to himself full credit for good deeds, then surely he will be able to glory in receiving most perfect gifts from God. And so whenever actions go hand in hand with knowledge, then assuredly there is no trifling gain; but when either is lacking, the other will be very much crippled: and it is written: *Even faith apart from works is dead*. Although the knowledge of God Who is One even in nature, and the confession of Him in guilelessness and truth is all included in *faith*, yet even this *is dead*, if it is not accompanied by the bright light which proceeds from *works*. Surely therefore it is utterly profitless merely to know what is good and yet to be undesirous to practise it at once. For this reason then He says that His own disciples, and so also all that believe on Him, will be *blessed*, if they have not only grasped the knowledge of the words spoken by Him, but are also fulfilling those words by their deeds.

18 *I speak not of you all, for I know those whom I have chosen: but that the scripture may be fulfilled, He that eateth his bread with Me lifted up his heel against Me.*

The meaning of these words is involved in no slight uncertainty. For while saying that they shall be *blessed*, who, knowing what is good, are ever zealous to carry it out in action, He straightway adds: *I speak not of all*. In these words, as I with many others believe, He hints darkly at the traitor; for in no enviable plight is one who is hated of God, and never would one be reckoned among the *blessed* who had so degraded his soul as to make it capable of such horrible impiety. And this interpretation of the passage before us is the one currently accepted with most men: but there is besides yet another possible meaning. For as Christ was intending to say, according to the perfect and most holy word of Scripture: *He that eateth My bread* did magnify himself contemptuously, or *lifted up his heel against Me*, He in some sort explains Himself beforehand, and carefully avoids giving pain to the faithful company of the other disciples, by attaching the force of His reproach to one single individual. For since they were all eating His bread, that is, sharing the same feast and helping to consume the food that He had caused to be provided, therefore He does well in not allowing the minds of the innocent to be crushed by vain fears, and He drives away the bitterness of suspicion by saying: *I speak not of you all; for I know whom I have chosen. But*, He says, *that the Scripture may be fulfilled, He that eateth My bread lifted up his heel against Me*, or, did magnify himself contemptuously, according to the voice of the Psalmist. Something of this kind I imagine the passage to imply. Seeing therefore that a double meaning is delivered to us by these words, let

the devout student test for himself the better and truer sense of them: but now let us comment further on the saying, in the endeavour to confirm the faith of simple folk.

For doubts may be felt regarding this passage in two ways. And first, some one will meet us with the objection: "If we believe that Christ was all-knowing, why did He choose Judas; and why did He associate him with the other disciples, if He was not unaware that he would be convicted of treachery and fall a prey to the snares of covetousness?" Furthermore, another will say: "And if, as Christ Himself says, Judas *lifted up his heel against* his Master on this account, namely, *that the Scripture may be fulfilled*, surely he himself could not be deemed guilty, as responsible for what had happened, but the blame must rest with the power that caused the Scripture to be fulfilled."

Now it is our duty speedily to give answers in detail to the objections we have mentioned, and to construct by all the arguments in our power the proper defence to be urged against each, for the edification and comfort of those who are not enabled by the resources of their own minds to understand the contents of the Divine Scripture. And first we have this to say, that if we were to be carried away by such criticisms on all the dealings of God, we should never cease to censure our Maker, but should be ever railing against the God Who calls non-existent things into being, and ignorantly depreciating His boundless love to man. For tell me what there is to prevent others also from using, possibly, objections such as this: "Why didst Thou choose Saul and anoint him to be king over Israel, when Thou knewest that he would altogether disregard Thy favour?" And why do I say only this? For the plausible nature of the charge thus laid will extend back to Adam, the leader of our race. Some one of those who are thus minded will perhaps say: "Why didst Thou, the All-knowing, fashion man out of the ground? For Thou wast not ignorant that he would fall and transgress the commandment given to him." On the same principle he would go on to make further clamorous objections on even higher and more important matters: "Why hast Thou created the nature of angels, well knowing, as God, the senseless decadence into apostasy that would befall some of them? For not all of them have *kept their own principality*." What result therefore would such reasoning lead to? The foreknowledge of God would never have allowed Him to appear as Creator, nor would the rational creation have even passed at all into existence, so that God would have been Sovereign of the irrational and senseless creation only, without anyone to acknowledge Him as being in His nature God. Now I think that those who look into the matter cannot help very clearly perceiving, that the Creator of all things entrusted to the rational among His creatures the guidance of their own purposes; and suffered them to move, at the bidding of impulses regulated by themselves, towards whatsoever object each might individually choose, after discovering by tests the best possible course. Those therefore that have inclined rightly to the side of good, preserve safe their own fair reputation, and remain sharers of the good things that have been allotted to them, and find themselves undisturbed in their tranquillity of mind. But those that are corrupted in their own evil thoughts, and are dragged down to lawlessness as it were by irresistible torrents of passions, endure the penalty that befits their crime; and, justly convicted on the charge of their utter ingratitude, will be subjected to severe and endless retribution. You will find also the nature of the angels to have been created with similar possibilities and limitations. For those that *kept their own principality* have their abiding-place and station in the midst of all beatitude sure and steadfast: but they who by their proneness to evil have fallen gradually away from their ancient glory, are *cast down to hell in chains of darkness*, as it is written, and *are kept unto the judgment of the great day*. In like manner was the first man, that is, Adam, created in the beginning. For he was in Paradise, and amid the highest delights, namely those that are spiritual, and in the presence of the glory

of God. And he would have remained in the enjoyment of the good things that were bestowed on his nature at the beginning, if he had not been turned away to apostasy and disobedience, most rashly transgressing the commandment enjoined from above. Thus, too, God anointed Saul to be king: for he was in the beginning a not ignoble character; when however his conduct showed that a change had come over him, God removed him from his honourable rank and regal splendour.

In like manner Christ chose Judas and associated him with the holy disciples, since he was certainly gifted at first with a capacity for discipleship. But when after a while the temptations of Satan succeeded in making him captive to base greediness for gain, when he was conquered by passion and had become by this means a traitor, then he was rejected by God. This therefore was in no way the fault of Him Who called this man to be an Apostle. For it lay in the power of Judas to have saved himself from falling, namely, by making the more excellent choice, and transforming his whole heart and soul so as to become a sincere follower of Christ.

And to the second of the objections we are considering we make this answer. Let no one suppose, as do some ignorant persons, that the oracles delivered by the holy prophets are carried onward to final accomplishment simply in order that the Scriptures may be fulfilled. For if this is truly the case, there will be nothing to prevent those who have minutely shaped their conduct according to the letter of Scripture, from finding not invalid excuses for sin, or rather from actually making out that they have never erred at all. "For if it needs must have been," one will say, "that the Scriptures should be fulfilled by such and such things, surely those who were the instruments of the fulfilment must be free from all censure." The Divine Scripture therefore in such a case must have appeared especially as *a minister of sin*, urging men on as it were by force to the deeds spoken of by it, in order that what was uttered in days of old might really come to pass. But, because of this, I think the argument is very full of blasphemy. For who could ever be so utterly void of proper reason as to suppose that the Word of the Holy Ghost should become to any a patron of sin? Therefore we do not believe that the deeds of any were done simply for this reason, namely, that the Scriptures might be fulfilled. But the Holy Ghost has spoken in perfect foreknowledge as to what will happen, in order that, when the time comes for the event, we may find in the prediction which describes the event, a pledge to establish our faith, and may thenceforward hold it without hesitation. And as our discussion of this question in another book is very full, it seems now somewhat superfluous to linger any further in lengthy discourses on the matter.

19 *From henceforth I tell you before it come to pass, that, when it is come to pass, ye may believe that I am He.*

I have been led on, He says, by very urgent reasons to give you, even before the time, this account of the events that will very shortly happen. For it will ¹ gratify those who hear Me, and bring them no slight advantage, if they know My aim in the matter. For to be recklessly wasteful in the use of words in meaningless dissertations is contrary to My custom and pleasure: but whatsoever seems likely to be fraught with no slight profit to you provided you have knowledge of it, this I feel constrained to instil in your ears. *From henceforth* therefore, He says, *I tell you* things that are even now at the doors, and I implant in you the knowledge of things not yet fulfilled; *that, when* the time for their occurrence has come, *you* may be able to harmonise the final issue of the matters with the prophecies uttered by Me, and so *may believe that I am He* concerning Whom the Divine Scripture has uttered such oracles. At one and the same time therefore our Lord Jesus the Christ wisely attempts to correct the traitor,

putting forward His rebuke in a form concealed under slight obscurities, as well as to show that the issue of the treachery would be a sure sign and most clear indication of the fact that He is Christ. For, as we have already said by anticipation, any one who compared the utterances recorded from old time in the sacred Scriptures with the daring deeds of the traitor, would perceive I think very clearly and without difficulty that their interpretation in reference to Him was certainly and very evidently true.

20 Verily, verily, I say unto you, He that receiveth whomsoever I send receiveth Me; and he that receiveth Me receiveth Him that sent Me.

Having previously shown in a manner suitable to the occasion that He is the Christ, and having indicated the means by which the traitor was meditating his grievous outrage against Him, He now devises another very effectual method for overthrowing his evil designs. And now again His discourse seems to be marked by a certain want of distinctness: for He is still trying to conceal the daring deed, and as yet does not openly say who is about to betray Him. He proves therefore, and that very effectually by a clear illustration, that it is absolutely necessary to consider the Person of God the Father as included in the object of the love and reverence shown to Himself. And yet the main object that He wishes here to demonstrate is surely not this, but rather perhaps in my opinion exactly the converse. For leaving, as seems probable, the plainer [negative] form of speech, which He used at other times,----as for example in the words:*He that honoureth not the Son honoureth not the Father*,----He has here passed to the milder [positive] form of expression, intending all the while that His hearers should from this infer the converse. For surely it was a time for threatening rather than for exhortation, when the deed was already at the doors, and when the grievous outrage against Him was already in course of preparation. For Satan had already planted the evil design in the heart of the traitor. "As therefore," He says, "a man would certainly acknowledge Me in My own person and not another, if he received one who had been sent by Me; even so he that received One sent forth by God the Father would in all likelihood receive the Father Himself." But in these words of Christ any one may perceive the meaning indicated, seeing through the mildness of the language. And turning the statement into its converse, the traitor's impiety will be seen to be a transgression, not only against the Son, but also against even the Father Himself. The language used is therefore a form of threatening, though couched in somewhat mild terms; and it conveys the same idea that words of foreboding would properly suggest. For even as one among ourselves will receive one sent by God, assenting to the words he speaks, and paying honour to the God of Whom he preaches by observing the Divine oracles he proclaims; on just the same grounds I think one would receive the Lord, and through Him the Father, by believing on the Son. For the manifestation of the parent is ever the natural office of the offspring. So he who has fully believed that Christ is the Son thereby fully confesses the God Who begat the Son. Terrible therefore is the sentence pronounced on the traitor, since his rebellious insult is even against God the Father, because so much is involved in his impious outrage against the Son. For if with unswerving faith he had acknowledged the Son to be God of God, he would then have accepted and revered Him, submitting heart and soul in sincerity to Him as to the Lord; and then would the wretched man have found his love to Christ stronger than base passions, nor methinks would he, by being found guilty of treachery, have made it true concerning himself that it would have been better for him if he had never at all been born.

21 *When Jesus had thus said, He was troubled in the spirit, and testified, and said, Verily, verily, I say unto you, that one of you shall betray Me.*

Who is there among living men who would not feel plainly convinced that our human faculties are incapable of supplying either ideas or words which may at all express, in an irreproachable and infallible manner, the attributes peculiar to that nature which is both Divine and ineffable? Therefore we depend on the words of which our faculties are capable, as a feeble medium of expressing such things as pass our understanding. For how can we speak with clear fulness on a subject that really transcends the very limits of our comprehension? We are compelled therefore to take the feebleness of human phrases as a faint image of the true ideas, and then to endeavour to pass onward, as far at least as circumstances will allow, to realise the peculiarities of the Divine attributes. The Divine nature is exceedingly terrible in uttering reproofs, and is stirred to violent emotion by unmingled hatred of evil, against whomsoever the Divine decree may have determined that this feeling is justly due; and this in spite of immeasurable long-suffering. Whenever therefore the Divine Scripture wishes to express God's emotion against impious designs of whatever kind, it derives its language as on other occasions from expressions in use among us, and in human phraseology speaks of anger and wrath; although the Divine Essence is subject to none of these passions in any way that bears comparison with our feelings, but is moved to indignation the extent of which is known only to Itself and is natural to Itself alone, for the ways of God are utterly unspeakable. But the Divine Scripture, as we have said, is wont to record things too great for us in accordance with human fashion. Therefore here also the inspired Evangelist says that Christ *was troubled in the spirit*, calling the evil-hating emotion of the Spirit "trouble," because, as it seems, there was no other word he could use. And it certainly seems as though the emotion of the Godhead, intolerant of the restraint of the flesh, did really bring about a slight shuddering and an apparent condition of disturbance, exhibiting the outward signs of anger; doubtless similar to what is recorded also at [the raising of] Lazarus, [where we read] that Jesus went to the tomb *groaning* [or, moved with indignation] *in Himself*. For just as in that passage Christ's stern menace against death is called "groaning," even so here also His emotion against the impious traitor is indicated by the word "trouble." And good cause He had to be *troubled*, in indignation at the stubborn wickedness of Judas. For what could be the ultimate end of the impiety of one who, although in common with the other disciples he was the recipient of super-excellent honours and enrolled among the elect, yet was persuaded by a little silver to relinquish all his love to Christ, and while eating His bread lifted up his heel against Him,---a man who regarded neither honour nor fame, neither the law of love nor the reverence due to Christ as God, nor any other of the just claims that were laid upon him; but who, with his eyes fixed only on the loathsome pieces of money that were to be the result of his bargain with the Jews, sold his own soul irrecoverably for those few coins, and betrayed the *innocent* and righteous *blood* into the hands of polluted murderers? Most reasonable was the plea Jesus had for being *troubled*. And the reproof comes home to them in all its sternness, affecting indeed in its special significance one person only of the twelve, but enabling them all in a remarkable manner to realise the extreme horror of the accusation laid; and all but loudly imploring each one among the listeners to strictly guard his own soul, lest by any means it should be unwarily caught in such fatal snares, and fall a foolish prey to the cruel wiles of the devil. Instructive therefore was the force of the reproofs, the disregard of which by the traitor's heart left him to the unchecked influence of his own ambitions. Most emphatically then Christ adds the words: *One of you shall betray Me*. Hereby He either seeks to upbraid the ingratitude of the daring traitor, or indicates the vastness of the wickedness of the devil, which could even carry off one of the Apostles themselves.

22 *The disciples therefore looked one on another, doubting of whom He spake.*

Terror and dread at once thrill the hearts of the disciples, and they glance one at another, being filled with a twofold alarm at the words uttered. For each one, as was natural, on reviewing the state of his own individual soul, was weighed down with grievous fear; and furthermore, they all felt the agony, no less severe, which was produced by the suspicion that rested on them all in common. For they are well assured that the words spoken will be fully verified. They know that the saying of the Saviour could not pass away unfulfilled; and yet they reckon it as a terrible and unbearable misery that any one of those numbered among the disciples should have relapsed into such a depth of impiety. This leads them each one to examine his own conscience, and to look around him in bewildered inquiry as to who it is to whose share the lot of perdition is to fall, wondering much whence or how Satan will obtain such power as to steal away the allegiance of one even of Christ's own peculiar companions.

23, 24, 25, 26 *There was at the table reclining in Jesus' bosom one of His disciples, whom Jesus loved. Simon Peter therefore beckoneth to him to ask who it might be of whom He spake. And he leaning back, as he was, on Jesus' breast, saith unto Him, Lord, who is it? Jesus therefore answereth, He it is to whom I shall give the sop when I have dipped it.*

We might naturally be filled with admiration, and especially from this further instance, at the zealous ardour displayed by the holy disciples in their love to God, and at the excessive strictness of their devotion. For being unable of themselves to know the guilty person, whoever he might be, and refusing also to place confidence in the uncertainties of deceitful conjectures, they again give vent to their curiosity by questions, and make one who was preeminent among them, I mean Peter, the representative of their eagerness to learn the truth. Peter shrinks from putting the question by his own mouth, and entrusts the interrogation to him who is reclining next to Christ and who is beloved for his more conspicuous purity, I mean John, the author of the book before us; who, in speaking of himself as beloved by Christ, has concealed his own name, burying it in silence, lest he might seem to any to be making a boastful display. For the mind of the saints is untainted by any such ambition. And so, turning himself gently towards his Master, in a secret whisper he sought to learn who was to be *the son of perdition*. But the Saviour vouchsafes to him no further indication of the fact save what had been proclaimed of old by the voice of the prophet in the words: *He that eateth my bread did magnify himself contemptuously against me*. For when He has dipped the sop, He gives it to Judas, thereby showing who it was that was eating His bread. And He thus both removes the fear felt by the holy disciples, and seems to remind them of another prophecy, that runs thus: *But it was even thou, O my companion, my guide, and mine own familiar friend: eating at the same board, thou didst make my food sweet to me: we walked in the house of God as friends*. For there was a time when even the traitor himself was a companion and a familiar friend to the Saviour, eating at the same board with Him, and sharing in everything that is reckoned to denote true discipleship; inasmuch as he had his allotted portion among the other holy disciples, who, with their whole lives devoted to the Saviour, traversing in His company the length and breadth of Judaea, were zealous attendants on Him in all His mighty works, and hastened on all occasions to do whatever might redound to His honour and glory. And yet this familiar friend and companion exchanged the grateful service owed to One Who had so honoured him for slavery to disgraceful passions.

Notice again how effectually the very wise Evangelist spurs us on to a desire to live, as far as possible, in the manner most accordant with reason, and to train up the keenness of our intellectual powers so as to be able, and that with perfect ease, to act in obedience to the Divine intentions, and to endeavour, as far as in us lies, to thoroughly fulfil the conditions of the vision of God. He tells us that he was himself the object of special honour and love on the part of Christ our Saviour, so as even to recline next Him, actually in the very bosom of the Lord, deeming this circumstance a token of His surpassing affection towards him. Nearest therefore to God, and as it were in the highest place in His honour, will most especially be those whose heart is pure: and to them also the Saviour Himself assigns conspicuous honour when He says that *the pure in heart shall be blessed, for they shall see God*. And we shall bring forward, as evidence of the truth of this saying, even this very wise Evangelist himself. For he has seen the glory of Christ, according to his own words, for he says: *I beheld His glory, the glory as of the Only-begotten of the Father, full of grace and truth*. For surely not with bodily eyes could any one gaze at the nature of Him Who to every creature is absolutely invisible. For, according to the Saviour's words: *No man hath seen the Father, save He Which is from God, that is, the Son; He hath seen the Father*. To those however who keep their mind untainted by worldly stain, and freed from vain imagination whose only concern is with this life, it seems that Christ reveals His own peculiar glory by a subtle and perhaps incomprehensible process, thereby showing forth also the glory of the Father. For it must have been with this meaning that He said: *He that hath seen Me hath seen the Father*.

27 So when He had dipped the sop, He giveth it to Judas Iscariot, the son of Simon. And after the sop, Satan entered into him.

Most distinct was the token to mark the traitor that the Saviour showed to His own disciples. For when He had dipped the sop He gave it to him, thereby making clearly evident who it was that did eat of His bread, and was now about to lift up his heel against Him. Nevertheless the very wise Evangelist tells us that the guide and instigator of his impiety and accursed cruelty to Christ, and the deviser of the whole scheme, had rushed into the heart of the traitor, even that Satan in all his evil power had taken up his abode within him after the giving of the sop. And let no one suppose on the contrary that the sop was to the traitor the cause of his being possessed by Satan. For we shall not have so nearly reached the verge of madness, nor shall we even prove ourselves so bereft of proper intelligence, as to suppose that such a gift could have afforded the evil one any pretext for an entrance; but we will rather say this, keeping our statement about the traitor well within the limits of the truth:---Seeing that, although perfect love had been shown towards him, and nothing was in any way lacking of the things that are generally reckoned to imply a disposition to confer honour, he still clung fast to the same evil endeavours, never correcting by repentance his wicked thoughts, never turning his heart away from its ungodly designs, never weeping in bitter sorrow for the wickedness he had so much as dared to conceive; but still thirsting more and more to accomplish to the full his impious purpose, and so to be finally ruined by his own evil recklessness: *Satan consequently entered into him*, finding his heart ready and open like a gate to receive him, unprotected by sobriety; and seeing that his mind was not locked against him, but rather already inflamed with a willingness to do whatsoever he might wish and suggest.

And by searching thoroughly the inspired Scripture we shall find this to be an accustomed habit, as we may say, of the evil one. He at the beginning opens his attack by trying the hearts of those who worship God, first of all sowing the seed of evil questionings, and inciting us with the bait of paltry pleasures to false steps of various kinds. And he above all most violently

assaults us at any point where he sees we have already suffered and been vanquished before. For he always uses somehow our own weakness as an auxiliary to his wicked devices, and employs again the passion which previously injured our soul. Thus, for example, he harasses one man perhaps with violent assaults through the senses which become the most depraved incentives to fleshly pleasures; whereas in the case of another who is overcome by base gains, to make a profit of unholy wealth seems somehow held up to honour as the best thing possible. Whenever therefore he makes war against us, he uses as an auxiliary force the passion that has before held sway in warring against us, and by its agency he ever devises the scheme of our perdition. For just as a commander, skilled in generalship, when laying siege to a city, hastens with all speed and by every device to attack the weakened parts of the wall, thither ordering his battering-engines to be brought into action, well knowing that in those quarters the capture will be easy; even so methinks Satan, when intending to lay siege to a human soul, sets to work at its weakest part, thinking that he will by this means bring it into easy subjection, especially when he sees it receiving no assistance from those helps by which it is likely the passion would be defeated, such as noble emotions, provocations to manly courage, suggestions to devotion, and the mystic Eucharist. For this most of all is effective as an antidote to the murderous poison of the devil.

Therefore it happened that the traitor was not dismayed at rebukes uttered as yet quietly and secretly, nor did he even regard the invincible might of love, nor honour and glory and grace, nor the gift that he received from Christ. But hurrying on, without pausing to reflect or checking himself for a moment, his eyes fixed on that, and that alone, which had proved too strong for him once before, I mean the curse of avarice, he was now finally ensnared, and fell to utter ruin. For no longer has he Satan merely as a counsellor, but he takes him now to be master of his whole heart and absolute dominator of his thoughts, who was at first merely an adviser who whispered suggestions. For *Satan entered into him*, according to the language of the gospel.

We must therefore be on our guard against, and very carefully avoid, the harm that may result from the first approaches of evil; and we ought as a duty to remember him who said: *If the spirit of the powerful one rise up against thee, leave not thy place, for a remedy will keep in check great sins*. For necessity would compel us again to grant authority over our thoughts to *the spirit of the powerful one*. If there is not in us the power to resist altogether, still we are at any rate able to check a growing impulse at the outset, and not to allow it to take deep root by lazily yielding and giving way to it: rather we should hasten to extirpate it, as the germ of bitterness, desiring that our minds should be free from its vexations. Else we must surely know that Satan will prevail little by little through continual flattery, and we shall probably experience something like what the Psalmist did, who says: *Before I was humbled, I went wrong*. For before we suffer the full effect of the sin, we go astray in yielding assent to evil thoughts, cherishing them with approval, and so by this means giving Satan a place of access. And the case of the traitor will be to us a type and example of the whole matter.

28 *Jesus saith unto him, That thou doest, do quickly. Now no man at the table knew for what intent He spake this unto him.*

It may seem perhaps to some that this present verse is somewhat out of harmony, and not in a very close connexion with what has been just previously said. "For what can be the reason," some one may ask, and not inappropriately, "that, while reproving the would-be traitor, and in a secret and somewhat obscure fashion seeking to divert him from his murderous design

against Himself, the Lord now seems to be spurring him on to carry it into action, and urges him to proceed without delay to such an accursed and impious deed? And verily," he would say, "what need was there to urge on, more than he himself was inclined, one who was possessed by a disease that sprang out of his own heart, to commit a crime that had been started by his own device; instead of rather curbing his passion by admonitions to amendment, and hindering him from carrying out his intended plans?" One might readily say that the objection here alleged was wanting in proper cogency: still, by fastening our attention more keenly on the sense involved in the passage, we shall find that nothing is spoken unfittingly, but that on the contrary there is latent in the words a very pertinent signification, which I will endeavour briefly to set forth as far as I am able.

It was therefore not without careful foresight that the wise Evangelist told us in the preceding verses that Satan himself had forced his way and entered into the heart of the traitor, to the end that our Lord Jesus the Christ may now appear to be really and truly addressing Satan himself rather than the disciple who by heedless infatuation had fallen into his power, when He said: *That thou doest, do quickly*. It is as though He were saying plainly: "That work of thine, O Satan, whereof thou alone knowest, and which is ever dear to thee, see that thou *do quickly*. Thou killedst the prophets: thou wast ever leading on the Jews to impiety: in former days thou didst procure the death by stoning of those who were sent as ambassadors bearing the word of salvation to Israel: thou sparedst not one of those who were sent forth from God: towards them thou didst show forth thy incredible brutality and the excesses of thy madness. And now I am come following in their steps. To those who are still wandering in error I bring the power to avoid wandering so again for ever: to those that are in darkness I ensure a life within the light of God: and to those who have fallen into thy net, and become a prey to thy cruelty, I bring the power of escape from all thy snares. I am come to break up the sovereignty of the sin that thou hast caused to reign, and to make manifest to every man Who is in His nature the true God. But full well I know thy implacable temper. Whatsoever harm therefore thou art wont to attempt against all who wish to accomplish such works as I have come to do, that do thou even now practise against Me. For thou wilt cause Me no more grief by being swift to attack and very urgent in thy assault, however great will be the pang piercing through Me at first."

