

Cyril of Alexandria's Commentary on Luke Sermons 57 - 80

Sermon 57

9:57-58. *And as they were going in the way, a certain man said unto Him, I will follow Thee whithersoever Thou goest. And Jesus said unto Him: The foxes have holes, and the birds of heaven a place, to lodge in: but the Son of man hath not where to lay His head.*

TO covet the gifts that come from above from God is in very deed a state of mind worthy of being attained to, and that wins for us all good. But though the Lord of all be a bountiful Giver, yet giveth He not simply to all men without distinction, but to such rather as are worthy of His bounty. For just as those invested with the glory of royalty bestow their honours, and the various offices of state, not upon rough and ignorant men, who have nothing in them worthy of admiration, but crown those rather, who have hereditary nobility, and have been proved by trial worthy of receiving them, and likely to be successful in the discharge of their duties; so also God, Who knoweth all things, bestoweth not a share in His bounties upon souls careless and pleasure seeking, but upon such as are in a fit state rightly to receive them. If then any one would be accounted worthy of these great honours, and of being accepted by God, let him first free himself from the pollutions of evil, and the guilt of indifference; for so he will become capable of receiving them: but if he be not so disposed in mind, let him depart far away.

And this the purport of the passage from the Gospels just placed before us teaches us: for a certain man drew near to Christ the Saviour of us all saying, "Teacher, I will follow Thee whithersoever Thou goest." But He rejected the man, saying, "The foxes have holes, and the birds of heaven a place to lodge in: but that He had not where to lay His head." And yet perchance some one may say, that 'he who promised to follow Him had attained to the desire of what was honourable, and good, and profitable. For what is comparable to being with Christ, and following Him? Or how must it not aid in his salvation? Why therefore did He reject one who was eagerly promising to follow Him constantly? For one may learn from His own words, that to follow Him leads on to every blessing: for He said, "He that followeth Me, walketh not in darkness, but possesseth the light of life." What therefore was there improper in promising to follow Him, in order to gain the light of life? What then is our answer to this? That this was not his object. How could it be? For it is easy for any who will examine such matters accurately, to perceive that in the first place there was great ignorance in his manner of drawing near; and secondly, that it was full of excessive presumptuousness. For his wish was not simply to follow Christ, as so many others of the Jewish multitude did, but rather to thrust himself into apostolic honours. This then was the following which he was seeking for, being self-called thereto: whereas the blessed Paul writes, "that no man taketh the honour unto himself unless he be called of God, as Aaron also was." For Aaron did not enter upon the priesthood of himself, but on the contrary was called of God. And of every one of the holy apostles we find, that he did not promote himself to the apostleship, but rather received the honour from Christ. For He said, "Come after Me; and I will make you to become fishers of men." But this man, as I said, boldly took upon himself gifts thus altogether honourable, and, though no one called him, thrust himself into that which was above his rank. Now were any one to draw near to an earthly king, and say, "I shall promote myself, even though thou grantest it not, to this or that honour, whatever it may be;" it would be a dangerous act, and one that would bring upon him the loss often even of his life. Who can doubt that certainly

this would be the result? For in every matter we must await the decision of him who possesses sovereign authority. How then could it be fitting for this man to appoint himself among the disciples, and crown himself with apostolic powers, without being called thereunto at all by Christ?

And there is another reason for which He justly rejected him, and deemed him unworthy of so illustrious an honour. For earnestly to follow Christ is confessedly profitable to salvation: but he who wishes to be counted worthy of so great glory must, I say, bear his cross. And what is it to bear the cross? It is to die unto the world, by denying its empty distractions, and manfully abandoning a carnal and pleasure-loving life. For it is written: "Love not the world: neither the things that are in the world: for every thing that is in the world is the lust of the body, and the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life."... And again, "Know ye not that the love of the world is enmity unto God? Whosoever therefore would be a friend of the world is found God's enemy." The man therefore, whose choice it is to be with Christ, loves that which is admirable and profitable unto salvation; but let him hearken to our words: withdraw thyself far from fleshly lusts; wash away the pollution of wickedness; cleanse off the stains caused