Verily I for my part imagine that these words of the Saviour imply by somewhat obscure intimations the substance of what I have just said: but pray let us now proceed further to investigate the reason for His urging that the daring deed should be hastened. Terrible indeed beyond all description is the rash cruelty of the godless sinners who had deliberately planned in their ungovernable madness the outrageous crime. Before Him there lay, as He knew, insults and blasphemies intolerable, stripes and spitting, and the final misery of the death on the tree; nails and cross, vinegar and gall, and the spear-wounds. Why then, one may ask, does He hasten it on, and desire that the devil's designs concerning His passion should be brought to a speedy accomplishment? For the Jews were indeed instruments and accomplices in the crime, but it is to the devil that we will attribute the original authorship of the wicked deeds, as well as the supreme direction of the whole matter on to its most accursed conclusion. Still, however terrible may have been the daring insults offered to Christ by the unholy Jews, and however intolerable the overweening impiety of those who crucified Him, He knew most fully the ultimate purpose of all He had to suffer, and foresaw everything that would follow therefrom. For by the effect of His precious cross the sovereignty of the devil was doomed to fall to eternal ruin; death was to be deprived of its sting, and the sway of corruption to be destroyed; the human race was to be freed from that ancient curse, and to be

enabled through the gracious love of our Saviour Christ to hope for the annulling of the sentence: *Earth thou art, and to earth shalt thou return; all iniquity*, in the words of the prophet, was to *stop her mouth*, and those in all the world that know not Him Who alone is in His nature God were to be utterly brought to nought, and no longer to condemn those that had been in her power but were justified by faith in Christ; and for the time to come the gate of paradise was to be expected to be opened. The world below was to be united with the world above, and the *heavens* to be *opened*, according to the saying of Christ; and the bands of the holy *angels* were to *ascend and descend upon the Son of Man*. Tell me therefore, seeing that such wondrous blessings were now in store for men, and that so brilliant an expectation was raised into existence for us by the agency of the salutary cross, was it not a matter of course that He Who thirsted for our salvation, and for this cause was made like unto us except in sin, should be eager to see actually present the time for which He longed thus earnestly? And was it not natural for One Who knew no evil to despise the handiwork of devilish ingenuity, and to hasten rather to pass onward to the ardently-desired period of such a joyous consummation?

To Satan then, who knew not that he was fighting against his own existence, and was utterly unconscious of going headlong to ruin in bringing to its accomplishment Christ's death upon the Cross, the Saviour addressed the words: *That thou doest, do quickly*. For this is the language of one threatening rather than of one exhorting. It is as though some handsome youth in early manhood, his heart swelling with fresh vigour at the sight of an opponent running at full speed to attack him, were to equip his right arm with a keen battle-axe; and, in full knowledge that his enemy will no sooner reach him than die, were then perchance to exclaim: "*That thou doest, do quickly*; for thou wilt feel the force of my right arm." And surely this would not be the speech of one who is desirous to die, but rather of one who knows certainly that he will be victorious, and will prevail over him who wishes to harm him. In this spirit our Lord Jesus the Christ urges Satan to speed more quickly on his course of daring assault upon Him. For the time has come when He will exhibit the offender fallen into feebleness and universal contempt, and will present to our view the world liberated from the tyrant who in arrogance held it of old, and prevailed against it by cunning deceit so far as even to turn it away from faith in God. The disciples however understand not the force of the saying, and this (it seems) in accordance with the Divine dispensation, as Christ did not unfold its meaning to them: since in other places indeed we find Him teaching them that He would be delivered into the hands of sinners, and that He would be crucified, and put to death, and would rise again on the third day; but ever charging them by no means to tell this to any man. For His aim was to prevent the prince of this world from knowing who in very nature He was, to the end that He might actually be crucified, and by His crucifixion might destroy death, and effectually accomplish salvation for them that believe on Him. Therefore in accordance with His Divine purpose He conceals the deepest meaning of His words: for as God He ever knows what is best for man.

29 But some thought, because Judas had the bag, that Jesus said unto him, Buy what things we have need of for the feast; or, that he should give something to the poor.

The disciples failing to understand the force of Christ's words, readily resort to their ideas of what was usual, and suppose that Christ is once more indicating such commands as it was His wont to give. For as the feast was near at hand, they expected He was ordering the one who *had the bag* to buy something of what was necessary for it, or at least was very probably bidding him discharge that duty of which Christ was ever careful, namely, to give to the needy what He could, according to the resources at His disposal. For *the Lord is gracious and*

merciful, as it is written. And for us also, the example of this occurrence will be found to be most excellent. For I think that those who wish to celebrate a feast in purity of heart and in a manner well-pleasing to God must not regard their own enjoyment alone, nor must they even take thought as to how they themselves alone may keep the feast in all its fullest gladness; but rather they must interweave with their thoughtfulness about themselves the spirit of mercy towards others who are in need. For then, and then only, fulfilling the Divine law of mutual love, shall we in perfection celebrate a truly spiritual feast to the honour of the Saviour Christ. Therefore also the law ordained of old for the Jews concerning the ingathering of the manna, charges those who are able to gather it not to do so for themselves alone: for it says: *Gather ye every man for your companions that are in the tents*. For if any one of their tent-mates was troubled with sickness, those who were free from that affliction, lending him as it were their own vigour, gathered in with their own measure what was enough for the weak as well; so that, in the words of Scripture: *He that gathered much had nothing over, and he that gathered little had no lack*. For so it happened, by a sort of mingling of their stores, that the principle of equality was preserved for all. He therefore does dishonour to the example suitable for holy feasts, who does not combine care for the needy with anxiety on his own account. For the union of these would in very truth make a festival perfect.

30 *And he having received the sop, straightway went out: and it was night.*

In haste he hurries away in obedience to the will of Satan, and like one stung and goaded on to madness he rushes from the house. He sees nothing that can overcome his love of gain, and, marvellous though it is, we shall find him in no way benefited by the gift from Christ, of course because of his irrepressible inclination for getting money. For, completely overpowered by his passion, and possessed heart and soul by the father of all iniquity, the wretched man henceforward cannot even discern whither he is rushing on. So with his soul sunk in a night of its own, and darkened by a gloom-bringing swarm of unholy thoughts, he falls headlong into the abyss of Hades as into a trap; and, according to the saying in Proverbs, he flees away as a stag *smitten to the liver with a dart*, or like a dog into chains, *and knoweth not that he runneth with peril of his life*. And it seems to me that the inspired Evangelist did not without a purpose say that, *having received the sop, he straightway went out*. For Satan is terribly wont to urge on those whom he has once captured, and who have once for all fallen into his power, to straightway accomplish their evil works; and, throwing aside all delay, to compel them even against their will to carry out his pleasure. He fears, perhaps, with his usual bitterness of spirit and continual maliciousness, lest perchance in the interval of postponement some change of mind should overtake the man, inducing him to repent and to form a good resolution, and causing him to lay aside his pleasure in sin as a drunkard might leave off drunkenness; and so drag out of his net a victim whom he had deemed already caught in its toils. For this reason I suppose the offender harasses ever those who have fallen into his power, urging them to make great haste and speed in doing whatever is pleasing to him. For instance, he compels Judas, straightway after receiving the sop, as holding him now in his power, at once to proceed to that unholy deed; being very probably afraid as well of his repentance as of the effective power of Christ's gift, lest this, shining as a light in the heart of the man, should persuade him rather to make a deliberate choice of well-doing, or at any rate should give birth to the genuine honest temper of one who had been at length persuaded against his better feelings even to attempt the betrayal.

For that this is ever the wont of the demon in working against us we shall also see to be the case from what happened by way of type. The Jews were in subjection to Pharaoh while still in

Egypt, and being by his orders sore vexed with laborious tasks in working with clay and making bricks, were allowed no time for the services they owed to God. For instance, Pharaoh says to the overseers of their tasks: *Let the tasks of these men be made heavier, and let them not regard vain words*; meaning by "vain words" their eagerness to escape to a state of freedom, their ardent passionate longing for this object, their lamentations over their slavery, and prayer for the greatest blessings. For he was not ignorant that in the leisure time which would be spent on these they would find great comfort. Passing then from the types to the perfect knowledge of the truer meanings, we shall find Satan ever hurrying onward to perform their wickedness those who have once fallen within his snares, and urging on those over whom he has already won a complete victory to be the ministers of such evil deeds as please him.

31, 32 *When therefore he was gone out, Jesus saith, Now is the Son of Man glorified, and God is glorified in Him; and God shall glorify Him in Himself, and straightway shall He glorify Him.*

The traitor departs to minister to the stratagems of the devil. And now Christ begins His discourse; teaching us thereby, as in a figure, that the things which are fitted only for true disciples are not to be uttered in the hearing of all men. For it is not meet to *give that which is holy unto the dogs*, as Christ Himself says, nor even to allow *pearls* to be insulted by the *feet of swine*. The very same lesson that He had thus given them before in the form of a parable He now endeavours to teach them at a time requiring its practice, and calling for a more distinct explanation of it. So then, after the departure of the traitor and his hasty withdrawal from the house, Christ now, as at the fitting moment, unfolds the mysteries to His true disciples, saying: *Now is the Son of Man glorified*; and by this He is pointing to His sufferings as Saviour, as being already at the doors, and after but a brief while to come upon Him. He says, however, that "*the Son of Man*" is *glorified*, meaning none other than Himself; not implying a separation in Himself, as some have thought, for the Christ is one only Son both before and after His incarnation, as well after He became man like unto us as before He had become man. But we must now inquire what manner of glorification that is to which He now specially alludes; for some perhaps may say: Was He not surely glorified before this, by the mighty wonders which He wrought? Surely, when with a single word He rebuked the angry rage of the sea and checked the violence of the fierce winds, then He was *worshipped* by those *that were in the boat*, and heard them say: *Of a truth Thou art the Son of God*. Again, when He had bidden Lazarus at Bethany return once more to life, the marvellous deed was noised abroad, even so much that as He went up to Jerusalem at the time of the feast all the people together with their babes came forth to meet Him, and joined in the strain of wondrous praise addressed to Him, saying: *Blessed is He that cometh in the name of the Lord*. Nay, more, there was a time when He brake five loaves and two small fishes, and satisfied therewith the hunger of the multitude who had come together unto Him, amounting to five thousand men, besides babes and women. And to some the wonder then wrought seemed so magnificent that, astonished at the greatness of the achievement, they sought even to proclaim *Him king*; for this the Evangelist himself has testified to us. And there would be no difficulty in extending our argument at length by enumerating many other deeds wherein Christ's glory was manifested no less highly than in those we have just mentioned. How then, after all, does it happen that He Who had been glorified long before speaks of Himself as glorified at this particular time? Truly He had been glorified in other ways, and had won for Himself most distinctly a reputation for possessing Divine authority: still the perfect consummation of His glory and the fulness of His fame were summed up in the facts of His

suffering for the life of the world and opening by His own resurrection the gate through which all may rise. For if we examine as well as we may the real character of the mystery of His work, we shall see that He died, not merely for Himself, nor even especially for His own sake; but that it was on behalf of humanity that He suffered and carried out both the suffering in itself and the resurrection that followed. For in that He died according to the flesh, He offered up His own life as an equivalent for the life of all; and by rendering perfect satisfaction for all, He fulfilled in Himself to the uttermost the force of that ancient curse. And in that He has risen again from the dead to a life imperishable and unceasing, in Himself He raises the whole of nature. For having died once for all, thenceforward, as it is written, *He dieth no more; death no more hath dominion over Him. For the death that He died, He died unto sin once: but the life that He liveth, He liveth unto God.* This also will for Christ's sake be true even in our own case. For we shall rise, no more subject to death, but endowed with endless life; even though there will be hereafter a great diversity of lot among those that rise---I mean as regards their glory and the recompence which each shall receive as due to his works. Christ therefore, after *becoming obedient* to God the Father *even unto death, yea, the death of the cross*, according to the saying of Paul, was once again *highly exalted*, receiving *the name which is above every name*. For He Who was believed to be a mere man was glorified very much beyond that, by being acknowledged as in very truth really God and the Son of God; not being promoted to a new dignity in possessing the Divine nature, but rather returning with His flesh to the full enjoyment of that very glory which was equally His before He took flesh. For this reason then we shall reckon that He was now glorified, although there never was a time when He was not *Lord of glory*. |211 For in Christ we do not find one of His God-befitting attributes appearing as a new thing, but all appear as having naturally belonged to Him as God, even before the time when He is said to have emptied Himself. But still, when the form of a servant had been assumed, forasmuch as He raised Himself to those conditions again, even after He became man, He is conceived of as being "glorified," and is said to have "received" [the exalted name]. With Christ therefore in His glorification, *God the Father also is greatly glorified*. And *He is glorified in the Son*; not as receiving from His Offspring any addition of glory, for of no such addition does the Divine and ineffable nature stand ever in need; but because it is made known of what a Son He is the Father. For even as it is a pride and a glory to the Son to have such a Being for His Father, likewise also methinks it is a pride and a glory even to the Father to have born from Himself so glorious a Son. Therefore Christ says this: *And God is glorified in Him; and God shall glorify Him in Himself, and straightway shall He glorify Him*: for at the same time the Father is glorified on account of the Son, and straightway glorifies the Son in return. For to Both, for the sake of Both, the ascription of glory extends.

But in order that we may bring down the application of the passage to our own level, and so make it a source of edification to our hearers, we will add this to what has been said. If in ourselves we glorify God, we may expect that we shall be glorified by Him. For, *As I live, saith the Lord, them that honour Me I will honour*, and they shall not be lightly esteemed. And God is glorified by us and in us, when, casting away the defilement of sin, we adorn our lives in all the beauty of good works. For thus it is that we live to His glory.

33 *Little children, yet a little while I am with you.*

He places the disciples in the position of *little children* and accounts them as new-born babes, although they had advanced to so high a stage in virtue, and were possessed of wisdom such as is fully vouchsafed to few; showing us hereby, and that very plainly, that even he who is

accounted very perfect in the eyes of man is an infant in the sight of God, and feeble in mental faculties. For what is the understanding of man in comparison with the wisdom that fashioned the universe? Therefore it is that a Psalmist said to God: *I was as a beast before Thee.* And no one whatever will say, if he has any perception at all, that the Psalmist compares himself to a beast because of his having cleaved closely unto God; for such an idea would be a bitter disparagement of the Divine nature, and would be seen to involve a great impropriety. For he that cleaves to a wise man and "is" ever "before" him, (for I suppose I must adapt the words of the Psalm so far as is necessary,) would never become "as a beast;" but rather would become ready of mind, and quick of understanding, and skilful in judgment. If therefore any one acknowledged this to be very just and true, would not a person be thought foolish in the extreme who should suppose that one who cleaves fast to the wisdom that comes from God Himself will ever become *as a beast* in senseless folly? Why then does the Psalmist say that even he who is counted very wise among men will in comparison with the wisdom of God appear to be as *a beast*, and be reckoned among those who have no sense to guide them? It is because the understanding of man can no more be compared with the wisdom of God than the smallest star can vie with the rays of the sun, or even the heaviest of stones with the highest of all mountains; but rather is as nothing at all in comparison with it. And so it appears that even the perfect man is but as a little child.

Yet a little while, however, Christ said He would be with the disciples; not meaning that He was soon to depart so as to return no more, or to be separated from them altogether and entirely, for He is with us (according to His own words) *alway, even unto the end of the world*; but implying that He would not be with them in the flesh, as He had been yesterday and the day before, and that now there was even at the door, or rather within the door, the time of His departure thence unto the Father, and of His ascension into heaven. And I say that it is necessary for us all, at least those who are right minded and have their faith well established, to realise the fact that even though He is absent from us in the flesh, now that He has returned from earth to God the Father, yet He pervades all things in His Divine power, and is ever present with those who love Him. For surely this is why He also declared: Verily, verily, I say unto you, wherever *two or three are gathered together in My Name, there am I in the midst of them.* For just as, while still sojourning among men, yea, while verily on earth with flesh, He filled the heavens, and even then was still present with the holy angels, and never left the realms above; so now also, while verily in heaven with His own flesh, He fills the earth, and is ever present with those who know Him. And notice how, although expecting to be removed from earth as regards His flesh alone, since in the power of His Divinity He is ever with us, He nevertheless speaks of being with us *yet a little while*, including in this statement His whole and perfect Self without any division: lest any should endeavour to sever the One Christ into two Sons, but that all should think and believe that the Word begotten of God the Father is one with the Temple assumed from the holy virgin; not that they are of the same essence, but that after their ineffable union, none can speak of severing them without impiety: for the Christ is, of them both, One.

Ye shall seek Me: and as I said unto the Jews, Whither I go, ye cannot come; so now I say unto you.

Not altogether without pain to His own disciples will the departure be, He says; it will be the departure of Himself. In the first place they will languish in grief on account of it, and will find the weight of bitterness produced by it to be intolerable. For beyond all question they will thirst once more to be with Him, and long to live with Him for ever; just as also the inspired

Paul, preferring the being with Christ to life itself here, said it was *better to depart and be with Christ*. Perceiving this, and well knowing the hearts of those who love Him, Christ said that His Ascension would not be without grief to His disciples. But there was also, besides this feeling, another just cause that forced the holy disciples to seek to be with Christ. They were destined within a brief while to be compassed about with grievous dangers, and to be exposed on all sides to the ungovernable frenzies of the Jews, and even to fall victims to madness on the part of strangers, while on their mission through the whole world, preaching the word of the Saviour to those that were still wandering afar; so as to become acquainted with prisons, and to have their part in all kinds of insult and outrage, and to gain no less experience of other tortures: and all this in spite of their never having experienced any such suffering while they were with Christ. "Then most especially," He says, "*ye shall seek My company, when the manifold waves of trial break over you.*" And hereby He sought not to bring the disciples to cowardly timidity, or to shatter their courage with fear; but rather to brace them up to fresh vigour, and in a manner to teach them to be ready prepared for the patient endurance of all which they expected would come upon them. For we shall find the Psalmist's song to be anything but meaningless, nay, rather to convey very profitable instruction in the words: *I was prepared and was not confounded*. For the wholly unexpected arrival of misfortune is wont to throw us into confusion, taking us as it were off our guard: but when a trial has been known beforehand and long expected, the greater part of the terror it occasions has passed away before it comes, and its power over its victims is not at all absolute, as the mind has already rehearsed it and often in imagination received its attack. In the same way, if some wild and savage animal, starting up from the midst of a luxuriant and dense jungle, rushes on one who does not see it coming, it tears him limb from limb before he is conscious of the attack, having seized him while he was unprepared for warfare: whereas if the beast is seen from afar and its coming expected, it meets an armed foe, and either does him less harm, or perchance has even to depart in helpless impotence. Just so in the case of temptations: that which is wholly unexpected will attack us more fiercely and more severely than one which has been anticipated for some time. With kind intent therefore does our Lord Jesus the Christ in saying "*Ye shall seek Me*" hint at the evils that will come on the disciples when His presence is removed, and the troubles that will arise from their enemies; preparing them by this warning for a renewal of their courage: with kind intent also He adds to these hints the statement that there will for the present be an obstacle in the way of their following Him. For *as I said to the Jews*, He says, *even so I say now unto you: Whither I go ye cannot come*. For not yet was the time come when the disciples should have accomplished their service on earth, and be admitted to the mansions above. For their entrance to those realms was reserved most strictly to its appointed season.

This point however we must notice again, that in speaking to the Jews, while giving to them this same warning, He said: *Ye shall seek Me, and shall not find Me*; but to His disciples He only says: *Ye shall seek Me*, fitly breaking off without the words "and shall not find Me." And why so? The Jews will rightly deserve to be told that they should never find Him, on account of their monstrous infidelity and the surpassing baseness of their impiety towards Him: but to those who have a true affection for Him, and have preserved their love in all sincerity, it could not be fitly said: "Ye shall not find Me." For He was ever with them, and will be with them to the end.

34 *A new commandment I give unto you, that ye love one another; even as I have loved you, that ye also love one another.*

Well and truly writes the inspired Paul: *Wherefore if any man is in Christ, he is a new creature: the old things are passed away; behold all things are become new.* For Christ does renew us, and fashions us again to a newness of life which is unknown to and untravelled by the rest of mankind, who love to regulate their lives by the Law, and remain constant to the precepts given by Moses. *For the Law makes nothing perfect,* as it is written; but it is very evident that the standard of reverence towards God involved in the commands of our Saviour is the highest possible. For this is why He Himself somewhere says to us: *Verily, verily, I say unto you, Except your righteousness shall exceed the righteousness of the scribes and Pharisees, ye shall in no wise enter into the kingdom of heaven.* We do not wish to struggle against the manner of life of the Jews, and yet except we outstrip very decisively the righteousness contained in the Law, I doubt if we should ever enter into the kingdom of heaven. And we do not mean to assert that the Law as given by Moses was useless and unprofitable: for it has brought to us, albeit imperfectly, a knowledge of good, or at any rate has been found to be a tutor for our instruction as to the nature of the Gospel dispensation. And in bringing before us by hints and types a pattern of the true worship, it imprinted on our minds the dim outline of the teaching we learn from Christ. Hence, surely Christ Himself also said: *For I say unto you, that every scribe who hath been made a disciple to the kingdom of heaven is like unto a rich man, which bringeth forth out of his treasure things new and old.* For in very truth it is the highest form of spiritual wealth, that a man should be well versed in the words spoken by Moses, and have all the good that can be derived from them treasured up in his mind, and besides should have added to this store the beauty of the evangelic teaching, and so have twofold ground for boasting, in his knowledge as well of the ancient as of the new laws. Therefore our Lord Jesus the Christ, by way of shewing that His commandment was better than the ancient one, and that His preaching of salvation was as yet foreign to those who regulated their lives by the Law, now that He is about to ascend into heaven, lays down the law of love as a foundation and corner-stone of all that is good, meaning by love not that which was in accordance with, but that which transcended, the Mosaic Law. Therefore He says: *A new commandment I give unto you, that ye love one another.* "But tell me now," some one may say, "why He has called this commandment new, when He had said to former generations by the voice of Moses: *Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart and with all thy mind, and thy neighbour as thyself.*" For see, while setting love to God in its fitting place, in the forefront of and in preeminence to all other affections, He has there introduced in the very next place our mutual love, and has joined with our love to God love to each other, implying that in no other way would love to God rightly exist, except it were accompanied by the love which is due to our neighbour. For we all are brethren one of another. For instance, the very wise John, most excellent alike in knowledge and in teaching, says: *He that loveth his brother loveth God.* How then cometh a new commandment by Christ, although the very same had been declared by the ancient laws?" But notice, I pray you, the justifying clause; look at the illustration used. He does more than say: *A new commandment give I unto you, that ye love one another;* He plainly signifies the novelty involved in His command, and the extent by which the love that He enjoins surpasses that old idea of mutual love, by straightway adding the words: *Even as I have loved you, that ye also love one another.*

We must investigate therefore the question how the Christ loved us, in order to understand clearly the full force of the words used. For then we shall indeed perceive, and that very easily, the novel character and the changed nature of the commandment now given. We know that, *being in the form of God, He counted it not a prize to be on an equality with God, but emptied Himself, taking the form of a servant, being made in the likeness of men; and being*

found in fashion as a man, He humbled Himself, becoming obedient even unto death, yea, the death of the cross. And again: *though He was rich, yet He became poor*, as Paul elsewhere testifies to us. Dost thou see the novelty of His love towards us? For whereas the Law enjoined the necessity of loving our brethren as ourselves, our Lord Jesus the Christ on the other hand loved us far more than He loved Himself, Else He would never have descended to our humiliation from His original exaltation in the form of God and on an equality with God the Father, nor would He have undergone for our sakes the exceeding bitterness of His death in the flesh, nor have submitted to buffetings from the Jews, to shame, to derision, and all His other sufferings: speaking briefly, so as not to protract our argument to endless length by enumerating everything in detail. Nay, He would never have become poor from being rich, if He had not loved us very exceedingly more than Himself. Marvellous then indeed was the extent of His love. So also He would have us be minded, keeping ever our love to our brethren as superior to all other motives, such as reputation or riches; not hesitating to descend if need be even to death in the flesh, so that we may secure the salvation of our neighbour. And this is exactly what the blessed disciples of our Saviour have done, as also have those that followed in their train; reckoning the salvation of others superior to their own life, enduring toil of all kinds, and suffering the extremest of evils, that so they might save the souls of those that were perishing. For instance, Paul in one place saith: *I die daily*; and in another again: *Who is weak, and I am not weak? Who is made to stumble, and I burn not?* Thus the Saviour urges us to practise ever the love that transcends the Law as the root of all true and perfect devotion to God; well knowing that so, assuredly, and not otherwise, we shall be most highly approved in the sight of God, and by tracing out the Divine beauty of the love by Him implanted in us we shall attain to the enjoyment of great and perfect blessings.

35 By this shall all men know that ye are My disciples, if ye love one another.

You will set upon yourselves, He says, an irresistible and unquestionable mark of your having been My disciples, if you hasten to follow in the track marked out by My own conduct, at least as far as your nature and the limit of human powers will permit; so as to have ever the bond of mutual love firmly drawn, and to be united one to the other in full sympathy, at least to the extent of mutual love and the incomparable glory of affectionateness: for this it is that will stamp on us most exactly the true character of our Master. "Nay, but," some one will object, meeting us perchance with this question: "How comes it that love alone is the characteristic token of discipleship to Christ, whereas in Him there appeared the perfect display of all possible virtues: not exhibited merely in kindness to others, nor again as the outcome of much labour and struggling, as would be the case in a man; but as the natural and essential attributes of His real self? For to the Divine Nature there belong as its special and peculiar attributes things which transcend all wonder."

In very truth, my good sir, we will admit that you acted most rightly in adding this last remark. For the peculiar and especial attributes of the Supreme Essence are the natural fruits of Itself. But it is quite possible to perceive, by looking into the matter, that every species of virtue is necessarily comprehended in perfect love, and that everything which can rightly be looked upon as really and truly good seems to have its principle and aim comprised in love. For this reason, surely, the Law lays it down as a commandment preeminent above all, to love the Lord God with all the soul, and with all the heart, and with all the mind; and, second only to this, there is joined to it in close proximity the sister commandment, to love one's neighbour, which completes the whole Law. So again, the inspired Paul, summarizing all the commandments in this one, writes in an epistle: *For this, Thou, shalt not commit adultery,*

Thou shalt not kill, Thou shalt not swear falsely, and if there be any other commandment, it is summed up in this word, namely, Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself. Love, therefore, is the fulfilment of the Law. And that love has created for itself a fashion of every kind of virtue within its own proper limits, and as it were embraces within its arms all that is really good, the very wise Paul himself again shall testify, exclaiming: *Love vaunteth not itself, is not puffed up, doth not behave itself unseemly, seeketh not its own,* and similar expressions ---- for it would be a long task to tell the full extent of love. Most especially then do I say that it is most befitting and right for those who have given themselves up to a life of love that they should make themselves known to all men as having become Christ's disciples, by making the crown of love their chief glory, and by bearing about with them their mutual affection as a sign and seal of their discipleship. And the reason for this I will specify in a few words. Supposing that any ordinary man were practising the art of working in brass or of weaving, would he not appear very evidently to have been a pupil of a brassworker or of a weaver? And what of the man who shows some experience in carpentry? Would he not tell you that the reason why he can succeed in the works of his art is that, while gaining his experience, he had a carpenter as his guide? On just the same grounds I believe that they who display in themselves fully developed the power of Divine love, will speedily make known to the world that they have been disciples of Love, or of Christ Who is filled to the uttermost with love. For He *so loved the world* as to lay down even His life for it, and to endure the fierceness of Jewish outrages: and He shall Himself testify to this in His words to the disciples: *Greater love hath no man than this, that a man lay down his life for his friends.* For seeing that *God is love*, according to the saying of John, He, being the Son of Love, i.e. of Him Who is by nature the only and true God, has Himself also been shown forth to us as love; not resting His claim to the title on elaboration of arguments and grandiloquence of boastful words, but by deeds and positive facts proving Himself to be the Fruit of His Father's Essence. For by no means will we suppose that the Essence which is exalted far above all others is capable of receiving additional good; nor yet will we admit that the possession of any good quality is for It an acquired attribute, as with us; nor again that it is what we term a merely accidental quality, such as may pertain to an ordinary person, similar for example to the knowledge of any science which a man may possess: for man is not in himself knowledge, but is rather a recipient of knowledge; whereas we affirm that the Divine Ineffable Nature is by special right in Itself the sum of all that is good, whatsoever we may believe this to be; and is, as it were, a fountain-head containing within itself every kind of virtue, and pouring it forth in an inexhaustible stream. Most reasonably, therefore, will He, Who is the Fruit of Love, Himself also be Love; and being Himself like to the Father Whose Son He is, He will be shown forth in our lives most chiefly by the token of love, ever engraving on the hearts of good men, as an evident characteristic of their close relationship to Himself, an ardent clinging to the grace of mutual affection. Besides, according to the saying of Paul, *Christ is our peace*: for in Him all things were united, the world below to the world above; and by His means we were reconciled to God the Father, though we had in old times deliberately wandered far away from Him in our evil courses; and we who had formerly been divided into two peoples, Gentiles and Israelites, were created in Him into *one new man*, for *the middle wall of partition* has been broken down, and the power of *the enmity abolished*, the Law being put to silence by the ordinances of the Gospel. If this be so, how could those who had no peace in their mutual relations be known as disciples of [Him Who is] peace? For what else would be involved in the severance of love than a stirring up of war, and an utter overthrow of peace, and an introduction of every kind of discord? For just as by an unbroken bond of love all the blessings of peace are safely secured to us, so in the same way by the interruption of our love the evil

that arises from war finds a way to insidiously enter. And what follows thereupon? Insults arise, and strifes, and jealousies, and angers, and *wraths*, and *whisperings*, and *back-bitings*, and envyings, and every form of baseness.

Seeing therefore that every virtue is summed up and fulfilled in the form and habit of love, let no one among us think highly of himself for fastings, or prostrations on the ground, or any other ascetic practices, unless he be faithful to preserve in all fulness his love for his brethren. For else he is carried away very wide of the turning-post in the race, like the more unskilled of the charioteers; and wanders out of his course like a pilot who, with the ship's rudder in his hand, ignorantly misses the goal that lies directly in front of his course. Wherefore also, he who said in all boldness: *If ye seek a proof of Christ that speaketh in me*, I mean of course the inspired Paul, gloried not simply in the fact of his hastening onwards, but in the fact of his moving in the right direction, onward towards the goal: for to glory boastfully in bodily labours, while falling short all the while of the more important and essential qualities, this surely is to fail in hastening onwards towards our goal. And he knew so well that love is as it were a corner-stone at the foundation of every virtue, that he most justly says, in eager contention on its behalf: *And if I bestow all my goods to feed the poor, and if I give my body to be burned, but have not love, it profiteth me nothing: if I speak with the tongues of men and of angels, but have not love, I am become sounding brass or a clanging cymbal*. And so it appears that it is the special glory of love to be in us a figure and characteristic token of belonging to the Saviour Christ.

36 Simon Peter saith unto Him, Lord, whither goest Thou?

Peter again with his usual curiosity is anxious to learn more, and busies himself about the significance of Christ's words, not yet (as seems probable) comprehending the real meaning of what had been said, yet feeling with all the force of his fiery zeal that it was his duty to follow Christ. And in this matter most admirable is the behaviour of the disciples. For certainly no one would allow that it was only the chief disciple who was in ignorance while the others fully understood the matter, and that this was why he asked the question. I should rather say that they yielded to him, as chief among them, the privilege of speaking first, and of taking the initiative in courageous inquiry. For the speaking into the ears of their Master was no light and easy matter, even for those *who were reputed to be somewhat*. And the conduct of Peter is no less admirable, who is harassed by no fear of being thought sluggish in the comprehension of those matters of which he was ignorant, but zealously seeks for enlightenment, considering that the profit he will derive from gratifying his love of knowledge will be of more value than an unseasonable sense of shame: and so in this also he is a pattern to those that live after him. For we ought never, I think, to pass over the words of our teachers, even though they may not be so very distinct, merely for the sake of seeming to be shrewd people and very quick in intelligence; but rather to investigate the meaning and search it out wisely, in the teaching at first delivered to us for our profit. For the knowledge of what is useful is far nobler than a vain semblance of wisdom, and far better is it to learn a thing in reality than merely to seem to know all about it.

Jesus answered him, Whither I go, thou canst not follow Me now, but thou shall follow afterwards.

Well knowing that the grief caused to His disciples would be heavy and intolerable if He said plainly that He was about to enter into heaven and to leave them on earth bereaved of His

presence, though He would ever be with them as God, He employs a style of speech wisely adapted to their present feelings, and gently refrains from giving full information of what was in His mind. And thus, seeing them in ignorance, He suffers them so to continue. For the wise are accustomed occasionally to overshadow with weightier words things that seem likely to cause pain. For although, in returning on His way to the heavens above, He was most especially presenting Himself to God the Father as the firstfruits of humanity, and although what was being done was to secure the advantage of all mankind: for He consecrated for us a new way of which the human race knew nothing before: nevertheless, to the holy disciples, in their earnest longing ever to be with Him, it seemed unendurable that they should be separated from Christ, although He was ever with them in the power and co-operation of the Spirit. Finding therefore the blessed Peter ignorant of the force of the words used, Christ leaves him, as well as the other disciples, in that condition, not at once explaining fully the exact import of what He had said, but waiting in His kindness until He should have finished the teaching that would be able to strengthen them to bear it. This indeed we shall perceive Him doing in the words that soon follow; for He says to them: *It is expedient for you that I go away: for if I go not away, the Comforter will not come unto you.* He hastens however, as God, to promise the disciple who desires so to do, that he shall follow Him earnestly, and be with Him in all reality, with none to check his zeal; saying: *Whither I go thou canst not follow Me now, but thou shalt follow afterwards.* And the saying is pregnant with a twofold signification, one part of which is very evident and obvious, while the other is rather more indistinct and wrapped in mystery. For He means to say that Peter could not possibly follow Him now in His passage to the world above and in His return to heaven, yet that he would follow Him hereafter; namely, when the honour and glory for which the saints are ever hoping is conferred upon them by Christ, when they come to the city in the heavens to reign with Him for ever. But the words also contain another meaning, the nature of which I will explain. The disciples had not yet been *clothed with the power from on high*, neither had they received the strength that was to invigorate them and mould to courage their human dispositions, I mean the gift of the Holy Ghost; and so they were not able to wrestle with death and engage in a conflict with terrors so hard to face. And surely on another ground, since it was fitting for Christ alone, and reserved specially for Him to be able to shatter the power of death, it was unlikely that others should appear engaged in this work before Him. For to be freed from the fear of death could surely mean nothing else than to despise death as being powerless at all to harm us. Wherefore, in our view at least, even the blessed prophets used to dread the approach of death when it had not yet been rendered powerless by the Resurrection of Christ. And it was from a right understanding of this that Paul said that the Word, Who was from God the Father and in God, *laid hold of the seed of Abraham, that through the death of His holy Flesh, He might bring death to nought, and might deliver all them who through fear of death were all their lifetime subject to bondage.* For the saving Passion of Christ is the first means that ever brought release from death, and the Resurrection of Christ has become to the saints the beginning of their good courage in meeting it. As therefore our natural life had failed as yet to crush the power of death, and had not even destroyed the terror that it casts over our souls, the disciples were still somewhat feeble in the presence of dangers. Therefore the Lord graciously intimates that Peter should be crucified when the time had come, and thereby should follow the footsteps of His Master: and in the words: *Whither I go, thou canst not follow Me now, but thou shalt follow afterwards*, He obscurely implies that now his mind is not firmly enough prepared for so severe a trial. For if it is not the death of Peter to which Christ darkly alludes in these words, why is it that, although admittedly all the other holy apostles have before them the promise that they shall continually be with Christ and follow

Him, at the time of the resurrection, when a spotless life is secured to them amid all the blessings for which they hope, nevertheless He here applies the force of His words individually to Peter alone? Nay, it is abundantly evident that in special reference to Peter He dimly shadows forth what will happen to him in after time. In illustration of this He has explained the matter more distinctly in another place, where He says: *When thou wast young, thou girdedst thyself, and walkedst whither thou wouldest: but when thou shalt be old, thou shalt stretch forth thy hands, and others shall gird thee, and carry thee whither thou wouldest not. Now this He spake*, adds the Evangelist, *signifying by what manner of death he should glorify God.* For even though suffering for Christ's sake is a thing delightful for the saints, yet the danger is not wished for by them: but still it must be endured when of necessity it is brought upon them. Therefore also He bids us *pray that we fall not into temptation.*

37 Peter saith unto Him, Lord, why cannot I follow Thee even now? I will lay down my life for Thee.

What is there, he means, that prevents or that can keep him back from following His Master, now that his deliberate aim is to die for Christ's sake, reckoning this as his proudest boast? For the utmost of all danger, and the extremest violence of the implacable enmity of persecutors, have no effect beyond the range of the flesh; for with the flesh alone has death to deal: and he that is ready and fully prepared even for this extreme, would not easily be hindered from his purpose, or give up his intense conviction as to the duty of following to the end. The zeal of Peter was most ardent, and the extent of his promise excessive; yet one might see that the power latent in him was not inconsiderable, or rather the issue of the events themselves would convince one of this. One point however must be considered. Our Saviour Christ, speaking now in one way and now in another of His ascension into heaven, says that Peter will not follow Him now, but will follow Him hereafter; as soon, namely, as his apostolate is fulfilled, and when the fit season has come to summon the bodies of the saints to the city above: whereas Peter himself protests that he is now ready even to risk his life, going as it were by a different way, and not coming by a direct course to the meaning of the words. And I think his language must imply this: failing as yet to attach to what has been spoken by Christ its exact signification, he believes that the Lord intends possibly to pass over to some of the wilder villages in Judaea, or even to visit foreign peoples, who will, after carefully listening, so violently dissent from the words which He will be likely to speak, that the daring plots of the Pharisees will seem feeble compared with the base designs of the other Jews, and the madness inherent in them will be shown to be of the very mildest type. For this reason he declares that he will suffer nothing to interfere with his following Christ: he does not absolutely promise to die, but says that if the need should arise he will not shrink from death. Now there is a passage exactly similar to this in the previous part of this book, and I will proceed to tell you where it occurs.

At one time Christ was sojourning among the Galilaeans to avoid the fury of the Jews, their ungovernable temper, and their unbridled insolence in speech; and great was the wonder excited in those quarters by His marvellous deeds. But when the brother of Mary and Martha had died, I mean of course Lazarus, He as God knew of it, and forthwith said to His disciples: *Our friend Lazarus is fallen asleep, but I go that I may awake him out of sleep.* Hereupon the disciples affectionately reply: *The Jews were but now seeking to stone Thee; and goest Thou thither again?* And when Christ is on the point of starting, and urgently tells them that He must certainly return to the country of the Jews, *Thomas, who is called Didymus, said unto his fellow-disciples, Let us also go, that we may die with Him.* I believe

that Peter's object in speaking is pregnant with some similar idea. For he thinks, perhaps, as I said just now, that Jesus is on the eve of departing to preach somewhere else among people at whose hands He will be exposed to danger. Therefore he himself also, in his uncontrollable affection for Christ, declares that his zeal now to defend his Master will be invincible and irresistible, meaning that there is nothing left in the world that is strong enough to check his devotion, now that he has convinced himself that he must follow Christ, seeing that he is ready and willing even to die in his Master's cause.

38 *Jesus answereth, Wilt thou lay down thy life for Me? Verily, verily, I say unto thee, The cock shall not crow, till thou hast denied Me thrice.*

Wonderful as the zeal of Peter in this matter may be, his promises are beyond his power to fulfil: Christ, however, with the gloom of the threatening tempest in His mind, knowing well how severe will be the temptation and how bitter the persecution, seems as it were to shake His head in sorrow; and then, unfolding to Himself the whole extent of His sufferings, as though it were present to His bodily eyes, beholding the surpassing fury of the Jews in their madness, and seeing clearly all that will come to pass in that hour, He exclaims as though to say: "Dost thou, O Peter, lay down thy life for Me, and sayest thou that thy fear in this matter is as nothing? and supposest thou that thou wilt be strong enough to overcome the trials that will encompass thee? Nay, thou knowest not the grievous weight of the coming temptation, for the suffering that lies before thee is beyond thy strength to endure: thy heart shall fail thee utterly, even though thou wouldst not have it so: thrice shalt thou deny Me, and that too in one single night." We must surmise that Jesus means to speak somewhat to this effect: yet herein again it is fitting that we should admire the kindness to mankind that appeared in Him: for having predicted that the strength of Peter's courage will not be commensurate with the tone of his zealous assertions, but will fail and flag so utterly as to yield at the mere alarm of a coming danger, He added not one single word of threatening; perhaps for this reason, that Peter had not spoken under any Divine impulse: at all events, for some reason or other He does not hold out any threat of chastisement against one who suffered from human infirmities. For He knew that the nature of man was as yet enfeebled, [1230](#) and unable to endure the threat of death. Death had not yet been deprived of its power through His resurrection, and was still boastfully vaunting against the mind of all men, still strong enough to crush, even by fear and that alone, the hardiest and bravest of heroes. For human nature, being unnaturally subjected to death, yields to death as to a conquering power, or rather used to yield at that time: but now that our Saviour has burst its bonds, the approach of death is delightful to those who love Christ, even though it come in bitterness and pain. For the everlasting life has arisen in its stead, destroying the power of corruption.

And let no one here again imagine that Peter's denial and failure were caused by the words of Christ. He is not speaking by way of imposing any obligation on the disciple, or drawing him on by constraint to the sufferings of which He speaks; but rather He means to predict to His disciple exactly what as God He knows will most surely and certainly come to pass.

But seeing that all that *happened* to the men of former times has been *written for the admonition* of those who live after them, let us now say somewhat necessary to our edification, drawing our conclusions from this passage. I do not think that we ought to make any rash vows before God, or to promise to perform what may sometimes be beyond our power, as though we could control human events. And I say this in regard to the charges to which we render ourselves liable in case of failure: especially I consider that hasty statements,

such as "I will do this," or, "I will do that," as the case may be, are not far removed from arrogance. For in all cases where one may have deliberately determined to undertake any matter, wishing to carry it out successfully, one's duty is always to use those words of the very wise disciple: *If the Lord will, and we live*. For while I maintain that a zeal for good works must be inherent in the souls of the godly, as well as eager willingness to carry these virtuous resolves with all our might into effect, yet our duty is to pray for the successful means of gaining this end through the gracious blessing that is from above, and not to make rash promises as though success lay already in our own grasp. Thus we shall be able to keep unbroken our promises to God of all that is good, and we shall have "our feet clear" of blame, according to the saying of the Greek poet. And on other authority: *Better is it not to vow to any, than to vow and not pay*.

Chap. xiv. *Let not your heart be troubled*.

By saying that Peter's courage will fail him so utterly that he will deny his Master thrice, and will suffer so sad a downfall in one single night, He almost seems by the overwhelming weight of His words to arouse in the disciples the extremity of terror at the dangers before them. Whence it may very well have happened that the other disciples began at once to reason with one another, saying: "What can be the nature, the extent, or the exceeding heaviness of that dread of coming troubles, and of that temptation so irresistible as to attack the chief among us and overcome him, not once only, but many times by the same assault, and that within so brief a space of time? Surely, who among us will escape a yet worse plight, or how can any other among us withstand such an attack, when Peter wavers and yields as of necessity to the grievous weight of the trials that beset him? Vainly it seems have we endured toils for the sake of our duty in following Him: our efforts are ending only in the exhaustion of our vital powers, though they seemed to hold out to us a prospect of life with God." There is surely nothing improbable in supposing that the disciples were thus reasoning in their inmost thoughts: and since it was needful to restore again their drooping spirits, He introduces as it were the necessary antidote to the reasonings and fears that His words had aroused, and bids them arm themselves with a calm and untroubled spirit, saying to them: *Let not your heart be troubled*. Notice, however, in how guarded a manner He promises them the forgiveness of their coming febleness of spirit. He does not say plainly: "I will forgive you even in spite of your weakness," or, "I will be present with you none the less, although you deny Me and forsake Me;" His object therein being, not to completely remove their fears of shame, or completely take away their suspicions of failure, lest He should seem to make out their error to be a light matter and teach them to regard as of no account the blame they would incur in their denial of Him. But in bidding them not be troubled, He placed them as it were on the borderland betwixt hope and fear: so that, if they fell into weakness and suffering in their human frailty, the hope of His clemency might help them to recovery; while the fear of stumbling might urge them to fall but seldom, since they had not yet been endowed with the power never to fail at all, not having as yet been clothed with the power from above, *from on high*, I mean the grace that comes through the Spirit. He bids them therefore not to be troubled, teaching them at once that it was fitting that those who were prepared for the conflict, and ready to enter on the struggles for the sake of the glory that is on high, should be altogether superior to feelings of cowardice: for an untroubled mind is a great help towards a courageous temper: at the same time, with somewhat obscure and not very distinct intimations, yet certainly, sowing the seed of a germinant hope of forgiveness, if ever it should really happen to them in their human weakness to fall away into cowardice. For a mind that is not yet established by the grace that comes from above is timid and easily upset, and very apt

to be disturbed. For this reason also surely the very wise Paul prays for certain to whom he is writing, in the words: *And the peace of Christ, which passeth all understanding, shall guard your hearts.* For this is in reality to be untroubled in heart.

Ye believe in God, believe also in Me.

He is making an able soldier out of one who but now was a coward, and while the disciples were smarting with the anxieties of fear He bids them take to themselves the terrible power of faith. For thus are we safe, and not otherwise, according surely to the song of the Psalmist: *The Lord is my illumination and my saviour; whom shall I fear? The Lord is the shield of my life; of whom shall I be afraid?* For if the all-powerful God fights for us and shields us, who could ever have power to harm us? And who will by any chance advance to such a height of power as to keep the elect in subjection to him, and to force them to submit to the evil designs of his perverse imagination? Or who could take by his spear and lead captive those that wear the panoply of God? Faith therefore is a weapon whose blade is stout and broad, that drives away all cowardice that may spring from expectation of coming suffering, and that renders the darts of evil-doers utterly void of effect and utterly profitless of success in their temptations. And this being the nature of faith, we must further notice another point: Christ bade them believe not in God alone, but also on Himself, not implying thereby that He is at all different from the One Who is in His nature God, I mean as regards identity of essence; but that to believe in God and to suppose that the province of faith must be wholly bound up in this one phrase, is rather a peculiar characteristic of the Jewish imagination, whereas the inclusion of the name of the Son within the compass of faith in God indicates the acceptance of an injunction of evangelic preaching. For those at least who are rightly minded must believe in God the Father, and not merely in the Son, but also in the fact of His Incarnation, and in the Holy Ghost. For the Persons of the Holy and Consubstantial Trinity are distinguished both by difference of names and by the peculiar qualities and special offices of each: for the Father is Father and not Son, the Son again is Son and not Father, and the Holy Ghost is the Spirit peculiar to the Godhead. And yet the Trinity is summed up into a common Unity of Essence, so that our Creed gives us not three Gods, but one God. Still, I maintain that we must preserve accurately the definitions of our faith, not content with saying "We believe *in God*," but fully explaining our confession, and attaching to each Person the same measure of glory. For in our minds there should be no difference as to the intensity of our faith: our faith in the Father is not to be greater than our faith in the Son, or even than our faith in the Holy Ghost. But one and the same is the extent and the manner of our confession, uttered in regard to each of the three Persons with the same measure of faith; in such a way that herein again the Holy Trinity may appear in Unity of nature, so that the glory that encircles It may be seen in unchallenged perfection, and our souls may display our faith in the Father and in the Son, even in His Incarnation, and in the Holy Ghost. And I believe no man, if he were wise, would make any distinction between the Word of God and the Temple formed from the virgin, at least as regards the question of sonship; for there is *One Lord, Jesus Christ*, according to the saying of Paul. But let him who would sever into two sons Him Who is One and One alone, know surely that he is denying the faith. The inspired Paul, for instance, in working out very excellently and accurately the doctrine on this point, would have us confess our belief not simply in Christ as the Only-begotten, but also in Him as made like unto us, that is, made man, and as having both died and risen again from the dead. For what does he say? *The word is nigh thee, in thy mouth, and in thy heart: that is, the word of faith, which we preach: that if thou shalt say with thy mouth, Jesus is Lord, and shalt believe in thy heart that God raised Him from the dead, thou shalt be saved: for with the heart man*

believeth unto righteousness; and with the mouth confession is made unto salvation. Now if we believe on the Son as having risen again, who was He that died so that He might rise again? But it is evident that He is reckoned to have died according to the flesh. For His own body was imprisoned in the bonds of death, and restored to life again: for it was a body that shared in our natural life, though containing in itself in full perfection that peculiar indwelling power so mysteriously united to it, namely an energy capable of bestowing life. Whosoever therefore any one shall sever these two natures, and in separating the flesh from Him Who corporeally dwelt therein shall dare to speak of two sons, let him know that he is believing on the flesh alone. For the Divine Scriptures teach us to believe on Him Who was crucified and died and rose again from the dead, as being no other than the Word of God Himself; not so much in regard to identity of essence, for the body of Christ is body and not Word, though it be the body of the Word; but rather in respect of veritable sonship. And if any one were to think that herein we are not speaking with all possible accuracy, he would have to come forward and show us the Word Who is from God dead as regards His Divine nature, a thing which it is impossible or rather impious even to conceive.

2, 3 In My Father's house are many mansions; if it were not so, I would have told you; for I go to prepare a place for you. And if I go and prepare a place for you, I come again, and will receive you with Myself; that where I am, there ye may be also.

Having forcibly enjoined upon them that they ought not to be troubled, and having bidden them rather believe both in God the Father and in Himself, He now tells them plainly as an encouragement to them to shake off their feebleness of mind, that they shall not be excluded from the holy courts, but shall be made to dwell in the mansions above, living their eternal life in the Church of the Firstborn, in the enjoyment of bliss unending. He says moreover that *in His Father's house are many mansions*, teaching them thereby that heaven is wide enough for all, and that the world He has created needs no enlargement at all to make it capable of containing those who love Him. And it seems likely that in speaking of the *many mansions* He wishes also to indicate the different grades of honour, implying that each one who desires to live a life of virtue will receive as it were his own peculiar place, and the glory that is suitable to his own individual acts. Therefore if the mansions in God the Father's home had not been many in number, He would have said that He was going on before them, namely to prepare beforehand the habitations of the saints: but knowing that there are many such, already fully prepared and awaiting the arrival of those who love God, He says that He will depart not for this purpose, but for the sake of securing the way to the mansions above, to prepare a passage of safety *for you*, and to smooth the path that was impassable in old time. For heaven was then utterly inaccessible to mortal man, and no flesh as yet had ever trodden that pure and all-holy realm of the angels; but Christ was the first Who consecrated for us the means of access to Himself, and granted to flesh a way of entrance into heaven; presenting Himself as an offering to God the Father, as it were *the firstfruits of them that are asleep* and are lying in the tomb, and the first of mankind that ever appeared in heaven. Therefore also it was that the angels in heaven, knowing nothing of the august and stupendous mystery of the Incarnation, were astonished in wonder at His coming, and exclaim almost in perplexity at the strange and unusual event: *Who is this that cometh from Edom?* that is, from the earth. But the Spirit did not leave the host above uninstructed in the marvellous wisdom of God the Father, but bade them rather open the heavenly gates in honour to the King and Master of all, proclaiming: *Lift up the gates, O ye princes, and be ye lift up, ye everlasting doors, and the King of Glory shall come in.* Therefore our Lord Jesus the Christ consecrated for us a *new and living way*, as Paul says; *not having entered into a holy place made with hands, but into*

heaven itself, now to appear before the face of God for us. For it is not that He may present Himself before the presence of God the Father that Christ has ascended up on high: for He ever was and is and will be continually in the Father, in the sight of Him Who begat Him, for He it is in Whom the Father ever takes delight: but now He Who of old was the Word with no part or lot in human nature, has ascended in human form that He may appear in heaven in a strange and unwonted manner. And this He has done on our account and for our sakes, in order that He, though *found as a man*, may still in His absolute power as Son, while yet in human form, obey the command: *Sit Thou on My right hand*, and so may transfer the glory of adoption through Himself to all the race. For in that He has appeared in human form He is still one of us as He sits at the right hand of God the Father, even though He is far above all creation; and He is also Consubstantial with His Father, in that He has come forth from Him as truly God of God and Light of Light. He has presented Himself therefore as Man to the Father on our behalf, that so He may restore us, who had been removed from the Father's presence by the ancient transgression, again as it were to behold the Father's face. He sits there in His position as Son, that so also we through Him may be called sons and children of God. For this reason also Paul, who insists that he has Christ speaking by his voice, teaches us to regard the events that happened in the life of Christ alone as common to the whole race; saying that God *raised us up with Him, and made us to sit with Him in the heavenly places, in Christ*. For to Christ, as by nature Son, it belongs as a special prerogative to sit at the Father's side, and the glory of this dignity we can ascribe rightly and truly to Him, and Him alone. But the fact that Christ Who sits there is in all points like unto us, in that He has appeared as Man, while we believe Him to be God of God, seems to confer on us also the privilege of this dignity. For even if we shall not sit at the side of the Father Himself,---for how could the servant ever ascend to equal honour with the master?---yet nevertheless Christ promised the holy disciples that they should sit on thrones. For He says: *When the Son of Man shall sit on the throne of His glory, ye also shall sit upon twelve thrones, judging the twelve tribes of Israel*.

"I shall not then," He says, "depart to prepare mansions for you, for many there are already, and to make new habitations for creation is needless; but I go to make ready a place for you on account of the sin that has mastery over you, that so those who are on the earth may be able to be mingled with the holy angels; for else the saintly multitude of those above would never have mingled with those who had been so denied. But now, when I shall have accomplished this work, and united the world below to the world above, and given you a path of access to the city on high, I will return again at the time of the regeneration, *and receive you ⁵ with Myself; that where I am, there ye may be also*." And this is also in the mind of Paul, when he thus writes in his own letter: *For this we say unto you by the word of the Lord, that we that are alive, that are left unto the coming of the Lord, shall in no wise precede them that are fallen asleep. For the Lord Himself shall descend from heaven, with a shout, with the voice of the archangel, and with the trump of God: and the dead in Christ shall rise first: then we that are alive, that are left, shall together with them be caught up in the clouds, to meet the Lord in the air: and so shall we ever be with the Lord*.

4 And whither I go ye know, and the way ye know.

"I Myself," He seems to say, "am going on before to make ready for you the path of entrance into the heavens: but if you wish, and if it is the delight of your heart, to rest within those mansions, and if you have devoted all your endeavours to reach the city above and to dwell in the company of the holy spirits, then *ye know the way*, which is Myself; for assuredly through

Me. and none other, will you gain that blessing so marvellous. No other will ever open the heavens to you, or ever smooth for you the ground that none on earth could hitherto ever tread or ever know, except Myself alone." And the saying is true. Therefore surely it was that the prophet Jeremiah, speaking by the Spirit, bade us ever seek this way most diligently, saying: *Stand ye in the ways, and ask for the everlasting paths of the Lord, and see what is the good way, and walk therein; and ye shall find sanctification to your souls.* For the *ways* and *paths* of the Lord are, according to the prophet, the saving precepts of the holy prophets; but if any one devote his mind to them, he will find the *Good Way*, that is, Christ, through Whom cometh the perfect *sanctification* to our souls: for we are justified by faith, and are made *partakers of the Divine nature* by sharing in the gift of the Holy Spirit. Nay, more, Isaiah himself, that prophet of mighty-sounding voice, thus heralded forth to us the coming of Christ, saying: *There shall be in that time an undefiled way, and it shall be called a holy way;* where by the phrase "in that time" he clearly means to speak of the time of the Incarnation of the Only-begotten: for He has made Himself for us an *Undefiled and Holy Way*, along which whosoever shall travel will at the appointed season behold the fair brightness of the city of the saints, and *the Jerusalem* which is *free*. And again, the inspired Psalmist himself says to us, addressing himself as to God the Father: *Teach me, O Lord, in Thy way:* for he is desirous to be instructed in the laws that are given by Christ, as one who is not unaware that he will travel onward even to the city above, if led by the Evangelic teaching, journeying straight towards every blessing. And it would not be difficult to bring forward also many other testimonies out of the prophets, from which we might know assuredly that Jesus was called by them the holy "Way"; but I consider that there is no necessity for laying excessive stress on arguments whose effective use is so self-evident. "Ye know therefore," He says, "the way by which you yourselves also may pass to the mansions above;" signifying thereby just this, and nothing else: "There are indeed resting-places in God the Father's home, many and glorious; and I am going on before you to prepare for you a means of access whereby you may in all boldness enter the regions yonder. But be well assured that no man would ever be able to reach those courts save through Me, and Me alone." If therefore any one fall away from the love of Christ, or (giving way to profane babblings and to impure and unnatural suggestions on the part of men whose hearts are set on false slanders) venture to degrade to the condition of slavery His nature so ineffable and incomprehensible, numbering among those born in the world Him Who is the Word begotten of the Father's essence in perfect freedom, or having any like base thoughts; let that man be well assured that he has lost the track of the journey to heaven above, and that he has been "deceived as to the waggon-wheels of his own farm," according to the saying of some one, and will most certainly undergo the penalties that are merited by those who cling to the world below. Therefore also the most wise Paul says of those who in madness have refused to order their lives in the manner of Christ, rushing back to the shadows of the law, that they have been alienated from Christ, and have *fallen from grace* in their desire to be *justified by the law*. For even as he who strays from the direct and beaten path will certainly be exposed to the disastrous consequences of his wandering, just so methinks and in the same degree will they who have rejected the righteousness that is in Christ, and have set at nought the teaching of the Evangelic dispensation, never see the city above, and never dwell with the saints. For Christ alone is the Way that can bring them thither.

5, 6 *Thomas saith unto Him, We know not whither Thou goest, and how know we the way?*
Jesus saith unto him, I am the Way, and the Truth, and the Life: no one cometh unto the Father, but by Me.

Christ willed not as yet to tell His disciples in so many words that He was going away to the world above and returning to His Father, although in dark hints and through many impressive sayings He had been referring to the event. But one of His disciples, that one being Thomas, now questions Him directly, and by introducing at the same time a sort of argument, all but forces Him in spite of Himself to tell them plainly both whither it is that He is going, and where the path of His journey lies. For *we know not*, said he, *whither Thou goest*: so then, *how could we know the way*? Christ in His reply evades the excessive curiosity of His disciple, for He does not give the desired answer at all, but treasuring up the question in His all-knowing mind, and rather reserving it for a more convenient moment, He in His kindness unfolds a truth which it was essential for them to learn. He says, therefore: *I am the Way, I the Truth, I the Life*. Now as to the truth of the Lord's saying in these words concerning Himself, no reasonable person can ever have felt the slightest shadow of doubt; yet I conceive it is needful to examine the question attentively. For how comes it that, whereas in the inspired Scriptures He is spoken of as Light, and Wisdom, and Power, and by many other names, He selects a few only as being of very especial significance for the present occasion, calling Himself *the Way, and the Truth, and the Life*? For the real force of the words is deep and not easily discernible, as it seems to me; yet still we must not shrink from attempting to discover it. I shall say exactly what occurs to my own mind, commending to those who are wont to speculate more keenly the task of thinking out a higher meaning.

There are then three means whereby we shall reach the Divine courts that are above and enter *the Church of the firstborn*; namely, by practice in virtue of every kind, by faith in rightness of doctrine, and by hope of life to come. Is there any one else than our Lord Jesus the Christ, who could ever be a leader, a helper, or a means for granting us success in such matters as these? Surely not: do not think it. For He Himself has taught us things that are beyond the Law; He has pointed out to us the way that any one might safely take as leading to a virtue mighty in operation, and to a zealous and unhindered performance of those acts that are after the pattern of Christ. And so He Himself is the Truth, He is the Way; that is, the true boundary of faith, and the exact rule and standard of an unerring conception concerning God. For by a true belief in the Son, namely as begotten of the very essence of God the Father, and as bearing the title of Son in its fullest and truest meaning, and not even in any sense a made or created being, we shall then clothe ourselves in the confidence of a true faith. For he who has received the Son as a Son, has fully confessed a belief also in Him of Whose essence the Son is, and knows and will straightway accept God as the Father. Therefore He is the Truth, He is the Life; for none other will restore to us the life which is within our hopes, namely, that life which is in incorruption, and blessedness, and sanctification: for He it is that raises us up, and will bring us back again from the death we died under the ancient curse, to the state in which we were at the beginning. In Him therefore and through Him, all that is best and all that is precious has already appeared, and will appear for us. And notice again that the meaning connected with these words is very suitable to the idea involved in the previous verses. For while the disciple was still in doubt, and saying: *How know we the way*? He shewed him briefly that since they knew Himself to be the motive cause, the leader, and the prince of the blessings that would bring them to the world above, they would have no further need of knowing the way.

But since He has added hereunto the words: *No one cometh unto the Father but by Me*, let us give some attention to this point in what we are about to say; first examining the question how one could go to the Father. We approach Him in two ways: either by becoming holy, as far as is possible for humanity, we thus are led to cleave to a holy God, for it is written: *Ye shall be*

holy, for I am holy; or else we arrive, through faith and contemplation, at that knowledge of the Father which is as it were *in a mirror darkly*, as it is written. But no man would ever be holy and make progress in a life according to the rule of virtue, unless Christ were the guide of his footsteps in everything: and none would ever be united to God the Father save through the mediation of Christ. For He is Mediator between God and men, through Himself and in Himself uniting humanity to God. For since He is born of the essence of God the Father, in that He is the Word, the Effulgence, and the very Image, He is one with the Father, being wholly in the Father, and having the Father in Himself; while in that He has become a man like unto us, He is united to all on the earth in everything except in our sin: and so He has become a sort of border-ground, containing in Himself all that concurs to unity and friendship.

No man therefore will *come to the Father*, that is, will appear as a partaker of the Divine nature, save through Christ alone. For if He had not become a Mediator by taking human form, our condition could never have advanced to such a height of blessedness; but now, if any one approach the Father in a spirit of faith and reverent knowledge, he will do so, by the help of our Saviour Christ Himself. For even as I said just now, so I will say again, the course of the argument being in no wise different. By accepting the Son truly as Son a man will arrive also at the knowledge of God the Father: for one could not be looked upon as a son, except the father who begat him were fully acknowledged at the same time. The knowledge of the Father is thus necessarily concurrent with belief in the Son, and knowledge of the Son with belief in the Father. And so the Lord says most truly: *No man cometh unto the Father but by Me*. For the Son is in nature and essence an Image of God the Father, and not (as some have thought) a Being moulded merely into His likeness by attributes specially bestowed, Himself being by nature something essentially different, and being so esteemed.

7 If ye had known Me, ye would have known My Father also.

Some may perchance say and think that the Son is here speaking of His own accord, and at His own suggestion. But it is not so. For He never uttered anything in an uncalled-for, or merely casual way; though He does occasionally repeat Himself in a most instructive manner, especially because of the utter inability of some to follow His teaching. But in the present instance His words are most profitable to us in connection with what He had said just before. For when Thomas questioned Him, asking: "Whither wilt Thou depart; or how can we know the way, if we know not whither Thou wilt go?" He thereupon answered him most effectively in the words: *I am the Way, and the Life, and the Truth*; and again: *No man cometh unto the Father but by Me*; thereby shewing that if any one willed to know the way which would lead to eternal life, he would strive with all diligence to know Christ. But since it was likely that some, who had been trained in Jewish rather than in Evangelic doctrine, might suppose that a confession of faith in and a knowledge of One Person only out of all was sufficient for a right belief, and that it was needless to learn the doctrine concerning the Holy and Consubstantial Trinity; Christ seems to absolutely exclude those who hold this opinion from a true knowledge concerning God, unless they would also accept Himself. For it is through the Son that we must draw near to God the Father. For in a manner analogous to our acceptance of the Offspring, we shall arrive at our belief in the Parent also. For it is utterly impossible to doubt that a belief in the sonship of Son, as begotten of the essence of the Father, will certainly lead to a knowledge of the Father.

According then to the simpler and more obvious interpretation, He must be supposed to have spoken with this meaning: but if any one believes that He is employing subtle ideas so as to penetrate to the very root of the whole matter, he will find once more that the Son is teaching truth. The Divine Nature, indeed, is utterly incomprehensible by any human intellect; and to claim for oneself to have fully discovered Who and What in very essence the Creator of the universe is, would involve a display of absolute folly. Still, it is not impossible for us, though in a shadowy and uncertain manner, to obtain some kind of knowledge by holding up as a mirror to our mind's eye the catalogue of Divine attributes which are inherent by nature in the Son. For from a knowledge of what Christ is in Himself, and of the works He has wrought when He became Incarnate as well as before His Incarnation, one might afterwards ascend by analogous reasoning to a contemplation of the Father Who begat Him. Behold, I pray thee, the glory and the power that were His: gaze on His authority, that extended without hindrance over all. Tell me, is there anything conceivable or inconceivable that He does not appear to have achieved with perfect success at His own free will, both before and since His Incarnation? Nay, more, He Who shewed Himself to us so mighty by the evidence of His works, says expressly: *I and the Father are One*, and: *He that hath seen Me hath seen the Father*. We must therefore, in reliance on what we have just quoted, pass onward from the Likeness to the Archetype, and from the Very Image to the full realisation of Him Whom the Very Image represents. We do not say, as some of the heterodox would have us say, that the Son is fashioned after the Father's likeness by means of certain attributes bestowed upon Him from without; nor even would we admit, as some in error suppose, that He is styled the Image of God the Father as possessing His glory, His power, and His wisdom, although being Himself really of a different nature: these are the foolish babblings of the heretics, sheer nonsense delicately veiled, or rather absolute impiety, designed according to their unholy and ungodly object to overthrow and destroy the doctrine of the Son's Consubstantiality with the Father. But Christ is a Son in very truth, begotten ineffably and incomprehensibly of the essence of God the Father, and as such is the Very Image and Likeness and Effulgence of Him, bearing innate within Himself the proper characteristics of His Father's essence, and possessing in all their beauty the attributes that are naturally the Father's. For we will not imitate the heretics in their extravagant madness, and degrade our own minds to such a depth of foolishness as to say that Christ in any respect differs from a Being Who is in very nature God, or to deny that He is begotten of the essence of God the Father, and so refuse to attribute to Him the glory of God; neither would we allow that any nature which was created and brought into existence out of nothing could ever, without undergoing change, be endowed with the Divine power and wisdom, or ever be such as the Divine and ineffable nature of God the Father may be imagined to be. For else, what distinction could any longer exist between the Creator and the creature; or what could intervene or sever, that is to say, between the thing made and Him Who made it, in regard to identity and essence? For if a creature possesses glory and power and wisdom exactly to the same degree as God the Father, I should be utterly unable to say, and I conceive the heretics would be in the same perplexity, wherein God's superiority can possibly consist, or how He can be greater than we or than His creature. Therefore we maintain that the Son is in no wise fashioned so as to resemble the Father by the addition of attributes from without, nor is He like a representation in a picture, adorned by us with merely ideal colours which gloss over and falsely indicate the royal dignity; but He is truly the Very Image and Likeness of His Father, displaying to us the Father's nature in clearest light by the graces that are His own by nature. And this is why Christ pronounces it impossible for any to have fully known the Father without first knowing Himself, that is, the Son.

And from henceforth ye know Him, and have seen Him.

Wonderful, it seems to me, is the gracious intention and the unspeakably profound purpose that underlies this saying also. For after having just said: *If ye had known Me, ye would have known My Father also*, and seeming thus to reproach His disciples for their ignorance of truths so essential, He immediately passes on to comfort them with the assurance: *From henceforth ye know Him and have seen Him*. For since they were destined to become rulers of the Churches throughout the world, in obedience to the Saviour's commission: *Go ye and make disciples of all nations*, for this reason above all others, as I think, He first utters a most useful truth of universal reference to all time, that whosoever knoweth the Son will most assuredly also know God the Father of Whom the Son is begotten; and then in His kindness He goes on to testify that His disciples possess this knowledge: not speaking at all by way of compliment, for He could never utter aught but truth, but inasmuch as they really knew Him and had most fully acknowledged Him. For that they knew and had believed that the Lord was really Son of God can by no means be a matter of doubt to right-minded persons. For how came it that Nathaniel the Israelite, when he heard Christ say: *Before that Philip called thee, when thou wast under the fig-tree, I saw thee*, immediately put forth his full confession of faith, saying: *Rabbi, Thou art the Son of God, Thou art the King of Israel?* Moreover, when the sea was marvellously and supernaturally calmed, how was it that those who were in the ship worshipped Him, saying: *Truly Thou art the Son of God?* Will any one maintain that this saying was uttered by men who did not know that He was God and begotten of God the Father? Surely such an one would give a most convincing proof of his want of intelligence. When, in the district of Caesarea Philippi, they were asked by Christ Himself: *Who do men say that I the Son of Man am?* did not they first of all give the opinions of others? *Some*, they say, *think Thou art Elijah, and others Jeremiah, or one of the prophets*. But Who they themselves said that He was, they shrank not from telling Him plainly, all speaking by the mouth of their chief, and that was Peter, affirming positively: *Thou art the Christ, the Son of the Living God*. Yet when Christ says: *If ye had known Me, ye would have known My Father also*, do not suppose that the saying is uttered entirely for the sake of the disciples: it is rather a general declaration laid down for all, the holy disciples being taken as representatives of all mankind.

Notice carefully then how clearly we shall find that they have not been ignorant that He is God and the Son of God; but when He spoke of Himself as "the Way" of God, then they did not understand what seemed to be spoken enigmatically: and this will comprise the full extent of any charge of ignorance that can be brought against them. For this reason surely, having briefly refuted the idea of their inability to understand what was told them indirectly, and then grounded on this a declaration affecting all men, teaching plainly that whosoever knows not the Son will also lose his knowledge of the Father; He then most justly testifies to the disciples' knowledge of Him, inasmuch as they had already made open confession of their faith: and this He does in the words: *From henceforth ye know Him and have seen Him*. And He uses the word "henceforth," not with reference to that hour or that day on which He was uttering His teaching on these matters: but He uses the word in order to contrast with the days of the old and first dispensation the new and recently-arisen season of His own presence, whereby the knowledge of the Father as seen through the Son has been made clearer for all men throughout the world. Therefore also in the Book of Psalms, as speaking to God the Father, He says: *The knowledge of Thee has been greatly magnified by Me*. For having seen the Son excelling in deeds incredibly marvellous, and with God-befitting authority easily accomplishing His own good pleasure, we have been led on thereby to accept in reverent

admiration the knowledge of the Father, believing it to be no other than the knowledge of the Son Who came forth from Him. *From henceforth*, therefore, *ye know Him and have seen Him*. For through the Son we have been led, as I said just now, to know Who the Father is, and not only have we known, but we have also beheld or seen. For knowledge indicates that mental contemplation at which one may very well arrive concerning the Divine and ineffable nature that is above all, and through all, and in all. But to have seen the Truth signifies the fulfilment of our knowledge by the vision of the miraculous works. For we have not simply known the bare fact that the Father is in His nature Life; nor have we had within ourselves the knowledge of the matter ideally and theoretically only: we have seen the truth carried out by the Son, in giving life to the dead, and restoring to existence those who had seen corruption. We have not simply known the fact that the God and Father of all is in His nature Life, and has the whole creation in subjection beneath His feet; and that He rules in sovereign authority over all things made by Him, so that, as it is written: *All His works shake and tremble at Him*, we have seen evidence of the truth in the action of the Son, when, in rebuking the sea and the winds, He said with all authority, *Peace, be still*.

Since therefore He was intending to say that "you have not only known, but have even seen the Father," He considered it essential to prefix the word "*henceforth*;" and why so? The reason was this: the law of Moses declared to the children of Israel, *The Lord thy God is one Lord*, and never offered the doctrine concerning the Son to the men of old time; it was content with driving them away from the worship of many gods and calling them to adore One, and One only: but our Lord Jesus the Christ by His Incarnation made known to us the Father through Himself by many signs and mighty works, and has shown that the nature of the Godhead which we believe to be contained in the Holy Trinity is in truth One. And so He does well to say "*henceforth*," on account of the imperfection of knowledge possessed by those who walk after the law, and order their lives in that system. And we must note well that in saying that He Himself and not the Father has been seen, He in no way denies the real and individual existence of the God and Father from Whom He is; nor does He even say that He Himself is the Father, inasmuch as He claims to have come to represent the Father's Person. But since He is Consubstantial with the Father, He says that His Father is seen in His Person; just as if an ordinary man's son, wishing to indicate plainly the nature of his father, were to point to himself and say to any chance inquirer in the matter: "In me thou hast seen my father." Here again, however, the Godhead will entirely transcend the power of the example to illustrate.

8 Philip saith unto Him, Lord, shew us the Father, and it sufficeth us.

Philip is anxious to learn, but not very keen in that understanding which is adapted to Divine vision; for else he would never have supposed it possible with bodily eyes to behold in its fulness the Divine nature in spite of the plain declaration of God: *No man shall see My Face and live*. For even if God in days of old appeared to the saints, as the inspired Scripture tells us, yet no one I think would suppose that the Divine nature was ever made manifest in its full perfection, but rather that it moulded itself into that peculiar fashion of outward appearance which was more specially suitable for each occasion. For example, the Prophets have seen Him in different manners, and their description of God varies greatly. For Isaiah beheld Him in one way, and Ezekiel again in a manner not resembling the wonder recorded in Isaiah. Philip therefore ought to have understood that it was absolutely impossible that he could see the Divine Essence in the flesh and yet in no fleshly form; especially as it was far from wise, with the Likeness and Very Exact Image of God the Father present before his eyes, to seek to penetrate onward to the presence of the Archetype, as though it were not then visible before

him and manifested in the most fitting manner. For surely the contemplation of Christ is most fully sufficient as a representation of the Essence of God the Father, unfolding most beautifully and most exactly the marvellous grace of the Kingly Essence from which He was begotten. *For the tree is known by its fruit*, according to the saying of the Saviour Himself. Seeing therefore that to one who is really thoughtful the contemplation of the Son suffices to represent to us in perfect fulness the nature of Himself and of His Father, we may in all probability reckon the saying of the disciple as out of place; but still it will be found meet to be reckoned within the number of things that deserve the highest praise. For I think we must admire him, and that more than moderately, for saying: *Shew us the Father, and it sufficeth us*. For it is as though he had said: "We should acknowledge that we were in the enjoyment of every pleasure, and there would be nothing for us to seek to fill our cup of happiness, if we ourselves also were deemed worthy of the longed-for sight of God the Father." But a man who preferred to every blessing, and to everything that could be imagined to contribute to his pleasure, the sight of [252](#) God the Father, would surely be acknowledged to be worthy of all admiration. In this sense we shall understand the meaning in this passage, as I think, according to the obvious and simpler view taken by most men. But if it is needful to glance at a more elaborated sense, and perhaps to speak of some of the hidden meanings, we may suppose that Philip both spoke and also thought something on this wise. The leaders of the Jews, and besides them the scribes also and Pharisees, were stung to the quick by the Saviour's wondrous works, and pierced as by stones cast into their heart by His immeasurable proofs of Divine power; they were bursting with jealousy and knew that they were utterly powerless either to perform such wonders themselves or to prevent Him from working them. And so they cavilled at His miraculous acts, seeking to make light of His glory by deceitful words; and running up and down the whole territory of Judaea and Jerusalem itself, they spread reports, at one time that He wrought His signs in the power of Beelzebub; at another time, in the fury of their uncontrollable madness, that He had a devil and knew not what He said. For they kept rebuking the multitudes, saying: *He hath a devil, and is mad: why hear ye Him?* Moreover [there was another plan of theirs] devised in an insufferable manner to ruin His good reputation; and what this was, I feel it my duty to explain. For they tried to persuade the people, as we showed just now, not to attend to our Saviour's discourses, but to desert His teaching as contrary to the law; hastening to avoid Him as much as possible, and to adhere more firmly to the precepts given as from God by Moses. And on what grounds did they urge this? They said that the great Moses led forth the people of old *to meet with God*, as it is written, and presented them at the Mount Sinai, showing to them God in the mountain, and preparing them to hear His words, and assuring them most fully and clearly that God was uttering the laws: whereas Christ gave no such proofs of His authority, and did nothing at all of the like. And that this comparison was currently accepted among them thou wilt learn from hence. For thou wilt behold them saying to the man born blind whom the Saviour healed by ineffable power: *Thou art His disciple, but we are disciples of Moses. For we know that God hath spoken unto Moses; but as for this Man, we know not whence He is*. Those therefore who were arguing with Jewish pleas considered that their argument on this head was difficult to meet and impossible for most men to refute; and, as is probable, they did thereby confound and ensnare many. Bearing this in mind, and thinking that all the gainsaying of the Jews would be stopped if Christ Himself also would show the Father to those who believe on Him, Philip addresses Him in the words: *Lord, show us the Father, and it sufficeth us*. For conceive him to imply this much: "All things, O Master, that are conducive to faith are effected by Thy authority, and by wonders innumerable one might rebuke the immoderate extravagance of the Jewish gibes. But nothing whatever will fail us, if Thou Thyself wilt show forth to us God

the Father; for this will be sufficient for Thy disciples, so as to enable them in the future very successfully to arm themselves in defence with the very arguments of those who put forth the former objections." By applying some such view as this to the passage before us, we shall I think succeed in arriving at the argument suitable to the occasion. For Philip himself invites our attention to this view of this case, by saying, "*It sufficeth us to see God the Father,*" as though this and this alone were wanting to those who have believed. And the Saviour Himself also may seem to suggest the same idea, by saying in what follows: *The words that I say unto you, I speak not from Myself: but the Father abiding in Me, He doeth the works.* But the sense we should attribute to this saying will be explained not in the present but in the more suitable and neighbouring passage.

9 *Jesus saith unto him, Have I been so long time with you, and dost thou not know Me, Philip? He that hath seen Me hath seen the Father.*

In an unexpected way He convicts the disciple of ignorance. For the less easily discernible portions of the meanings implied, in the apprehension of which our mental faculties are necessarily put to a more subtle test, will certainly, although possibly not in any short period yet still in a longer extension of time, be grasped by those who are desirous to learn, and will explain themselves most clearly; and those whose minds are not hardened and whose knowledge is unobstructed, may at once be expected to perceive such meanings and accept them with perfect ease. "What is it therefore," He seems to say, "that hinders you, O Philip, from arriving at perfection of knowledge of Myself? Tell Me. For although so long a time has elapsed since I have been with you as to suffice for a perfect knowledge of all that it was needful for thee to learn, nevertheless thou art still in doubt, or rather art convicted of absolute ignorance, as to Who I am by nature, and whence I come; and yet thou findest Me to be the Creator of all that is more especially admired in thy sight. How was it that thou didst not know that he who hath seen Me hath seen the Father? Thou supposest that the Jews of old saw the Divine Nature on Mount Sinai, and heard it speaking in delivering the laws that govern men's conduct; but not yet hast thou realised that through Me and in Me thou hast seen the Father. For *he that hath seen Me hath seen the Father.*" And to show my hearers that it is no corporeal contemplation that Christ here indicates, needs I think not many words. For no thoughtful person would ever maintain that the Divine Nature can be made an object of corporeal vision; nay, no one could endure to behold with the eyes of the body that which is now apprehended dimly as *in a mirror: for we see darkly*, and I believe that even the man who boasts of the very highest knowledge has but a faint idea concerning God.

But this also we must say to the enemies of the truth, who are profuse in their railings against us, or rather against the very essence of the Only-begotten. For if it is untrue that the Son is of the very essence of God the Father, so as to be by generation That which He is, namely in His nature and in very truth God; and if He is made illustrious by the mere addition to Himself of features that were not originally His own, so that He shines as it were by reflected light from glories bestowed upon Him, and not by His own natural lustre, while appearing all the while as a true Likeness of the Father and an unchanging Image of God; then surely in the first place He could not be in His nature a Son, or even in any true sense an Offspring, but He must be either a created object like unto ourselves, or some other being standing in a similar relation: and this much being admitted and accepted as true, we shall then, it seems, have established this consequence also, that the Father could never be really and naturally a Father, but only so in will and in semblance, just as He is reckoned a Father of us also. And what will be the natural sequence of this? We shall still necessarily have to acknowledge a Trinity: only no

longer do we express any belief whatever in the Holy Trinity, but rather in three utterly distinct Persons, each having nothing essentially in common with any other, each one of those named receding as it were into the special peculiarity of His own nature, each totally separate from the other. For the weightiness of the subject forces us to speak even more firmly still on the point. And if we allow that this is true, and confess that it follows as we have said, and admit that the Son is utterly different from the essence of God the Father, surely then Christ will be speaking falsely in the words: *He that hath seen Me hath seen the Father*. For since the Father is from the beginning in His nature God, how could the Son, although not being (according to the view of these heretics) in His nature God, shew forth the Father in Himself? For how shall we behold the Uncreated in the created? And in one who once was not (according to their theory), how could any man possibly behold Him Who was from all eternity? For let not any of these blasphemers tell me, in his sophistical declamations against the power of truth, that because Christ is endued with the glory of God and His power and wisdom and good and omnipotence, so that He can bring into being things that never before existed, therefore He is also an Image of Him: but first let such an one prove whether Christ does not display Himself as in His nature God, and that so irrefutably that there is nothing which impairs the universal and absolute resemblance of the Image to the Archetype. And if he hesitates in perplexity and is unwilling to prove this, we will in the next place ask him to tell us what explanation will allow of one who (according to their accursed notions) is not in His nature God, being enabled to fulfil the works that belong to the Godhead: for this is what they mean by saying that He bears the Image of the Father. For if the Son, without possessing as His own a power sufficient for the purpose, borrows the power from the Father, and is by Him supplied with wisdom and might, so as to be able to perform actions which we shall allow to be beyond the power of any nature save that of the Father alone; then in so doing He will be falsely representing the Image and the Likeness. And if we refuse to admit that He (being of the nature we have just been describing) is guilty of falsehood, and accept the truth of His words, we shall then find ourselves convicted of wronging the glory of God the Father in a manner that I will now explain. We are constrained to admit one of two things: either He falsely represents the Image of God the Father, in that He possesses not in Himself the might sufficing for His acts, but is supplied therewith from another, whereas it is not so with the Archetype; or else, if it is true as He says that in Him the Father is seen by us, and that there is really nothing whatever that disfigures or obscures or perverts His perfect similarity, it is absolutely necessary, willingly or unwillingly, to admit that the Father Himself holds His power as something received from another. For in this way He willed to display to us Himself in the Image of His own nature and of His glory.

"Is it possible then," one might go on to say to these heretics, "that you do not perceive whither your theory, when once it quits the safe path, will lead you on, and into what an abyss of error it will plunge those who have held such views?" "But," say they, "surely it is possible that the Son, although a created being, may yet fulfil the works whereof by His nature He is capable, and so advance the glory of God the Father?" Now what suggestion can appear more impious than this? If this be as they say, there can no longer be any superiority or any higher dignity by which God excels His creatures, if even one of them is to be invested with the glory and power of the Godhead. For let no one be so excessively deranged in mind as to suppose that he is imagining and uttering a marvellous and magnificent compliment concerning the Son in thinking or saying that "He is a creature, but not as one of the creatures." Let him be well assured that he is thus in no small degree disparaging His glory. For the question is not whether His nature is specially superior beyond all other creatures, but whether He is at all a created being. For how could He avoid the consequences of being a creature, even though He

were the noblest of all creatures? And if the glory of the Son is disparaged by saying that He was brought into existence, why do they vainly advance (to heal as it were His offended dignity) the statement that He was created in the highest of all possible ranks? It follows therefore that we shall offer insult to the essence of God the Father if we bestow such power on the Son, supposing the Son (according to their ignorant and unskilful reasoning) is Himself a created being. And we shall not tolerate them when they tell us that the Son performs the acts of the Godhead, though Himself in His nature a creature, so as to glorify God the Father. If they can prove as much from the Divine Scripture, let them bring forward their citations, and let them observe the sayings of the holy writers in all sincerity: but if these are inventions of their own brains, and if they have themselves manufactured their arguments in this matter, we shall salute them with the words: *Woe to those who prophesy after their own heart!* For we shall allow that the Father ever is desirous of whatsoever He knows will maintain in integrity His Divine glory and preserve the absolute truth of the declarations made concerning Himself. And so we shall now bid farewell to the ignorant suggestions of those heretics and pass on to the real truth concerning Christ, believing that He is in truth begotten as Son of the essence of God the Father, and that He is in His nature God of God. For thus He speaks in perfect truth, in that He is both the Very Image and the Likeness of God the Father, when He says: *He that hath seen Me hath seen the Father.*

How sayest thou then, Shew us the Father?

"Thou mightest, Philip," He would say, "have beheld the glory of the Father in Me, and from what I am have perceived the nature of My Parent: for I have appeared in My true character as a Very and Exact Image and as a Perfect Likeness of His essence, bearing engraved on Myself the entire nature of God the Father. What additional manner of Divine vision other than this couldst thou ask for, at least if thou wouldst display thy ability to estimate things in true proportion; or tell Me what kind of contemplation thou dost require? Dost thou really suppose that a better and fuller manifestation was granted to the men of former times, when I came down on Mount Sinai in a vision of fire?" For this above all else was the greatest and most usual boast of the Jews.

This we may in all probability suppose to have been the meaning of Christ's answer. We must now, I conceive, feel it our duty to state in all boldness that the manifestation of the miracles of our Saviour Christ was a better guide to the knowledge of God the Father than the vision that appeared on Mount Sinai. For thus thou wilt see that Philip, when the true Image was before his eyes, was in no way constrained to ask for that other sight of God the Father which on Mount Sinai was granted to those of former time. For there the Lord descended, as it is written, in a form of fire, while the Israelites were looking on. But no one could, I think, thereby be made to advance to a right conception concerning God, or to ascend with one bound to a fitting comprehension of the Godhead. For how by means of fire as an image could we be led to realise the existence of God the Father as the Archetype [thereby shadowed forth]? For God is naturally good, and moreover is a Creator, calling previously non-existent things into being, bringing together the universe into consistence, and quickening all things: He is also Wisdom and Power, kind, compassionate, and merciful. And none of these attributes belong to fire. For no one would suppose, at least if he were gifted with sense, that fire was kind and compassionate to men; nor would any one soberly maintain that it was a creative influence, endowed with wisdom and the power of bestowing life. If this be so, tell me how any one could possibly from a vision of fire gather any ideas concerning the true nature of the Godhead. Or how could one behold *in a mirror darkly* any of those attributes that are

inherent in it? What then, one may say, was the ground or reason that induced God to declare Himself in the form of fire on Mount Sinai? We shall answer that as the children of Israel were, at that moment above all others in their career, beginning their education in the way of godliness, and were about to draw up the law which was to be observed as a strict rule to govern their own lives; it was most especially needful that God should appear as a Chastiser and a Terrible One to them, so that transgressors might be able to realise that they had to do with a Fire. Therefore surely it was that the great Moses also in speaking to the children of Israel said: *Our God is a consuming Fire*. And we should not at all be inclined to say that it was in order to exhibit to us the nature of God that the very wise writer thus compared Him to fire, but that he bestowed this title on God from the fact that, owing to His excessive hatred of wickedness, God shrinks not from wasting and consuming, like an all-devouring fire, those who despise Him. Therefore it is not in consequence of what He is in His nature that God makes Himself known in a vision of fire: but it was found to conduce to the profit of those who listened, that He should be thus named, and that He should have then appeared as fire. Let us pass now to that true and most exact vision of the Father granted to us in the Son. For we shall see Him to be an Image of the One Who begat Him, if we gaze intently with the eye of our minds on the extraordinary powers that are displayed in Him. Goodness belongs naturally to God the Father, and the same we shall find in the Son. For surely He is good, Who endured so great humiliation for our sakes, coming *into the world to save sinners*, and laying down His life for them. Similarly the Father is powerful, and so it is with the Son. For what power could be greater than that which commanded even the elements themselves, rebuking the sea and the winds, and transforming the nature of substances at His will; bidding the leper be cleansed, and giving sight to the blind: and all with God-befitting authority? The Father is in His nature Life: the Son also is equally Life, quickening those who have been turned to corruption, overthrowing the power of death, and thereby raising the dead to life. Rightly then does he say to Philip: *He that hath seen Me hath seen the Father*. "For whereas," He would say, "thou mightest in Me and through Me behold very clearly My Father, what other manner of Divine vision dost thou ask for, when thou hast received a far better one than that vouchsafed to the men of former time, and hast met with a most true Likeness of the Father, namely Mine own Self?"

10 *Believest thou not that I am in the Father and the Father in Me?*

"I indeed, O Philip," He would say, "in depicting in Myself the nature of My Father, am the Image of His essence, moulded as that implies after His likeness, not (as might be supposed) by the bestowal of glories that once were not Mine, nor even by the reflected brilliancy of Divine endowments that once were unfamiliar but have been granted from without: but rather in My own nature are contained the qualities peculiar to My Father; and whatsoever He may be, that in very truth am I, in regard to sameness in essence. To this thou wilt surely reply: for it seems thou didst not go on to realise that *I am in the Father, and the Father in Me*. And yet the force of my words shall constrain thee henceforth, even in spite of thyself, to acknowledge thy assent to this. Therefore, whatsoever I say is spoken as the words of the Father; and whatsoever I do, is done by the Father also." And Christ says this, not as one making use of the words of another, nor even as speaking in the office and capacity of a prophet to interpret the commands that came from the Father above: for the prophets ever spake, not their own words, but the words which they received by inspiration from God. Again, He attributes to His Father the successful performance of His miracles, not implying that He works His wonders by a power not His own, as did for instance those Apostles who said to the people: "Give not heed to us, as though by our own power or godliness we had healed the sick man." For the

saints are wont to use no power of their own in working their miracles, but rather the power of God: for they appear as ministers and servants, showing forth the words and also the works of God. But since the Son is Consubstantial with the Father, differing from Him in no respect except as to distinct personality, He says that His own words are those of the Father, since the Father could in no wise make use of words differing from those of the Son. And further, thou wilt understand the same to be signified in the majesty of His works. For since the Father could never by any possibility carry into effect any work without the Son's knowledge and co-operation, Christ attributes His works to His Father. For consider Him as saying more clearly this: "I am in all respects like to Him Who begat Me, and an Image of His essence; not merely adorned with the outward appearance of a glory that is not Mine, but, owing to the identity of essence, containing within Myself My Father in all His fulness."

The words that I speak, I speak not from Myself: but the Father abiding in Me Himself doeth the works.

"If," He would say, "My Father had spoken anything to you, He would have used words no other than these which I now speak. For so great is the equality in essence between Myself and Him, that My words are His words, and whatsoever I do may be believed to be His actions: for *abiding in Me*, by reason of the exact equivalence in essence, *He Himself doeth the works*." For since the Godhead is One, in the Father, in the Son, and in the Spirit, every word that cometh from the Father comes always through the Son by the Spirit: and every work or miracle is through the Son by the Spirit, and yet is considered as coming from the Father. For the Son is not apart from the essence of the Father, nor indeed is the Holy Ghost; but the Son, being in the Father, and having the Father again in Himself, claims that the Father is the doer of the works. For the nature of the Father is mighty in operation, and shines out clearly in the Son.

And one might add to this another meaning that is involved, suggested clearly by the principles that underlie the Incarnation. He says: *I speak not of Myself*, meaning "not in severance from or in lack of accordance with God the Father." For since He appeared to those who saw Him in human form, He refers His words back to the Divine nature, as speaking in the Person of the Father; and the same with His actions: and He almost seems to say: "Let not this human form deprive Me of that reverent estimation which is due and befitting to Me, and do not suppose that My words are those of a mere man or of one like unto yourselves, but believe them to be in very truth Divine, and such as befit the Father equally with Myself. And He it is Who works, *abiding in Me*: for I am in Him, and He is in Me. Think not therefore that a mighty and extraordinary privilege was granted to the men of former days, in that they saw God in a vision of fire, and heard His voice speaking unto them. For ye have in reality seen the Father through Me and in Me; since I have appeared among you, being in My nature God, and *have come visibly*, according to the words of the Psalmist. And be well assured that in hearing My words, ye heard the words of the Father; and ye have been spectators of His works, and of the might that is in Him. For by Me He speaks, as by His own Word; and in Me He carries out and achieves His wondrous works, as though by His own Power."

And so I suppose that no reasonable theory would ever separate Him Who is the Word of the Father and the mighty Power of His essence, from the essence of the Father. Eather would every one freely confess that the Word ever was from the beginning in His nature contained in the Father's essence, every one at least who is anything but distraught in mental perplexity.

CHAPTER I. That by reason of the identity of Their nature, the Son is in the Father, and the Father again is in the Son.

11 *Believe that I am in the Father, and the Father is in Me*

He now admits plainly, or rather enjoins on the disciples henceforth, that it is fitting that we should be no otherwise minded than as the Word of Truth Himself may desire. For He is Consubstantial with His Father, nothing whatever intervening or in any way separating One from the Other into a diversity of nature. He is One with Him, so that the Son's nature appears in the essence of the Father, and in the essence of the Offspring appears conspicuously that of God the Father; just as one might see happen in the case of human relations. For we are in no way different in our nature from our offspring, nor are we sundered from them in an alienation of nature, although we are distinguished by a difference of outward personality; in illustration of which, let any man who has looked upon the son begotten by himself consider the history of the blessed Abraham. But in the case of men the difference is often very considerable, each one tending definitely, in a way, towards a retirement and withdrawal of himself into a peculiar line of life and manners, without feeling personally bound up in the other; although their unity of essence may be certain and evident to all. But in the case of God, Who is ever in perfect accordance with His nature, thou wilt believe it to be otherwise. The Father indeed is in individual personality Father and not Son; and again similarly He Who cometh forth from the Father is Son and not Father; and the Spirit is peculiarly Spirit. But since the Holy Trinity is united and joined together into a oneness of Godhead, there is among us One God alone: and it would be impossible to attribute to each one of the Persons here indicated the habit of secession from the others, and neither will ever withdraw into absolute separation; but we believe that each Person is in very substance exactly what we have here entitled Him. We consider that the Son, being of the Father, that is, of His essence, proceeded forth from Him in a manner ineffable, and yet abides in Him. Likewise also concerning the Holy Spirit: He proceeds in very truth from God as He is by nature, and yet is in no wise severed from His essence; but rather proceeds forth from Him, still abiding ever in Him, and is supplied to the saints through Christ; for all things come through the Son by the Holy Spirit. Such is the true and upright teaching that the wisdom of the holy fathers has taught us: thus we have been trained also by the Holy Scriptures themselves to speak and to think. And the Lord would cheer us onward to accept this unreviled faith, when he says: *Believe that I am in the Father, and the Father in Me.*

Or else believe for the very works' sake.

In these words He distinctly says that He could never have worked out and achieved those miracles which were characteristic of the Divine nature alone, if He had not been Himself essentially of that nature. And see on what sure grounds and also with what truth He makes this declaration. He does not claim credence for His words alone, although He knew no deceit, so much as for His actions. And why this is so I will tell you. There would be nothing to prevent any man, however mad and however foolish, from falsely using God-befitting words and speeches, and uttering such expressions in a most reckless manner: but who could ever display a God-befitting power of action? And to whom of created beings will the Father grant

that glory which is especially His own? Do we not always say that the power of doing all things and the possession of an all-supreme might is the glory of God alone, attaching to no other being, at least to no one ever numbered among the creatures of God? Therefore it is that Christ, wishing to give a proof of His Divinity resting on cogent and unquestionable arguments, urged them to believe the evidence of His actual works that He was in the Father, and that the Father again was in Him: that is, that he bears in His own substance the nature of the Father, as being His very own Offspring and most truly His Fruit, and appearing in natural relation to Him as Son to Father. But while the Church of Christ, in perfect confidence in the rightness of her teaching, holds in this form her doctrine concerning the Only-begotten, on the other hand the ungodly heretics have attempted to seduce to a different belief those who follow after and attend to their pernicious teachings. For the miserable creatures are furious in their outcries against Christ, and *consider one another not to provoke unto godliness, but to the end that each one may appear more godless than another, and may utter something yet more unseemly.* For since they drink the wine of Sodom and gather the bitter clusters of Gomorrah, because they receive not from the Divine Spirit their knowledge concerning Him, nor yet by revelation from the Father, but from the dragon himself; they can conceive in their minds nothing that is sound and right, but they utter sayings which bring to absolute wretchedness the souls of those who hear them, hurling them down to Hades and the abyss below. They venture moreover to publish these opinions in books, thus stereotyping their own wickedness for all time. It ought to have been sufficient for us to have said just so much on the present passage as would have been likely to benefit those who may chance to read it, by way of establishing in absolute accuracy the true conception concerning the Son, without making any allusion whatever to the heretical writings. But as it is in no way improbable that some persons of feeble intelligence may, on chancing to meet with their miserable sayings, be carried away by them; I considered it necessary to put an end to the harm that might result from their foolish talk, by exposing the utter weakness of the slanders they wish to raise in their vehement attack on the Son, or rather, for that is the truer way of putting the case, on the whole Divine nature.

I happened then to meet with a pamphlet of our opponents, and on investigating what they had to say on the text now before us, I found, in the course of reading it, these words used after certain others: "The Son therefore being essentially encompassed by the Father, has within Himself the Father, and it is the Father Who utters the words and accomplishes the miracles. This is the interpretation of His words: *The things that I speak unto you, I speak not from Myself; but the Father abiding in Me, He doeth the works*"

Such are the exact expressions of the author's quibbling jugglery. Now since it is my duty to mention this view, which is opposed to the language of Scripture, and which may very well perplex an inexperienced mind, I make this assertion. As to their phrase, that "the Son is essentially encompassed by the Father," I do not in the least understand what in the world it means, or what it signifies,----I speak the truth, as I feel it my duty to do,----so great is the obscurity of the expression. The real sense of the words seems ashamed of itself, and inclined to veil itself in overmuch dimness, not daring to explain itself openly and clearly. For even as *he that doeth ill hateth the light, and cometh not to the light, lest he should be improved,* according to the Saviour's word; even so every argument with an ill tendency is wont to move through dark ideas, and will not go towards the light of plain speaking, lest the meanness of its inherent unsoundness should be reproved. What then may we suppose to be the meaning of the Son's being "essentially encompassed by the Father?" For I will spare no pains to discover reasonings which may sift in every possible way the real import of that

which is here so dimly expressed, and which perhaps shrinks from being understood lest it may then reveal the folly of its author. If then the meaning be this, that the Son, appearing in the essence of the Father as Consubstantial with Him, displays also in His own Person the Father brilliantly shining in the nature of His Offspring, we also will assent to the truth of the statement: still, the use of the word "encompass" would perchance do more than a slight injustice in its application to the Son. But if this be not the meaning,----and surely it cannot be, for never would it be admitted that the Son is begotten of the essence of the Father by one who has vomited such blasphemy against Him, insisting that like some finite body the nature of the Son is enclosed within that of the Father,----certainly such an one will be convicted of evident blasphemy, and will be shown to be full of the most excessive madness. For while admitting in words that the Son is God, they endeavour most illogically to invest Him with properties peculiar to [created] bodies. For the being parted off by a boundary line and separated by a definitely conceived measure, the starting from a fixed origin and ceasing at a fixed limit, all this surely implies existence conditioned by place and size and fashion and form. And these are surely attributes of [created] bodies. Shall we not then in this way be thinking of Him Who is above us as though He were on a level with us as one of ourselves? Would He not then be a brother to the rest of creation, having henceforth nothing in Himself by way of superiority to it, inasmuch as this theory has come to speak of His existence as merely finite? And, being so, at least according to the foolish supposition of our opponents, why did He vainly reproach us in the words: *Ye are from beneath; I am from above*, and again: *Ye are of this world; I am not of this world*? For in saying that He Himself is "from above," He does not simply mean that He came from heaven: else, how would He excel the holy angels, since we shall find that they also are "from above," if we interpret the meaning in a merely local sense? But He signifies that He is the Offspring of that essence which is from above, and which is more excellent than all else in the universe. How then after this can He be speaking the truth, if He possesses the peculiar attributes of [created] bodies in common with all creation, and is "encompassed" by the Father, even as those things that are brought into existence out of nothing? For of course we are ready to agree that no created thing can be situated outside of the Father. And the inspired Psalmist also, speaking surely by the Spirit deep truths and hidden mysteries, says that the Son is all-pervading, attesting thereby His incorporeal and illimitable nature, and that as God He is confined to no one locality. For his words are: *Whither can I go from Thy Spirit, and whither can I fly from Thy Presence? If I ascend into heaven, Thou art there; if I descend into Hades, Thou art present: if I take my wings in the morning, and go unto the uttermost parts of the sea, even there also Thy hand shall guide me, and Thy right hand shall hold me*. But these heretics, in utter recklessness ranging their own opinions in antagonism to the words of the Spirit, subject the Only-begotten to limitations and boundaries, although they ought to have understood the matter from the cogent and instructive reasoning of this Scripture. For if He has filled the heavens and the uttermost parts of the earth, and therefore also the regions of Hades, is it not excessively unreasonable to apply to Him the word "encompassed," without reflecting that if His Presence, that is, if the Spirit----for the Psalmist calls the Spirit the Presence of the Son---fills all things, it is inconceivable that Christ Himself should be "encompassed" within any boundary, even though it be in the substance of God the Father? Nay, it will be no less outrageous to limit within a confined space that which is incorporeal than to include in a measure that which exists in no finite form. For to say that He is "essentially encompassed by God the Father" is surely nought else than to imply that His essence is finite, exactly like any individual thing of the works that were made by Him: and these we shall safely and truly allow

to be capable of being "encompassed ": for they are [created] bodies, even though perchance not all such as ours.

But besides, there is this also to be thought of. If we maintain that it is necessary that whatever is enfolded by anything lies entirely within the limits of that which is said to "encompass" it, will it not certainly follow that we should think of that which is "encompassed" as something less than that which "encompasses" it, and should speak of it as limited thereby, and as it were enclosed within the compass of that which is greater than itself? What sayest thou now, my friend? Here we have Christ presenting Himself before us as a Likeness of God the Father, and plainly saying: *He that hath seen Me hath seen the Father*, and again straightway adding: *I am in the Father, and the Father is in Me*. Let us assume then that He means, as you would understand Him to say, that "although I am the Very Image and Likeness of My Father, yet I am essentially encompassed by Him." Surely it is acknowledged by all men that He would have us hold just such ideas concerning the Father as we would conceive concerning Himself also. Therefore it would follow that the Father also is subject to limitation, for He is in the Son: and let the heretic search if he will and find out who or what is greater than the Father; I should deem it impious to express or even to conceive such an idea. The Son can never be a Likeness of the Father in one way and not so in another. For if He has in Himself anything at all that would alter or interfere with His resemblance in all points, He would be, as a consequence of that, a partial and not a perfect Likeness. But where could you show us the Holy Scripture teaching such a doctrine as this? For most certainly we are not going to be led astray by your words so as to reject the plain truth of the Sacred statements. And I wonder how it is they did not shrink in dismay from adding to their former arguments the following: "Just as Paul had Christ speaking in him and effecting the mighty deeds, exactly in the same way also the Son had the Father speaking in Him and working the miracles; wherefore He says: *Believe that I am in the Father, and the Father in Me: or else believe Me for the very works' sake*." After this, who will any longer allow the name of Christian to one who holds such views and thinks such thoughts concerning Christ? For behold how very evidently he maintains that Christ is no longer truly God: recklessly He invests Him with the limitations properly characteristic of creatures, proclaiming Him to be a sort of God-bearer, or one who participates in God, rather than One begotten God of God. To put it briefly, his aim is throughout the utter severance of Christ, in every way and in every respect, from the essence of God the Father; and to cut Him off altogether from that intimate relationship in nature and essence which He has with God His own Father.

Now what could be conceived to surpass such views as these in the immense amazement they are calculated to excite? How could one refrain from shedding in torrents uncontrollable tears of love over men so utterly abandoned to ungodliness, as though they were already dead and perished? One might say, and that very appropriately: *Who will give to my head water, and to mine eyes a fountain of tears, and I will weep for this people day and night?* For over those who have chosen to think such thoughts as these, one might fitly shed innumerable tears. But since it is by means of the doctrines of the truth that I conceive we ought to refute their slanders, for the sake of that which is profitable to simple folk, come now, and let us answer them by saying that we *have been very jealous for the Lord*. For assuredly, my friends, the inspired Paul or any other among the saints, while |272 they had in themselves Christ tabernacled in their hearts by the Spirit, very easily did such things as seemed good unto God, and appeared as workers of miraculous deeds. It is an established fact therefore, and one that thou wouldst thyself admit to be true, that being really human in nature, and

different in essence from the Holy Spirit of Christ that dwelt within them, they were fearers of God, and were glorious by reason of the grace bestowed on them by Christ. And thou wilt altogether agree with us in saying that they were at one time destitute of this gift, and were called thereunto when it seemed good to God, Who directs all things well, that thus it should be. It was then not impossible that, by some untoward action, or deed not well done, the blessed Paul, or any other of those similarly favoured, should after being joined unto God be capable of losing again the grace given to him, and being thrust back again to return to the humiliation whence he had arisen. For that which is wholly adventitious and from without may easily be spurned away, and is capable of being taken back even as it was given. Now then, my good sir: for my question is coming back to thee: if it is true, according to thy ignorant notions and most impious imagination, that even as Christ was speaking and working wonders in Paul, so one must admit that the Father is in the Son; what manner of doubt can there be that He must be in no sense whatever in His nature God, but rather something different from the Father indwelling in Him, the Father being God in very truth? For thus it was that Christ was in Paul. So then, [according to you,] the Only-begotten is a sort of instrument or implement [in the hand of the Father], cunningly devised to set forth His glory, in no wise differing from a flute or a lyre, giving utterance to whatsoever the mouth of the player might breathe into it or the touch of his finger call forth in rhythmic melody. And He will be acceptable to the Father as an assistance in the performance of His wonders, as one might conceive of a saw or an axe in the hands of a skilful carpenter. And then what can be more paradoxical than this? For if He is by nature as those heretics say, He must be altogether alien from God the Father; whereas in our opinion He is by nature God, and none other than God. But if the Son is severed from the essence of the Father, as far at least as pertains to His being in nature God, surely we are correct in inferring that the Son Who sits at the Father's right hand is placed in the same rank with the created world, and reckoned among the results of God's workmanship, and regarded in the light of a mechanical instrument, and looked upon henceforth as a servant to ourselves rather than as a master; or indeed that He is in strict truth not actually a Son at all. For never could one regard or accept in the light of a Son a being who was placed in the rank of a mere instrument. The Father, it would appear, has begotten an instrument to show forth His wisdom and skill, and is deemed to have generated something quite different from that which He is Himself. How could this possibly happen? Surely it is the height of folly to conceive such a notion. If therefore thou refusest to surrender that opinion concerning the Son which regards Him as an instrument or a servant, and if thou art unwilling to acknowledge Him as at all in truth a Son, and deniest His ineffable generation from the essence of God the Father; thou wilt be doing injustice to the glory even of the Father Himself: for then the Father will cease to be Father in veritable reality; for how could one who had not begotten a son of his own essence be at all in his nature a father? It would follow that the Holy Trinity is altogether falsely named, if neither the Father is truly Father, nor the Son in His nature Son. And the logical sequence to this view will be blasphemy against the Holy Ghost as well.

It would therefore follow in this case that we have been grossly deceived: our faith is a falsehood: the Holy Scripture is coining a lie when it calls God by the name of the Father. And if the Son is not in His nature God, as having been begotten of God the Father, we have been led astray, and together with us the citizens of the world above have erred also, even the undefiled multitude of the holy angels, when they joined us in glorifying and adoring the Son as One Who is in His nature God; being led on in some mysterious manner to sing the praise of one who (if we speak after the manner of the heretics' accursed folly) is a God-bearing vessel, the work of God's hands. And if the Father ever willed to withdraw from His

relationship to the Son and His indwelling in Him, the Son would then be in no respect different from others who have fallen away from their original sovereignty, with nothing to distinguish Him, no trace within His nature of the Father Who begat Him; but rather one like ourselves in all things, who had only been strengthened by the Divine grace, and indeed honoured with the title of sonship, in the same degree as ourselves. Tell me then, why does He not Himself acknowledge His natural relationship to us? Why is it written: *We perish for ever, whereas Thou abidest for ever?* And why are we "servants" and He "Lord"? For even if we are called the sons of God, yet by acknowledging none the less our own proper nature we do not disgrace the honour done to us: but tell me the reason why----if He is like unto us and not at all superior to His creatures, inasmuch as He is not in nature God (for this is their ignorant opinion)----He does not confess His community with us in being a servant? Either we find Him investing Himself with the honour and glory that peculiarly befit and are specially ascribed to the Divine nature, and saying to the holy disciples: *Ye call Me Lord and Master, and ye say well; for so I am.* This is the Saviour's saying: but our illustrious expositors, who introduce these doctrines attacking His Divinity, accept his words and affirmation asserting that He was truly called Lord, and yet thrust Him away from His natural lordship, because they are unwilling to confess Him as in His nature God of God; though they are not bold enough to bring against Him the worst of all the charges that their accursed blasphemy implies.

For that He wills not to be reckoned among those who hold the rank of servants, or even in the category of created objects, but rather that He ever looks to the freedom inherent in Himself by nature, even at the time when He was made in the form of a servant----all this thou wilt learn in the following manner. He had arrived at Capernaum, as we read in the Gospels: the collectors of the legal tribute-money came to Peter, and said: *Doth not your Master pay the half-shekel?* And when Christ heard of this, it is right that we should notice the question He addressed to Peter: *The kings of the earth, from whom do they receive toll or tribute? from their sons or from strangers?* And after Peter had wisely and sensibly acknowledged that it was a stranger to the kingdom, as regards birth and kinship as it is reckoned among us, who would be compelled to submit to ordinances and taxation; Christ forthwith brought forward His claim that a God-befitting nature was truly existent in Himself, by adding the words: *Therefore the sons are free.* Whereas if He had been a fellow-servant, and not a Son truly begotten of the essence of the Father, with no intimate natural relationship to the Father; why is it that, after implying that all besides are subject to the tribute, inasmuch as their nature is foreign to that of Him Who of right receives the tribute, and they are only in the rank of servants, He has claimed freedom for Himself alone? For it is by an inaccurate use of terms that attributes, which mainly and truly are befitting to the Godhead alone, are ascribed to us; whereas in Him they are in very truth inherent. And so if any one were to investigate accurately the nature of things created, he would perceive that to that nature the title as well as the fact of slavery most appropriately belongs; whereas if any like ourselves have been decorated with the glorious name of freedom, an honour that is due to God alone is attributed to them only by an inexact use of language.

Now here again is another question I should be very glad to ask them. Will they allow to Paul the epithet; of God-bearer, seeing that Christ dwells in him through the Holy Spirit, or will they be silly enough to deny this? For if they shall say that he is not in truth a God-bearer, this will be sufficient I think to persuade all men for the future to reject the nonsense they talk, and to hate them utterly, as men who shrink from saying no absurd thing. And if, avoiding this, they shall turn to the duty of saying the truth, and confess him to be truly a God-bearer,

because that Christ dwells in him, will they not be convicted of very impiously saying that the Son is alien from the essence of God the Father? For Paul is no longer a God-bearer, if the Son is not in His nature God. But sometimes they blush, and say----for they are also characterised by recklessness and perverseness in argument----that the Son is truly God, yet not in His nature begotten of God. And there is no manner of doubt that any man whatever will exclaim against them on this point too; for how could one who is not in his nature begotten of God be God? Further, we add this. You say that the Son is in His nature God: how then could He Who is in His nature God be a God-bearer or a partaker of God? For no one could ever be a partaker of himself. For to what end will God dwell in God, as though in something different? For if the recipient is in nature just the same as the indweller may be conceived to be, what henceforth becomes of the need of the participation? And if in the same way that Christ dwelt in Paul, the Father also dwelt in Him, will not Christ be a God-bearer in the same way as Paul? And He will not in any other sense possess the quality of being in His nature God, through His having the need of a greater one, namely, the indwelling God. Then again this noble friend of ours goes further in his clever inventions, and by many proofs (as he seems to think them) he attempts to talk people round to his peculiar doctrine. For I think it is worth while to go through all his words in detail, and to make a direct investigation of the impious plot that he has laid, in order that he may be clearly convicted of numbering the Only-begotten among things created. And the wretched man, having buried his impiety towards Christ beneath a heap of cleverly devised conceits, confesses Him to be God, and yet, excluding Him from the Divinity that is truly and naturally His, imagines that he will elude the observation of those who are looking for the real truth.

Accordingly he writes thus: "But even as we, while we are said to be in Him, have our substance in no way mingled with His; in the same way also the Son, while He is in the Father, has His essence entirely different from the Uncreated One."

What lamentable audacity! What extravagant language, and how full of folly, or rather of all perversity and madness! *Professing themselves to be wise they in reality became fools*; and holding these views concerning the Only-begotten, *they denied the Master that bought them*, as it is written. For if they say that the Word of God is a man and one like ourselves, there remains nothing that prevents them from saying that He is in God in the same way that we are: but if they believe Him to be God, and have learnt to worship Him as being so by nature, why do they not rather ascribe to Him existence in a God-befitting way in His own Father, and also the possession of the Father in Himself? For this I think would be more fitting for those who are really lovers of God to think and say. And if we find them still cherishing their shamelessness undaunted, and persisting in the words they have uttered,----saying that the Father is in the Son in the same manner as may be the case with any one of us, who have been created out of nothing and formed out of the earth by Him,----why is it not permissible for those who wish to do so, to say henceforth with impunity: *He that hath seen me hath seen the Father*, and: *I am in the Father, and the Father is in me*? But I think that in this way any one would be condemned, and very properly, on a charge of the most utter folly possible. For not only is it absurd, but such a thing was never said by any of the saints in the inspired Scripture. On the other hand, they all concede to Him Who is in His nature Lord and God, the Only-begotten, an incomparable excellence above all good men; yea, verily, they proclaim aloud and say: *Who among the sons of God shall be likened unto the Lord*? How then is the Only-begotten any longer like us, if (according to the language of the saints) no one is His equal or His peer? Whereas if He is in God in just the same way that we are, we shall in consequence be compelled to say that the company of the saints are untruthful, and to ascribe

to Him Who is in His nature Son nothing extraordinary which might distinguish Him as of a different rank from those who are sons only by adoption. Away with the loathsome idea, man! For we will not be so persuaded; God forbid! On the contrary, following the opinions of the holy fathers, we believe that we shall be well-pleasing unto God.

But seeing that they brought forward, as a proof of what they think and say, that well-known saying of Paul, that in God *we live, and move, and have our being*, arguing that when the Son is said to be in the Father the expression lacks precision, being adopted from our everyday life; come and let us subject their statement to the requisite investigation, and so convict them of deliberately misrepresenting the mind of the holy Apostle and most foolishly perverting to their own views what was said in absolute truth. For when the blessed Paul was at Athens and saw the inhabitants abjectly devoted to polytheistic error, although the people in that city were reputed wise, he attempted to lead them back from their ancient delusion, seeking (by argumentative exhortations to true piety) skilfully to convince them of the necessity for the future of knowing one God and one only, Who bestows on those that have been made by Him the power of moving and living and having their being. For the Creator of all, being in His nature Life, implants life in all, infusing into them by an ineffable process the power of His own Individuality. For in no other way was it possible that things which had received their allotted birth out of nothing should preserve their capability of existence: for surely each would have returned to its own nature, I mean back again to non-existence, unless, by the help of its relationship to the Self-Existent One, it had overcome the weakness of its own condition at birth. Therefore the inspired Paul very rightly and properly said, by way of showing that God is the life of the universe, that *in Him we live, and move, and have our being*: not at all meaning what the heretics invented for themselves, in corrupting (to suit their own peculiar theories) the true signification of the Holy Scriptures; but rather saying exactly what was true, and also highly profitable for those who were just being trained up to a knowledge of God. And, if it is needful to put it even more plainly, he has never wished to imply that we, who are in our nature men, are yet contained in the essence of the Father, and appear as existing in Him; but rather that *we live and move and have our being* in God, that is, our life consists in Him.

For notice that Paul did not say simply and unreservedly, "We are in God," and nothing more. This was on account of thy ignorance, my good friend, and most naturally so. But he employed different expressions, by way of interpreting the exact meaning of his words. After beginning with the statement: "*We live*," he added thereto the further idea: "*We move*" and thirdly he brought in the phrase: "*We have our being*;" presenting this also, so as to supplement the meaning of the previous words. And I think that the correct argument we shall use concerning this matter will very probably put to shame the ungodly heretic: but if he insists in his opposition, and drags round the words "in God" to the meaning which pleases himself and no one else, we will set forth the common use of the inspired Scripture. Scripture is wont occasionally to use the words "in God" in the sense of "by God." For let that man tell us what is the meaning of a certain Psalmist's declaration, when he says: "*In God*" *let us do valiantly*; and again, addressing God: "*In Thee*" *will we push down our enemies*. For surely no one will suppose that the Psalmist means this, that he promises to accomplish something valiantly "in the essence of God," nor even that "in that essence" we shall discover our own enemies and push them down: but he uses the words "in God" in the sense of "by [the help of] God," and again, "in Thee" in the sense of "by Thee." And why also did the blessed Paul say in his letter to the Corinthians: *I thank my God concerning you all for the grace which was given you "in Christ Jesus,"* and again: *But of Him are ye "in Christ Jesus," Who was made*

unto us wisdom from God, and righteousness, and sanctification, and redemption? For will any one reasonably maintain that the Spirit-bearer says that the grace which was bestowed on the Corinthians from above was given "in the actual essence of Christ," or to quote the authority of Paul in support of heterodoxy? Surely such a one would be evidently talking nonsense. Why therefore, setting aside the ordinary usage of terms in the Sacred Scriptures, and misrepresenting the intention of the blessed Paul, dost thou say that we are "in God," that is, "in the essence of the Father," because thou hearest him say to those in Athens, that *in Him we live, and move, and have our being?*

"Yes," says the defender of the pernicious opinions, "but if it seems to thee right and proper that the words 'in God' should bear and be acknowledged to bear the sense of 'by God,' why dost thou make so much needless ado? And why dost thou bring against us charges of blasphemy when we maintain that the Son was made 'by the Father'? For behold, He Himself says: *I am 'in the Father,'* in the sense of 'by the Father,' at least according to thy explanation, Sir, and according to the common usage, which thou hast just laid before us in thy quotations from the Sacred Scriptures."

But I say that it is necessary to defend myself again in reply to this, and lay bare their mischievous intentions and pernicious notions. For I am astonished that, after hearing gladly that it is a usage of the Sacred Scripture to use the words "in God" as equivalent to "by God," and after approving and accepting the phrase merely for the sake of being able to say something against the glory of the Only-begotten, they have by no means become conscious of the fact that they will again be convicted of talking as foolishly as before, although they claim to be wise and acute. For if our opponents were the only ones entrusted with the duty of defending from time to time the usage of the inspired Scripture in reference to the essence of the Only-begotten, and of saying that He was made by the Father, because of this, that He says He is "in God," and we have allowed that "in God" is to be understood in the sense of "by God;" then it might have seemed at least probable that their mischievous intention rested on grounds not altogether unreasonable. But if in truth there is nothing which can prevent us also, in our eagerness to refute by a *reductio ad absurdum* the unsoundness of the sentiments they hold, from carrying on the force of the meaning implied so as to make it refer to the Father Himself, and from saying plainly that since Christ also adds this: *The Father is "in Me,"* we must understand it in the sense of "by Me," so that as a consequence the Father Himself also will be a creature; surely then they, having relied on arguments so very foolish, will be universally condemned as guilty of unmitigated folly. For just as the Son says that He Himself is "in" the Father, so also He said that the Father, is "in" Him: and if they wish the words "in the Father" to be understood in the sense of "by the Father," what is there that prevents us from saying that the words "in the Son" shall be understood in the sense of "by the Son"? But we will not suffer ourselves again to be drawn down with them into such an abyss of folly. For neither will we say that the Son is made by the Father, nor indeed that He from Whom are all things, namely God the Father, was brought into existence by the Son; but rather, referring the usage of the inspired Scripture in due proportion to each occasion or person or circumstance, we shall thus weave together our theory so as to make it on all essential points faultless and indisputable. For with regard to those who out of nothing have been created into being, and have been brought into existence by God, surely it would be most fitting that we should regard them and speak of them as being "in God" in the sense of "by God;" but with regard to Him Who is in His nature Son and Lord, and God and Creator of the universe, this signification could not be specially or truly suitable. The real truth is that He is naturally in the Father, and in Him from the beginning, and has Him in Himself, by reason of

His showing Himself to possess identity of essence, and because He is subject to no power that can sever between Them, and divide Them into a diversity of nature.

And perhaps it might seem to minds more open to conviction that this matter has been sufficiently discussed, as indeed I think myself: yet our opponent will by no means assent to this; but he will meet us again with the objection, dishing up again the argument introduced by him at the first, that the Father is in the Son in the same manner, as we are in Him.

"What then," we might say, judiciously rebuking the unsoundness and childishness of his thoughts and words, "dost thou say that the Son is in the Father even as we are in Him? Be it so. What limit to our natural capacity then," we shall reply, "is there, that prevents us from using expressions with respect to ourselves as exalted as any of those which Christ is seen to have used? For He Himself, seeing that He is in the Father and has the Father in Himself, inasmuch as He is thereby both an Exact Likeness and Very Image of Him, uses the expressions: *He that hath seen Me hath seen the Father: I and the Father are One*. But with regard to ourselves, tell me, if we are in Him and if we have Him in ourselves exactly in the same way that Christ Himself is in the Father and the Father in Him, why do we not extend our necks as much as we can, and, holding our heads high above those around us, say with boldness: "I am in Christ and Christ in me: He that hath seen me hath seen Christ: I and Christ are one"? Then what would come next? No one, I think, would any longer have any just cause for alarm, or any sufficient ground for hesitation, to prevent his speaking as follows, daring henceforth to say concerning the Father Himself: "I and the Father are one." For if the Father is one with the Son, surely such a man, having become an exact image of the Exact Image, namely of the Son, will share henceforth in all the Son's relations to the Father Himself. Who therefore will ever descend to such a depth of madness as to dare to say: "He who hath seen me hath seen Christ: I and Christ are one"? For if thou attributest to the Son the being in the Father and the having the Father in Himself in some non-essential manner and not in His nature, and supposest that we in like manner are in Christ and Christ in us; in the first place the Son will be on the same footing as ourselves, and in the next place there is nothing that prevents us at our pleasure from passing by the Son Himself as though He were an obstacle in our way, and rushing straight on to the Father Himself, and claiming that we are so exactly assimilated to Him that nothing can be found which distinguishes us from Him. For the being said to be one with anything would naturally bear this meaning. Do ye not then see into what a depth of folly and at the same time of impiety their minds have sunk, and of what absurd arguments the wild attack upon us has consisted? What their excuse is therefore for saying and upholding such things, and for buoying themselves up on such rotten arguments, I will now again tell. Their one endeavour is to show that the Son is altogether alien and altogether foreign to the essence of the Father. For we shall know that we are speaking the truth in saying this, by reference to the words that follow after and are closely connected with the heretic's previous blasphemies. For he proceeds thus: "But even as we, while we are in Him, have our substance in no way mingled with His; in the same way also the Son, while He is in the Father, has His essence entirely different from the Unbegotten God." What sayest thou, O infatuated one? Hast thou made thy blasphemy against the Son in such plain language? Will any one therefore venture to say that we are trying to heap upon the heads of the God-opposers groundless and false accusations'? For see clearly, they attribute to Him no superiority whatever over those who have been made of earth and have been by Him brought into existence. And although I can scarcely endure the things which the wretched men have dared to say, I will endeavour to prove this, as being in accordance with the scope of Divine Scripture, namely, that since they deny the Son they deny at the same time the Father

also, and thenceforth are *without God and without hope in this world*, as it is written. And to prove that we are right in saying this, the God-beloved John will come forward as a trustworthy witness on our side, for he wrote thus: *He that denieth the Father and the Son. Whosoever denieth the Son, the same hath not the Father; he that confesseth the Son hath the Father also.* And surely the Spirit-bearer speaketh very rightly, not failing to make his statement conform fittingly to his argument. For because he knows that [God the Father] is essentially in His nature what He is said to be, namely a Father, and that not merely in name but rather in reality, he consequently says that the One is necessarily denied when the Other is denied. For concurrently in some way or other with One Who is really in His nature a Father and is so conceived of, there must always be the knowledge and manifestation of the Offspring that proceedeth from Him; and One Who has been in very truth begotten involves the Personal existence of Another capable by nature of begetting. For no sooner do we recognise a man as a father than we understand him to have begotten offspring, and we can by no means consider the idea of an offspring without implying that some father has begotten it. Thus by either term the other conception is produced in the minds of those who hear it, and so any one who denies that God is truly a Father makes out the generation of the Son to be altogether impossible, and similarly any one who does not confess the Son to be an Offspring must by implication lose all knowledge of the Father. When therefore, as from a sling, he hurls at us his unholy arguments, and maintains that the Son has His essence quite distinct from that of the Unbegotten God, why does He not openly deny that the Son is really a Son? And if there is not a Son, the Father Himself can no longer be conceived of as truly a Father. For whose Father will He be, if He has not begotten any Offspring? What we say is, that the Son is quite distinct from the Person, but not from the essence, of the Father; not being alien from Him in His nature, as forsooth these God-opposers think, but being possessed of His own Person and His own distinct subsistence, inasmuch as He is Son and not Father. But, if we understand our own mind rightly, we would not ourselves say, nor would we assent to any of the brethren who say, that He is distinct from the Father in regard to essence. For how can distinction exist in that one thing, with reference to which each individual has some special characteristic? For Peter is Peter, and not Paul, and Paul is not Peter; yet they remain without distinction in their nature. For both possess one kind of nature, and the individuals who are associated in a uniformity of nature have that same kind without any difference at all.

For what reason are we saying such things as this? We confess that our object is to show that those who hold such blasphemous opinions rob the Son of the Godhead which is His by nature, when they (as we have already explained) ascribe to Him nothing more than a non-essential relationship to God the Father. Else why do they put forward ourselves in illustration of their argument, and say: "Even as we have our substance in no way mingled with His, while we are in Him; so also He Himself has His essence entirely different from God, although He is said to be in Him"? Is not their craftiness patent to all men? Will not any one be right in saying that the man who vomited forth such an abominable statement as this must surely be one of the "mockers" announced beforehand by the Spirit? For what does Jude, the disciple of the Saviour, write to us in his epistle? *But ye, beloved, remember ye the words which have been spoken before by the apostles of our Lord Jesus Christ; how that they said to you, that in the last time there shall come mockers, walking after their own ungodly lusts. These are they who make separations, sensual, having not the Spirit.* For no man whatsoever, who speaks in the Holy Spirit, will say anything against the glory of the Only-begotten. For I maintain that this is just the same as saying: *Jesus is anathema.* On the other hand, *sensual* and worthless men, and those whose hearts are devoid of the Holy Spirit, *make separations* between the Father and the Son; asserting that the latter is as essentially and

completely severed from the former as are created things and each of the works made by Him, and believing Him to be in the Father only in the same way that we are in Him.

And that they who have dared to write such things have thereby reached the furthest verge of folly, let us if you please proceed to show in another way, as is quite possible, from the Divine Scripture; and let us hasten to prove to our hearers that we are in the Son in one way, whereas the Son is in His own Father in another way. For one person is not a likeness of another's substance when he conforms himself to that other by the exercise of a virtuous will, nor is he on that account said to be in the other; but when he is in natural identity with the other, and possesses one essence with him. And let the most wise John be called in as a witness for us on this point, since he says: *Yea, and our fellowship is with the Father and with His Son Jesus Christ.* How then, pray, do they say, and in what manner do they think fit to assert, that we have *fellowship with the Father and with His Son Jesus Christ?* For if we are considered to be in Them, as having our own essence commingled with the Divine nature, that is, with the Father and the Son, and if the expression "fellowship" does not rather refer to the similarity of our wills; how can we have it with the Father and with the Son, when (according to these heretics) the Father and the Son are not Consubstantial? For in that case we must hold opinions worthy of ridicule, and say that we have cleft our own nature asunder into two parts, and given one half to the Father and the other to ourselves and to the Son, and thus we consider ourselves to be in Them. Or else we must reject such absurdity of statement, and say that by doing our best to make our own disposition brightly radiant through the exercise of a virtuous will and through conformity to the Divine and ineffable beauty, we obtain for ourselves the grace of fellowship with Them. But shall we therefore say that the Son is in the Father after a similar manner to this, and that He only possesses a non-essential and artificially-added fellowship with the One Who begat Him? And yet, if so, why in the world does He wish, through the similarity and indeed identity of their works, to lead our mind to feel the necessity of believing without any hesitation that He is Himself in the Father, and that He again has also the Father in Himself? For is it not seen by every one to be perfectly evident and true that, wishing the brilliancy of His deeds to be investigated by us, He shows Himself equal in strength to His own Father, as if the severance as regards essence and the difference as to nature no longer maintained their position; since both Himself and the Father glorify themselves by similar achievements"?

For observe how we who constantly strive after conformity with God do (so to say) render ourselves worthy of fellowship with Him, not in such ways as these, but in certain other ways. For when we show pity to one another, are ardently devoted to works of love, and practise all that is truly respectable in our ordinary life, even then we can hardly venture to pronounce ourselves "in God." And John is our witness, saying: *Hereby know we that we are in Him: he that saith he abideth in Him ought himself also to walk even as He walked;* and again: *As for you, he says, let that abide in you which ye heard from the beginning. For if that which ye heard from the beginning abide in you, ye also shall abide in the Son, and in the Father.* And what he means by "*that which ye heard from the beginning,*" which he bids to remain in us in order that we may be in God, he himself will make no less clear to us when he says: *For this is the command which ye heard from the beginning, that ye should love one another.* Thou hearest how we are in God, namely, by practising love one towards another, and striving to the utmost of our power to walk in the footsteps of our Saviour, imitating His virtue. When I say virtue, I do not mean such as was shown by Him in being able to create heaven, and make angels, and set fast the earth, and spread out the sea; nor that which He exhibited when, in His ineffable and simple majesty, by a word He lulled the violence of the winds, and raised up

the dead, and graciously bestowed sight on the blind, and with great authority bade the leper be cleansed: but rather that virtue which may be suitable to the capacities of our humanity. We shall find Him, as indeed Paul says, *reviled* by the unholy Jews, yet *not* reviling *again*; instead of that, we see Him suffering, yet not threatening, but rather committing Himself to *Him that judgeth righteously*. Again, we shall find Him saying: *Learn of Me; for I am meek and lowly in heart; and ye shall find rest unto your souls*.

So then, when we strive by such conduct as this to imitate Christ Who is our guide unto all virtue, we are said to abide both in the Father and in Him, obtaining this distinction as a reward and compensation for the worthiness of our life. But the Son does not wish us to estimate in this way the brilliance that is inherent in Him: He bids us direct our natural shrewdness of attention to the magnificence of His miracles, and infer from thence the exact resemblance which He has to His own Father; so that henceforth we may believe that, as they are Consubstantial, it is thus that He has in Himself the One Who begat Him, and that He Himself is also in the Father. Or let our opponents come forward and teach, that when the Son is conceived of as being in the Father, He too in common with ourselves has this distinction as a reward, and as a fair payment for conducting His life according to the law of the Gospel. But I suppose that even this appears to them nothing dreadful: for to men by whom no form of talking is unpractised, what expression, however extravagant and monstrous, seems unfit for use? It is possible therefore that they will say even this, that the Son is in the Father and again has also the Father in Himself on this account, namely, because He fashions Himself like to the Father by practising the virtues that are also attainable by us. And we would reply, "Why then, honoured Sirs, when Philip said: *Lord, shew us the Father*, did not the Christ put forward all the holy Apostles as a likeness and accurate representation of Him Whom they meant, and say, 'Have we [all] been so long time with one another, and dost thou not know the Father?' Whereas He does not associate with Himself a single one of the others, but comparing Himself alone to the Father alone, He passes over our attributes as small matters altogether; and not willing that the Divine essence should be thought accurately imaged in human attributes, He has reserved to Himself alone the perfection of resemblance. For He says: *He that hath seen Me hath seen the Father*. Then to these words He straightway added: *Believe that I am in the Father and the Father is in Me*. For seeing that He possesses resemblance in the most absolute exactness, He must as a necessary consequence possess in Himself the Father, and be possessed (so to speak) by the Father. For think of something of the same kind, and accept it as an illustration of the words we are considering. If, for instance, any one were by chance to bring into our presence the son of Abraham or of any other man, and then were to question him as to the nature of his parent, desiring to learn precisely who and what kind of person the parent was; would not the youth employ reasonable language if he were to point to his own nature and say, "He that hath seen me hath seen my father: I am in my father, and my father is in me?" Then as a proof of his speaking the truth, would it not be fitting that he should draw attention to the identity with his father exhibited in his human doings and his physical peculiarities, and say: "Believe me for the very works' sake, seeing that I have all the qualities and can perform all the actions which pertain to human nature?" Indeed I think every one will say and will justly allow, both that he speaks the truth and that (in alleging the identity) he puts forward an accurate indication of the relationship involved in their particular actions. Why then do not they, who *pervert such things as are right*, persuade their own disciples to travel on the straight path of reasoning, instead of thrusting them off from the well-trodden king's highway, and taking an untrodden and rugged route, both deceiving themselves and destroying those who feel it their duty to follow them? We, however, not taking their road, will keep along the direct path; and, giving credit to the Sacred

Scriptures, we believe that the Son, Who is in His nature begotten of God the Father, is of equal strength and Consubstantial with the Father, and essentially His Image; and therefore that He is in the Father, and the Father in Him.

12, 13 *Verily, verily, I say unto you, He that believeth on Me, the works that I do shall he do also; and greater works than these shall he do; because I go unto the Father. And whatsoever ye shall ask in My Name, that will I do, that the Father may be glorified in the Son.*

If anyone should think to discourse hereon commensurately with the extent of the meaning of what is here submitted to us. the task would be broad and deep. But if we consider what is rather profitable for the hearers, we shall think it beseems us to grasp in general wise the things signified, and to curtail the length of our discourse. For so would the meaning be most easy to be received by most men. So then, wishing to show forth that He was Consubstantial with His own Father, and that He is a Very Image of Him; carried in the Father as in an Archetype, albeit having the Archetype in Himself, as being a Very Image both naturally and essentially, and not in virtue of any shaping which implies a process of moulding and fashioning; for the Divinity transcends shape, inasmuch as. it is incorporeal withal: *I, He says, am in the Father and the Father is in Me.* But to the end that we may not look for the identity of the resemblance and the exact conformity thereof in any other sort than as a conclusion from those prerogatives alone that attach to His nature; for it was possible therefrom to see that the similarity is essential and natural; He says: *Or else, believe by reason of the works.* For indeed He very rightly thought that of a surety if any man beheld Him radiant with the like mighty works to those of God the Father, He would accept Him for a really natural Image and Likeness of His essence; for nought save what is naturally of God would ever do equivalent deeds to those of God; nay, neither could the power to work wonders on any wise in equal measure with the Divine nature come to belong to any created thing. For utterly unapproachable and beyond reach to them that have been called into being out of nothing are the proper excellences of the Eternal. And in no wise was it likely that any would doubt that the Saviour's saying would be utterly irreproachable, at least in the eyes of the right-minded; yet, as God, He was not ignorant that even what was well said would be, to them that held opposite opinions, an occasion and a pretext for strange teaching. With intent then that no place for loquacity might be left herein for them that pervert such things as are right, and lest they should say it was not of His immanent might nor of His own power that the Son became a worker of wonders, but only inasmuch as He had within Him the Father doing the works: on this account, as He Himself said and insisted, the Lord (when need arose) courted them with words that might allure their minds: for He promises herein that He will be to them that believe on Him a Supplier of what things soever they will ask, and promises that He will supply to them not merely an equal power and authority but the same with increase: for *greater things*, He says, than I have done, *shall he do.* Seest thou then how He cuts short, and profitably so, the boldness of our opponents, and by His refutations of error reins in men (as it were) when they are rushing over precipices? For anyone will say to them: "O fools and blind, whereas ye suppose the Son to have been able to effect nothing of Himself, but rather to have been supplied by the Father with the power and authority for all those things that have been wondrously accomplished; how does He promise that He will grant to them that believe on Him to effect even *greater things*? How shall another, by borrowing the power from Him, effect what He has not done Himself? For notice that He has not said herein that the Father will supply power to them that believe; but, *Whatsoever ye shall ask in My Name, I will do it.* But He Who as God imparts to others the power to effect even those greater things, how

could He have been Himself supplied with the power by another?" So that what they say is utter nonsense, and thoughtless trash, and inventions of a devilish perversity. But no man would contemplate the power of the Son as in any wise limited, nor as extending to one thing but insufficient to reach things still greater; nay, but as doing easily whatsoever it will, and bestowing on the worthy the power to glory in thrones, it may be of equal honour, or it may be even more highly exalted. And let none suppose us to say that any of those who have set store by their faith in Him will ever have such excess of power as to be able to fashion a heaven, or to make a sun and a moon, or the brilliant choir of the stars, or peradventure to create angels, or an earth, or such things as are therein. For the aim of His words is not directed towards these things, but is bent upon the things whereon it was reasonable that so it should be; and He overpasses not the measure of the splendour that beseems mankind, in glory to wit, and holiness. For surely it is for this cause, by way of restraining His words from ranging as it were whithersoever a man might desire, and of confining Himself to those wondrous works which He did while on earth after He became man, when He draws the contrast with the greatness of the still greater deeds, that He says: "He shall do the things which I have done, *and greater things than these.*" For it was not because He was too weak to accomplish the greater things, that He held back His own power within the bounds of the things which He accomplished; but when He has done what was needful, and all perchance for which opportunity offered, He kindly gives us to understand by these words, that the reach of the incomprehensible greatness of His immanent power is not limited to those things. But to the end that, preserving the order of the thoughts presented to us, we may set the minds of our hearers on the contemplation of His utterance, [we will repeat that] He says: *Verily, I say unto you, he that believeth on Me, the works that I do shall he do also; and greater works than these shall he do; because I go unto the Father.*

Then, "What is this?" one of the hearers might say with some reason, "I mean the Son's going to the Father in order that they who believe on Him may be able to effect things even still greater than the deeds exhibited by Himself? Surely the saying introduces some hidden subject for contemplation." To learn what it is that He says, consider Him as perhaps meaning: ----"O ministers and genuine pupils of My words, so long as I abode with you on the earth, and had My conversation as a man, I did not exhibit the power of the Godhead undimmed before you: I both spake and acted as befitted the measure of My humiliation and the condition of a slave. But thereafter, when those things shall have been be-seemingly accomplished, then also will the mystery of the dispensation in the flesh be completed for Me. For almost immediately I shall suffer death and shall rise to life again. And I promise to then bestow on you the power to accomplish works still greater than My own miracles. And the time for this is even now at hand, and so is the glory of their accomplishment. For I am going to the Father, that is, to sit down with Him and to reign with Him as God of God in unveiled power and authority, [and in the fulness] of My own nature to give good things unto My friends. *Whatsoever ye shall ask,*" He says, "*in My Name, I will do it,* when the time has been completed wherein it was necessary," He says, "that I should show Myself in the garb of humiliation. I have observed all that was requisite to the proper carrying out of the scheme of the Incarnation; and now henceforth I promise that unveiledly as God I will work the works of God, not thrusting out the Father from the glory so God-befitting, but with intent that *He may be glorified in the Son.*" For if the Offspring is glorified, the Parent also shall assuredly be glorified in Him. For the Son, being ever in His nature God, would have been declared by many other signs; yet no less also is He disclosed by receiving the prayers of the saints, and granting them whatsoever they might ask and wish. How then should not the Father be glorified in Him? For like as He would have been grievously blamed, and naturally so, if the

Offspring that came forth from Him had not been in His nature God; in like manner He will be exceeding glorious in that He has for the Fruit that came forth from His essence One Who is God and can skill so well to do all things and to enable others to do them.

But if it tends to the glory of the Father that the Son should be seen possessed of God-befitting prerogatives, what manner of punishment shall fasten upon the heretic, forasmuch as he dreads not to disparage Him with shameless blasphemies in divers manners? And I will further say another thing, in no small measure (as I deem) at issue with their crude ignorances. For if we pray to the Son and seek our petitions from Him, and He pledges His promise to grant them; how could it be that He is not by nature God, and begotten of One Who is in His nature God? For if they conceive Him not so to be, and say that He was created, how shall we any longer be distinguished from those who invoke the sun, or the heaven, or any other of the creatures? For if, exceeding mischievously, ashamed of the ungainliness of their own folly, they say that albeit a creature equally with the rest of the creatures yet He hath a certain incomparable supereminence over all; notwithstanding let them be assured that none the less will they outrage the glory of the Father, that is, the Son, so long as ever they say that He is one in the number of the things that have been made. For the issue is, not whether He is haply a great or a small creature, but whether He is a creature at all, and is not rather in His nature God; which indeed is the truth.

14 If ye shall ask anything in My Name, that will I do.

Undisguisedly now He says that, being Very God, He will accept exceeding readily the prayers of His own people, and will supply right gladly what things soever they desire to receive, meaning of course spiritual gifts and such as are worthy of the heavenly munificence. And not as the minister of another's benevolence, nor yet as subserving another's kindness, does He say such things; but as, with the Father, having all things in His power; and as Himself being the *One through Whom are all things*, both from us to God-ward, and to us-ward from Him. For this cause Paul also prays on behalf of the worthy for such supplies of benefits as are by him ever mentioned in conjunction, in the following words: *Grace to you and peace from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ*; and surely no man in his senses will ever in the face of this suppose that the Father by Himself separately grants a grace, and again the Son by Himself separately and as it were in turn does so; but the grace is one and the same, albeit it is spoken of as coming through Both. Notwithstanding, it is by the Father through the Son that all good things are wrought for the worthy, and the distribution of the Divine gifts is made; through the Son, I say, not as accepted in the rank of a servant, as we have already explained, but as conceived to be Co-Giver and Co-Supplier, and moreover as being so of a truth. For the nature of the Godhead is one, and also is believed so to be. For although it is extended to Father and Son and to the Holy Spirit, yet it has no absolute and entire severance; I mean, into each of the Persons indicated. For we shall be orthodox in believing that the Son is naturally both of the Father and in the Father, and that the own Spirit of the Father and of the Son, that is, the Holy Spirit, is both of and in the Father. So then, forasmuch as the Godhead of Their nature both is and is conceived of as One, Their gifts will be supplied to the worthy through the Son from the Father in the Spirit, and our offerings will be carried to God manifestly through the mediation of the Son: for *no one cometh unto the Father but through Him*, as to be sure He also Himself fully confesses. So then the Son both has become and is the Door and the Way as well of our friendship as of our progress towards God the Father, and the Co-Giver as well as Distributer of His bounty, forasmuch as it proceeds from a single and common munificence. For one is the nature of the Godhead in the person and

substance both of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Ghost. And forasmuch as it was unwonted in a way with them of old time, and as yet foreign to their practice, to approach the Father through the Son, He teaches this also for our profit, and laying first in His own disciples a foundation as it were of the structure, He implants in them both faith in this and knowledge, and despatches to ourselves instruction both how we are to pray and wherein lies our hope. For He promises that He will Himself give us what we ask in prayer; a proof of the Godhead in His nature, and of the royal authority inherent in Him; adding this to the other proofs thereof.

15 If ye love Me, keep My commandments.

Having ordained that when men pray they must ask in His Name and promising that He will Himself supply to them that ask whatsoever they desire to receive, He takes great thought not to seem to speak falsehood, having in view the unholy slanders of such as are wont to be captious. For a man can see, and best out of the Sacred Writings themselves, that some approach and ask earnestly in His Name, and notwithstanding in no wise receive; because God is not ignorant of what is fitting for each and profitable for the askers. Therefore to the end that our Lord Jesus the Christ might clearly exhibit who they are in reference to whom the word has been spoken and stands good, and to whom is due the grace of the promise; He straightway introduced the mention of the persons who love Him, in whose case the promise will assuredly be fulfilled, and conjoins with His saying the exactly-defined keeper of the law, showing that unto such and not unto others shall the promise of kindness and the bestowal of the spiritual blessings hold good and come to pass. For that oftentimes the bounteous hand of God is shortened in hesitation, cutting off from them that will not ask aright the consummation of their hopes, thou wilt easily understand, from what the disciple of Christ is at pains to write on this wise: *Ye ask, and receive not, because ye ask amiss, when ye will spend it in your pleasures.* Wherefore also again he says, about them that are wont to be double-minded: *For let not that man think that he shall receive anything of the Lord; for [he is] a double-minded man, unstable in all his ways.* For to them that ask for the grace that is from above, not for establishing of virtue, but for enjoyment of carnal pleasure and worldly lusts, God well-nigh shuts fast His ear, and in no wise grants them anything; for what things soever He forbids and wholly casts out by reason of the abomination that is in them, how could He grant them to any? And the spring of all sweetness, how could it give forth a bitter stream? But that unto the lovers of spiritual gifts with rich and readiest hand He distributes blessings, thou shalt easily perceive, when thou hearest Him saying unto them by the mouth of Isaiah the prophet: *While thou art yet speaking, I will say, What is it?* and by the voice of the Psalmist: *The eyes of the Lord are upon the righteous, and His ears are open unto their prayer.*

So having determined and expressly declared that the enjoyment of the heavenly blessings, supplied, that is, through Him by the Father, is both due to them that love Him, and in very truth shall be theirs; He straightway goes on to describe the power of love, and instructs us excellently and irreproachably, for our profit, with intent that we should devote ourselves to the pursuit thereof. For albeit a man say that he loves God, he will not therefore straightway win the credit of truly loving, forasmuch as the power of virtue stands not in bare speech, nor is the beauty of piety towards God fashioned in naked words; but rather it is really distinguished by means of good deeds effected and an obedient temper; and the keeping of the Divine precepts best gives living expression to love towards the Divinity, and presents the picture of a virtue wholly living and true; not sketched out in mere sounds that flow from the

tongue, as we have said, but gleaming as it were and altogether radiant with brilliant colours, to wit, the portraits of good works. And indeed our Lord Jesus the Christ shows us this plainly, when He says: *Not every one that saith unto Me, Lord, Lord, shall enter into the kingdom of heaven; but he that doeth the will of My Father, Which is in heaven.* For the proof of faith lies not in barren words or professions, but in the qualities of acts, and indeed the Holy Scripture says that it is dead when the works do not follow therewith. For the knowledge that God is One, it says, we shall find, not only in human minds, but in the unclean devils themselves; who also shudder, even involuntarily, at the power of Him that made them. Howbeit to keep the radiance of their acts concurrent with their faith is manifestly the beauty and ornament of those only who truly love God. So then the proof of love and the most perfect definition of faith is the observance of the Evangelic decrees and the keeping of the Divine precepts. And perhaps it would be in no wise difficult to add other things hereunto, akin in their drift; only that I suppose they do not suit the present occasion. Wherefore we must once more betake ourselves to such points as are more suitable to what lies before us. *If ye love Me,* He says, *ye will keep My commandments.* For indeed thou must understand once again and call well to mind that oftentimes, when conversing with His own disciples or even with the Jews themselves, He would say: *The words that I speak are not Mine, but His Who sent Me;* and again: *I speak not from Myself, but the Father Which sent Me, He hath given Me a commandment, what I should say, and what I should speak;* and again: *The things therefore which I speak, are not Mine, but His Who sent Me.* And yet now again, notwithstanding He has confessed at large, up and down His discourses, that the words He addressed to us are God the Father's, He here says they are His own commandments, which He has spoken to us. And no one that has sense will suppose that He speaks falsely, for let not this thought come into the mind of a Christian; and moreover He will of course speak truly, forasmuch as He is Himself the Truth. For it was not in the manner of one of the prophets, as if with the rank of a minister and a servant, that He conveyed the message from the Father to us; but as bearing such likeness to Him that not even in word was He haply observed to differ, but rather naturally to speak on such wise as the Father Himself might peradventure talk with us. For the exact similarity of essence leads us to believe that the Son also corresponds in His utterances to Him that begat Him; and inasmuch as He is Himself the Word and Wisdom and Purpose of God the Father, He says that He has received commandment what to say and what He shall speak. For we also ourselves individually see that our own minds well-nigh even lay a commandment on our speech uttered through words, as it proceeds to the world without, that it shall interpret what is in the mind itself. Small indeed is the force of the illustration as applied to God; but notwithstanding this, by taking the analogy of human things to assure us of the things that transcend them, we apprehend the Divine Mysteries as it were in a mirror and darkly.

16, 17 *And I will pray the Father, and He shall give you another Comforter, that He may be with you for ever, even the Spirit of truth: Whom the world cannot receive; for it beholdeth Him not, neither knoweth Him: ye know Him; for He abideth with you, and shall be in you.*

He mingles once more the human with the Divine, and neither reverts to the pure glory of the Godhead, nor yet altogether confines His range within the limits of humanity, but traverses both, wondrously and at the same time indistinguishably too, forasmuch as He is at once both God and man. For He was God by His nature, inasmuch as He was the Fruit of the Father and the Effulgence of His essence; and again, He was man, inasmuch as He has become Flesh. Accordingly He speaks as God and at the same time as man: for after this manner it was

possible to preserve duly such forms of language as befitted the dispensation in flesh. Notwithstanding, while we are searching for the meaning of the passage before us, we say this: that at this point also, of necessity, our Lord has introduced the mention of God the Father, for the building up of their faith, and for the exceeding profit of the hearers; as indeed the argument will demonstrate as it proceeds. For when He bade us ask in His Name, and revealed, along with the other truths, a manner of praying unused among the ancients, promising withal even very earnestly that He will give whatsoever things we wish to receive: with intent that He might not seem thereby to thrust aside the Person of God the Father, nor yet to curtail the power of Him Who begat Him, the power (I mean) of satisfying the aspirations of the saints, He said that the Father would be a Co-Supplier for our profit, and would join in bestowing on us the Paraclete: adding also the words "*I will ask,*" as man; and referring peculiarly to the whole Divine and unspeakable nature what befits it especially, as in the Person of God the Father. For this was His custom, as we have oftentimes said already in the foregoing parts of this work.

Another Paraclete, however, is the name He gives to the Spirit that proceeds from the essence of God the Father and from that of Himself. For the kind of the essence is the same in the case of Both, not excluding the Spirit, but allowing the manner of His distinctness to be understood as lying solely in His being and subsisting in a separate personality. For the Spirit is not a Son, but we will accept in faith verily and properly to be and to subsist as That Which He is; for He is the Spirit of the Father and of the Son. But [the Son] knowing that He Himself also both is in truth a Paraclete and is so named in the Sacred Writings, He calls the Spirit *another Paraclete*; not on the ground that the Spirit can skill to effect in the Saints something else perchance more than what He also can, Whose Spirit He both is and is called. And that the Son also Himself both was named and is a Paraclete, John will bear record, in his own compositions, when he says: *These things say I unto you, that ye may not sin. And if any man sin, we have a Paraclete with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous: and He is the propitiation for our sins.* So Jesus calls the Spirit *another Paraclete*, willing Him to be conceived of as possessing the attributes of a proper personality; albeit having so close a likeness to Himself, and able so to work in exact correspondence what things soever He Himself might haply work, as that He might seem to be the Son Himself and no whit different: for He is His Spirit. And indeed Jesus called Him *the Spirit of Truth*, saying also in the discourse before us that He is Himself *the Truth*.

But any one will naturally say to those who suppose the Son alien to the essence of God the Father: "How is it, pray, that the Father gives *the Spirit of Truth*, that is, of the Son, not as foreign or alien, but as His own Spirit; notwithstanding that according to you He has the kind of His essence distinct from that of the Son, and, for of this there is no question, the Spirit is the Son's? And once more, how is it, if it be so that the Son is of another essence, that He gives the Spirit of the Father as His own?" For it is written that *He breathed on His disciples, saying, Receive ye the Holy Ghost.* So then will not a man suppose, and very rightly, or rather will he not be even firmly convinced, that the Son, being essentially partaker of the natural excellences of God the Father, has the Spirit after the same manner as the Father also would be understood to have Him: that is, not as something added or from without, for it were simple or rather mad to hold such an opinion; but as each of us has within himself his own breath, and pours it forth without from the inmost parts of his body? For indeed it was for this cause that Christ breathed on them even bodily, showing that as the breath proceeds bodily from the human mouth, so also from the Divine essence the [Spirit] from Him is in God-befitting manner poured forth. Forasmuch then as He is the Spirit both of God the Father and

of the Son, how can it be but that the power They thus possess at once in division and in conjunction will be altogether one? For the Father is a Father and not a Son, and the Son is a Son and not a Father; notwithstanding, the Father is in the Son, and the Son in the Father; moreover, it is not the Father separately by Himself, or the Son separately by Himself, Who gives the Paraclete or the Holy Spirit, but rather He is supplied to the saints from the Father through the Son. For indeed on this account [we must understand that] when the Father is said to give, the Son also gives, *through Whom are all things*; and that when the Son is said to give, *the Father* also gives, *of Whom are all things*.

But that the Spirit is both Divine and not of another essence, in reference I mean to the Father and the Son, is I imagine doubtful to no one who is right-minded; and furthermore a necessary argument will convince us thereof. For if a man say that the Spirit is not of the essence of God, how then henceforward would the creature in receiving the Spirit be a partaker of God? And after what manner shall we be entitled temples *of God*, and be so, if we receive a created or an alien spirit, and not rather That Which is of God? And how are those who have a share of the Spirit *partakers of the Divine nature*, according to the words of the sacred writers, if He is in the number of the things that are made, and does not rather proceed for us from the Divine nature itself; not passing through it unto us, as something foreign to it, but so to speak becoming in us a certain quality of the Godhead, and dwelling in the saints, and remaining for ever---[as He does] if by cleansing the eye of their understanding by all goodness, and by unyielding earnestness in the pursuit of every virtue, they preserve the grace in their hearts. For Christ says that the Spirit is uncontainable and invisible for them that are in *the world*, that is, for those that savour of the things in the world, and choose to love the things that are on earth; yet that He is containable and easily beheld by the saints. For what reason? They who have an uncleanness hard to be washed out of them, and who have filled their own mind as it were with some unhealthy humour, do not narrowly consider the beauty of the Divine nature, nor yet accept the law of the Spirit, forasmuch as they are wholly tyrannised over by the passions of the flesh; whereas the good and sober, keeping their heart free from the evils that are in the world, voluntarily induce the Paraclete to dwell within themselves, and after receiving Him keep Him and (so far as it is attainable by men) *behold* Him spiritually, winning therefrom something large and great and enviable for their prize. For He will sanctify them, and will make them at once fulfillers of all good things, and will release them from the shame of man-befitting slavery, and will endue them with the prerogative of the adoption of sons. And Paul will bear witness to this, saying: *And because ye are sons, God sent forth the Spirit of His Son into your hearts, crying, Abba, Father.*

18 *I will not leave you desolate: I come unto you.*

Of necessity our Lord Jesus the Christ at this point finishes the discourse touching the Holy and Consubstantial Trinity. For He has already shown before, setting forth both words and facts for assurance unto them that love Him, both that He is in His nature God and is begotten of God the Father, and is of equal might and like mind with Him. For to this end He also at one time said: *What I speak, I speak not from Myself*; and at another time again: *If I do not the works of My Father, believe Me not. But if I do them, though ye believe not Me, believe My works.* But besides these things it was in no small measure needful also that men should receive the right and irreproachable doctrine with reference to the Holy Spirit Himself; for so might the minds of His hearers be directed wholly unto Tightness of faith. Therefore I will set forth in few words what Christ teaches us by the passage before us. By saying that "Another" shall be sent unto us from God the Father, He once more, in accordance with His careful and

wise plan, renders the expression of the faith secure. For it was only likely that some, not rightly understanding what was said, would think that He meant that the Holy Spirit was not of the essence of God (as in fact some of the witless did suppose), but that He was in His nature something different; for to say "Another," among the more ignorant sort at least, might carry the appearance of some such ground for its use. So with intent to exhibit clearly that He does not wish the kind of distinctness which the Spirit possesses to be understood in any other way, save solely in virtue of His being in a peculiar and proper sense that which His Name implies, for the Spirit is a Spirit and not a Son, even as the Son is a Son and not a Father; after saying that the Paraclete shall be sent forth, He promises that He will come Himself; showing that the Spirit is not something other than what He is Himself, forasmuch as He is a proper Spirit proceeding from the Father, and is conceived of as the Son's, and for this cause is also called His Mind. For example, Paul says, signifying withal this very thing: *But we have the Mind of Christ*. So then, understanding the matter rightly and without all error, and rejecting as ungainly all perversion in any direction contrary to what is reasonable, and following the words of the inspired Scripture, we say that He is not something different from the Son so far as regards natural identity, but the same; yet with characteristics both distinct and personal. For, so understanding it, I imagine, the inspired Paul also oftentimes mingles Them and introduces Either as identical with the Other; the Paraclete, I mean, and the Son. For thou wilt find him saying: *But if any man hath not the Spirit of Christ, he is none of His*, and again directly after: *And if Christ is in you, the body is dead because of the sin; but the Spirit is life because of righteousness*. Hearest thou how he expressly confesses that they have Christ who have received His Spirit? And he says also in another place: *For I think that I also have the Spirit of God*. And he who spake this unto us, also says: *If ye seek a proof of Christ That speaketh in Me*; and oftentimes prays that in us also, who have believed, Christ may dwell by faith, howbeit himself receiving the Holy Spirit. And let no one suppose that we say that he annuls the fixity of name or person in respect of each, or that he says that the Son is not a Son but a Spirit, or at least that he does not know the Spirit as Spirit, but says He is a Son; this was not the aim in his mind, and indeed neither do we so believe. For he knows how to count the Persons of the Holy and Coessential Trinity, and teaches that each of the Persons signified subsists in His proper distinctness: notwithstanding he proclaims clearly that the Holy Trinity is fixed in absolute identity. Else how can it be that the Spirit is and is called God? *For do ye not know*, he says, *that ye are a temple of God, and the Spirit of God dwelleth in you?* But if, forasmuch as the Spirit dwelleth in us, we are made temples of God, how can the Spirit not be of God, i.e. of His Essence, whereas He makes God to dwell in us through Himself? So then by way of showing that the Spirit is not alien from His own Nature, the Only-begotten, having said that the Paraclete is being sent forth from the Father for the Saints, promises that He will come Himself and fill the place of a father, to the end that they be not found like some *orphans* destitute of the assistance of one to stand forth for them, and for this cause be found henceforth easy to be taken in the snares of the devil, and exceedingly easily assailed by the offences in the world, for all they be many and come as of necessity, by reason of the ungovernable madness of them that bring them to pass. So then for a shield and an irrefragable security unto our souls, the Father has given the Spirit of Christ, to fulfil in us His grace and presence and power. For it were impossible for a man's soul to effect ought that is good, or to have power over its own passions, or to escape the great subtilty of the snare of the devil, if it were not fortified by the grace of the Holy Spirit, and had not Christ Himself by reason thereof within itself. And indeed the inspired Psalmist? composing for us through the wisdom that was in him his thanksgivings on this behalf, cried aloud unto God: *Lord, Thou didst crown us as with a shield of favour---*

meaning by a *shield of favour* nothing else than the Holy Spirit Who shields us, and constrains us, by gifts of unexpected strength, to [the fulfilling of] the good pleasure of God. And so He promises that none the less He will be present and will help through the Spirit them that believe on Him, albeit He ascend into the very heavens, after His Revival from the dead, *now to appear in the presence of God for us*, according to the words of Paul.

19 *Yet a little while and the world beholdeth Me no more; but ye behold Me: because I live, ye shall live also.*

Now that the Passion is close at hand, and brings along with it the moment of His Assumption, He says that He will be invisible to *the world*, that is, to them that value the enjoyment of things temporal before the Divine blessings, and set more store by earthly things than by heavenly. And by way of making our belief to the end thereof kindred and consistent with what has been already said above, we shall be right in saying, that God the Father has given the Paraclete, i.e. the Holy Spirit, of course through the Son; for all things are through Him from the Father. Notwithstanding He has come, not on all indiscriminately, both evil and good, but on them on whom it was fitting He should go forth. For so far forth as touches the most rich and unstinted grace of the Giver, no man of all in the earth remained a non-partaker: *For I will pour out*, He says in the prophets, *of my Spirit on all flesh*. Yet each man is unto himself an accessory cause of his possessing or else wholly failing to get the God-given blessing. For some men, because that in no wise do they strive to cleanse their own mind by all goodness, but love exceedingly to dwell in the evils in the world, shall abide non-partakers of the Divine grace, and shall not see Christ in themselves, forasmuch as they have a heart void of the Spirit. For this cause albeit they are ranged on the side of the Protector of the orphans they are torn in pieces by simply everything that is strong enough to overreach, be it a passion or a devil, or yet any other worldly lust, and by everything that can drag them down as it were and overpower them unto sin. Howbeit, unto the holy and them that were purposed to receive Him, He said, as was likely He would, forasmuch as they were going to endure none of those ills, *I will not leave you orphans, I am coming unto you*. And so He says He shall be invisible and wholly unbeheld by them that mind the things in the world, after His Departure hence, I mean His Ascension into heaven. But He says He will be found visible unto the holy, forasmuch as the Holy Spirit is putting a certain Divine and spiritual flash in the eyes of their heart, and sowing therein all good knowledge.

For we shall either suppose that this is what He means by *Yet a little while and the world beholdeth Me no more; but ye behold Me*; or else turning aside to a different point of view---especially when there is intertwined with His words the saying *Because I live, ye shall live also*---we reason somewhat on this wise. For after His Revival from the dead, when He had effected for our nature the return unto that whereunto it existed from the beginning, and had made man incorruptible, He ascended, as it were by way of first-fruits and in the Temple of His own Body first, unto God the Father in heaven. But after in the meanwhile accomplishing a short time, He will descend again, as we believe, and will return again unto us, *in the glory of His Father with the Holy Angels*, and will set up the appalling tribunal before all men, both evil and good. For all created things shall come to judgment. And rendering becoming awards, corresponding to the life each one has led, He will say to them on the left, i.e. to those that have minded the things in the world: *Depart from Me ye cursed, into the eternal fire prepared for the devil and his angels*; howbeit to them on the right, i.e. to the holy and good: *Come ye blessed of My Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world*. For they shall be with Christ and shall reign with Him, and shall

revel in the heavenly blessings, having been made conformable to His Resurrection, and escaped the meshes of the ancient corruption, being endued with the long and ineffable life, and living endlessly with the ever-living Lord. For that they who have practised a life dear to God and exalted, shall be with Christ without ceasing, to wit contemplating His divine and unspeakable beauty, Paul will make clear where he says: *For the Lord Himself shall descend from Heaven, with a shout, with the voice of the archangel, and with the trump of God: and the dead in Christ shall rise first: then we that are alive, that are left, shall together with them be caught up in the clouds, to meet the Lord in the air: and so shall we ever be with the Lord;* and again, to them that have chosen to mortify worldly passions: *For ye died, and your life is hid with Christ in God. When Christ, Who is our life, shall be manifested, then shall ye also with Him be manifested in glory.* So---for I will sum up the meaning of the Lord's saying---the lovers of the evil things in the world shall go down to Hades and be banished from the presence of Christ; howbeit there shall be with Him and dwell with Him for ever the lovers of virtue, they who have kept inviolate *the earnest of the Spirit*, and being with Him of a surety they shall also behold His Divine Beauty without all hindrance. *For*, he says, *the Lord shall be thine eternal Light, and God thy glory.* And it is also likely that this is what the Lord means to make manifest, when we hear Him saying: *Yet a little while and the world beholdeth Me no more; but ye behold Me; because I live ye shall live also.* Howbeit in no wise will He speak falsely in saying that the time intervening, before His Revelation as it were, is a little while. For to God Who always is, even what is a long time with us counts utterly for nothing; and the Psalmist will testify this when he says: *For a thousand years in Thy sight, O Lord, are but as yesterday that is past, and a watch in the night.*

20 *In that day ye shall know that I am in My Father, and ye in Me, and I in you.*

The meaning of the passage before us is somewhat hard to reach, and as it were demands that the inquiry applied to it be keen, and imposes very considerable delay on our discourse: howbeit we believe that Christ will once more direct us into truth. Now some, albeit among the number of those once supposed among the impious heretics to be of eminence, refusing malignantly to confess that the Son is of the essence of God the Father, and is therefore in Him, conceive that the union is an accidental one and not one of nature; and in fact they have written---belching forth thereby what proceeds from their own minds, not from the Holy Spirit---that, forasmuch as the Son is loved by the Father, and Himself loves the Father in return, it is after this sort that He is in Him. And these demented men bring as a proof hard to overthrow, the words attached to the clause before us, to wit concerning us and Him; and indeed they say, resting withal their blasphemies on *the staff of a reed*, that as we are said to be in Him, and have Him in ourselves, and are not united to Him in the matter of our essence, but the manner of the union is determined by our capacity to love and be loved in return; so the Son also, one of them would say, is not at all within the essence of God the Father, but being wholly distinct in the matter of His nature, and being quite differently characterised, is understood to be in the Father solely by virtue of the law of love. For it is their aim, as we said just now, to show that the Only-begotten is an effect and a creature, and produced and honoured merely with His preeminence over the rest of the creatures, notwithstanding He is external to the essence of God the Father.

But forasmuch as concerning this we have already spoken at length, assaying thereby to show to the best of our power, that the Son is by nature in the Father and that the union which He has with Him is substantial, we will forbear further for the present to extend our remarks touching this subject. Howbeit we will not wholly leave as it were the ground of the argument

clear for our opponents to overrun, but will set the battle in array against them in a few words, exhibiting so far as possible at once the mischief and the ignorance of their wicked and loathsome artifice; and particularly we will say: If it is solely by reason that He is loved and loves that the Son is in the Father, and if by the same law we are in Him and He in us, and no different bond of union is discernible, whether we consider that which binds the Son to the Father, or us to Him and Him to us: in what sense or on what principle, I pray you, does He say that it is *in that day* we shall know the mystery of this? For seemingly we do not yet know that the Father loves the Son, and the Son also loves the Father; nor, I suppose, do we yet know our own condition, but a vain calculation mocks us, when we think that the Son loved us, and for this cause won us unto the Father, and that we also loved Him! For when He says *In that day ye shall know*, He shows that the time of the knowledge is not yet present; then, why did the Lord all in vain make our ears ring with His words: *The Father loveth the Son*? For that He Himself loves the Father, who will deny? And how, I pray you, said He also that His choosing to suffer in our behalf was a clear proof of His love to us-ward? *For greater love hath no man than this*, He says, *that a man lay down His life for His friends*. And why did He manifestly seek for love from us towards Himself, and that for this cause we should be eager to fulfil His good pleasure? For he that loveth Me, He says, will keep My commandments. For when shall we keep the Divine commandment, if at the present we make no account thereof? Forasmuch then as it is fit we believe that the Son loves the Father, and loves us and is beloved by us, how is it not consistent to conceive that the Son has purposed to signify something diverse from this, and not to define the manner of the union by the law of love; or rather that He has manifestly introduced it to us as after some different sort, when He says: *In that day ye shall know that I am in My Father and ye in Me and I in you*. But peradventure the opponent will answer, that before the Passion Christ said such things as these to us, to wit that He loves the Father and is loved again by the Father, and He loves us also and we Him; but that after the Passion and the Revival from the dead, when we saw that He burst the bonds of death, we learnt that He is *in the Father*, forasmuch as also He is loved, and for this cause rose from the dead. For this cause also He is in us and we in Him, according to the same law of love.

But we reply: Your opposition is exceeding idle, and wholly without understanding, and a tissue of rotten words. But, excellent Sirs, consider once more that what we knew of a truth before the Resurrection from the dead, there was no need to learn after the Resurrection. For if it was only imperfectly that we believed that the Son is loved of His own Father, and Himself loves the Father, it was indeed necessary to await the Resurrection, with intent we might therefrom have the perfection of knowledge. But if the Father be worthy of belief when He says even before the Resurrection: He is *My beloved Son*; and if the Saviour Himself also speaks true when He says: *The Father loveth the Son*; and if the law of love is fittingly to be conceived in its entire perfection; why do ye foolishly strike at us with hard words? And why, thrusting aside the beauty of the Truth, do ye fashion you an unsightly lie, dragging outside of the Father's essence the Son that is of Him and through Him, and withal inventing right rotten words, and contriving tricks of absurd argumentation? For that the Only-begotten loved us, and that we also loved Him, will be open to any one to see with utmost readiness, so he be willing to regard intently the nature of the truth: *For being in the form of God the Father, He counted it not a prize to be on an equality with God, but emptied Himself, taking the form of a servant*. Then what, I pray you, was the ground of such actions? Was it not the law of love towards us? And how is it possible to doubt? And our willingness too on behalf of Christ and readiness to abandon our very life to the persecutors, that we may not deny our own Lord, will it not supply proof to demonstration of our love to Him? But a man will also

say that this either is entirely true, or will condemn the Holy Martyrs as having wrought a desperate struggle for Christ for no useful end, and endured so grievous a danger all unrecompensed. So then, whereas it is proved with all clearness that the Father has towards the Son love in perfection, and that in like sort also He loves the Father, and we Him and He us, what reason could there be in supposing that the discernment thereof is referred perchance to other times, when the Lord says: *In that day ye shall know that I am in the Father, and ye in Me, and I in you.*

For away with their idle talkings and the pretentiousness of their God-hating speculations! But we waxing bold in the consciousness of bearing the torch of the Spirit, will not hesitate to say what seems to be right, with intent to clear up the questions at issue. So then, having said above: *Because I live ye shall live also*, straightway He is found to have added: *In that day ye shall know that I am in My Father, and ye in Me, and I in you.* Then to what man, upright and wont to think rightly, would it not be abundantly clear, that He limits a day, the time to wit of the knowledge hereof, upon which we ourselves also, renovated after His likeness, shall ascend unto eternal life, escaping from the curse of death? And something after this sort the Christ-bearer seems to me to indicate----I mean, Paul----when, revealing to us the Divine Mystery, he writes to some: *For ye died and your life is hid with Christ in God; when then Christ, which is your life, shall appear, then shall ye also appear with Him in glory.* For He shall transform *the body of our humiliation*----this body assuredly, and not a diverse----*to be conformable unto His glory*, and shall transmute the nature of man unto the ancient type with power unspeakable, changing all things easily unto whatsoever He will, none forbidding; for He is very God *That maketh all things and changeth the fashion of them*, as it is written. So then *at that day*, or time, when ye also yourselves shall live----for I do live, albeit made man like unto you, and clad with the body which as touching its proper nature is subject to corruption----ye shall recognise clearly, He says, *that I am in the Father, and ye in Me, and I in you.* And we shall be disposed to think that the Lord said this unto us, not with intent we might suppose that He is in the Father according to the law of love, as indeed our opponents thought fit to believe, but according to the power of a deep mystery, which is also both difficult to conceive, and hard to utter; howbeit I will essay how I may be able to expound it.

Now I hold that the mind of any man on earth is very far from equal to the accurate exposition hereof; notwithstanding, in the fervour of love, albeit with powers of sight and utterance but little whetted, let us now consider the aim of the Incarnation of the Only-begotten. Let us, I pray you, examine the cause, wherefore, being as God *in the form of God* the Father, *He counted it not a prize to be on an equality with God, but emptied Himself, taking the form of a servant*, and *endured the cross despising the shame.* For in this way the depth of the mysteries before us will be manifest, so far as is possible, howbeit hardly so. But we shall learn how the Son is in the Father, naturally, that is, and not by virtue of the relation of being loved and loving as invented by our opponents; and we again in Him after the same sort, and He in us. Well then, one cause the wise Paul expounded was a true and most general cause of the Incarnation of the Only-begotten, when he said: *For God the Father was pleased to gather together in one all things in Christ;* and "gathering in one," both the name and the thing, plainly involves the bringing back again and resumption of the things that have digressed to an unconformable end unto what they were in the beginning. Then desiring to put before us in a clear light the methods of the gathering in detail, at one time he said: *For what the Law could not do, in that it was weak through the flesh, God, sending His own Son in the likeness of sinful flesh and as an offering for sin, condemned sin in the flesh: that the ordinance of the Law might be fulfilled in us, who walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit;* and at another

again: *Since then the children are sharers in flesh and blood, He also Himself in like manner partook of the same; that through death He might bring to nought him that had the power of death, that is the devil; and might deliver all them who through fear of death were all their lifetime subject to bondage.* And herein we have two methods of the gathering together which Paul expounded the doctrine of the Incarnation of the Only-begotten as of necessity involving; but a further method, inclusive of the others, was set forth by the wise Evangelist John. For he writes thus touching Christ: *He came unto His own, and they that were His own received Him not. But as many as received Him, to them gave He the right to become children of God, even to them that believe on His Name: which were born not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but of God.* So then it is abundantly evident and manifest I conceive unto all, that it was for these causes especially that, being by nature God and of God, the Only-begotten has become man; namely with intent to condemn sin in the flesh, and by His own Death to slay Death, and to make us Sons of God, regenerating in the Spirit them that are on earth unto supernatural dignity. For it was, I trow, exceeding good, after this sort to gather together again into one and to recover unto the ancient estate the sore-stumbled race, to wit, the human. Again, let us set each of the causes just given side by side with the Lord's saying, and thereupon make such remarks that seem fit. For we must inquire in what sense it may be seemly to conceive that God the Father *condemned sin in the flesh by sending His own Son in [|317](#) likeness of sinful flesh.* For albeit the Son were by nature God and had shone forth from His essence and possessed naturally the immutability of His proper being, and for this cause in no wise could stumble into sin, or turn aside any whither into what is not right, the Father caused him voluntarily to descend into the flesh that is subject to sin, with intent that making very flesh His own, He might bring it over unto His own natural property, to wit, sinlessness. For, I conceive, we shall not be right in believing that it was with intent to effect this for the Temple of His own Body alone that the Only-begotten has been made man; for where were the glory and profit of His Advent unto us to be seen, if He accomplished the salvation of His own Body alone? But we believe rather that it was to secure the benefits for all nature through Himself and in Himself first as in the firstfruits of humanity, that the Only-begotten has become like us. For like as we have followed after not only death but all the sufferings of the flesh, undergoing this suffering in the first man by reason as well of the transgression as of the divine curse; after the same sort, I conceive, shall we all of us follow Christ, as He saves in many ways and sanctifies the nature of the flesh in Himself. Wherefore also Paul said: *And as we love the image of the earthy, we shall bear also the image of the heavenly.* For the *image of the earthy*, to wit of Adam, is to be in sufferings and corruption; and the *image of the heavenly*, to wit of Christ, is to be in impassibility and incorruption. So then the Word being God by nature condemned sin in His own flesh, by charging it to cease its activity, or rather so amending it as that it should move after the good pleasure of God, and no longer at its own will; and so whereas the body was *natural*, He made it *spiritual*. This then is one method of the gathering together; but the method that is most befitting and appropriate to the drift of the passage before us shall follow it. And it will be our task to speak touching eternal life and the slaying of Death, and how the Only-begotten removed from human nature the corruption that came of the transgression. Therefore *forasmuch as the children are partakers of blood and flesh, He also in like manner took part in the same* with intent to slay Death, and that He that *created all things* unto immortality and made *the generations of the world healthful*, according as it is written, might remould once more the fashion of things unto their ancient estate.

And once again, albeit my argument be more minute than behoves, yet, as it needs must, it shall proceed, setting forth the ancient condition of our estate. For I conceive the sincere

purpose to grasp the meaning of the words before us, will wholly escape the dangers that come of mere loitering. So then this rational creature upon earth, I mean man, was made from the beginning *after the image of Him that created him*, according to the Scriptures; and the meaning of *image* is various. For an *image* may be, not after one sort, but after many; howbeit the element of the likeness to God that made him, which is far the most manifest of all, was his incorruptibility and indestructibility. But never, I conceive, would the creature have been sufficient unto himself to be so, merely by virtue of the law of his own nature; for how could he that is of the earth in his own nature have been shown to possess the glory of incorruption, unless it were from the God that is by nature both incorruptible and indestructible and ever the same, that he was enriched with this boon in like manner as with all others? *For what hast thou that thou didst not receive?* saith somewhere unto us the inspired Paul, with exceeding reason and truth. With intent then that what was once brought into being out of that which is not, might not, by sinking back to its own original, once more vanish into nothing, but rather be preserved evermore---for this was the aim of Him that created it---God makes it partaker of His own nature. For *He breathed into his face the breath of life*, i.e. the Spirit of the Son, for He is Himself the Life with the Father, holding all things together in being. For the things that are receptive of life both *move in Him and live*, according to the words of Paul.

And let none of us found hereupon any words of false teaching, by supposing that we said that the Divine inbreathing has become a soul unto the living creature; for this we deny, guided unto the truth of the matter by such reasoning as this. If any suppose that the Divine inbreathing became a soul, let him tell us whether it was turned aside from its own nature and has been made into a soul, or has it remained in its own identity? For if they say it has been on anywise changed and that it traversed the law of its own nature, they will be convicted of blasphemy; for they will say that the immutable and ever-unchanging Nature is altogether mutable; whereas if it was in no wise turned aside, but has ever remained what it always was, after coming forth from God, to wit His inbreathing, how did it deflect unto sin, and become susceptible of so great diversity of passions? For, I trow, they would not say that there is, in anywise, in the Divine Nature the possibility of transgression. But to get over the words due to the subject before us without using lengthy proofs, I say we must repeat this once again and say,---that no one, I imagine, rightly minded would suppose that the Breath which proceeded from the Divine Essence became the creature's soul, but that after the creature was ensouled, or rather had attained unto the propriety of its perfect nature by means of both, soul and body to wit, then like a stamp of His own Nature the Creator impressed on it the Holy Spirit, i. e. the Breath of Life, whereby it became moulded unto the archetypal Beauty, and completed *after the image of Him that created it*, enabled unto every form of excellence, by virtue of the Spirit given to dwell in it. But whereas, being free of will, and entrusted with the reins of its own purposes---for this also is an element in the image, forasmuch as God has power over His own purposes---it turned and has fallen---but how this came to pass the Holy Scripture must teach you, for the account of it therein is plain---God the Father both determined and took in hand to gather together once more in Christ the nature of man unto its ancient estate, and willing it accomplished it withal. So then it naturally follows that we should observe how it has come to pass. It was not otherwise possible for man, forasmuch as he was of a nature that was perishing, to escape death, save by recovering that ancient grace, and partaking once more in God Who holdeth all things together in being and preserveth them in life through the Son in the Spirit. Therefore He hath become partaker of blood and flesh, i.e. He hath become man, being by nature Life, and begotten of the Life that is by nature, i.e. of God the Father---to wit, His Only-begotten Word, with intent that ineffably and

inexpressibly and as He alone could skill to do, uniting Himself with the flesh that by the law of its own nature was perishing, He might bring it back unto His own Life and make it through Himself partaker of God the Father. For He is *Mediator between God and men*, according as it is written, knit unto God the Father naturally as God and of Him, and again unto men as man; and withal having in Himself the Father and being Himself in the Father; for He is *the impress and effulgence of His Person*, and not distinct from the Essence, whereof He is impress and wherefrom He proceeds as effulgence; but both being Himself in It, and having It in Himself; and again having us in Himself according as He wears our nature and our body has become entitled the Body of the Word. *For the Word was made flesh*, according to the utterance of John. And He wears our nature, remoulding it unto His own Life. And He is also Himself in us; for we have all been made partakers of Him, and have Him in ourselves through the Spirit; for, for this cause we have Both, *being made partakers of the Divine Nature*, and are entitled sons, after this sort having in us also the Father Himself through the Son. And Paul will testify hereof where he says: *Because ye are sons God sent forth the Spirit of His Son into your hearts, crying, Abba, Father*. For His Spirit is not something diverse from the Son, I mean as touching the law of identity, to wit, identity of nature.

This being the result of the progress of our discourse of these things, let us now take the meaning of what has been set forth, and adapt it to the interpretation of our Saviour's words: *For in that day ye shall know*, He says, *that I am in the Father, and ye in Me, and I in you*. For I live Myself, He says, for I am Life by nature, and have shown the Temple of My own Body alive; but when ye also yourselves, albeit ye are of a corruptible nature, shall behold yourselves living in like manner as I do, then indeed ye shall know exceeding clearly, that I, being Life by nature, did knit you through Myself unto God the Father, Who is also Himself by nature Life, making you partakers as it were and sharers in His Incorruption. For naturally am I in the Father----for I am the Fruit of His Essence and Its real Offspring, subsisting in It, having shone forth from It, Life of Life----and ye are in Me and I in you, forasmuch as I appeared as a man Myself, and made you *partakers of the Divine Nature* by putting My Spirit to dwell in you. For Christ is in us through the Spirit, converting that which has a natural tendency to corruption into incorruption, and transferring it from the condition of dying unto that which is otherwise. Wherefore also Paul says that *He that raised Jesus Christ from the dead, shall quicken also your mortal bodies, through His Spirit that dwelleth in you*. For albeit the Holy Spirit proceeds from the Father, yet He comes through the Son, and is His Own; for all things are through the Son from the Father. For that it was through the Spirit we were wrought anew unto eternal life, the Divine Psalmist will bear us record, when he cries as unto the God of all: *When Thou openest Thine Hand, all things shall be filled with goodness; when Thou turnest away Thy Face they shall be troubled; Thou shalt take away their breath and they shall fail and shall turn again to their dust. Thou shalt send forth Thy Spirit and they shall be made, and Thou shalt renew the face of the earth*. Hearst thou how the transgression that was in Adam, and the "turning away" as it were from the Divine precepts, sore *troubled* the nature of man, and made it return to its own earth? But when God *sent forth His Spirit*, and made us partakers of His own Nature, and through Him renewed the face of the earth, we were transfigured unto *newness of life*, casting off the corruption that comes of sin, and once more grasping eternal life, through the grace and love towards mankind of our Lord Jesus Christ, through Whom and with Whom unto God the Father, be glory with the Holy Spirit unto the ages. Amen.

[End of the ninth book.]

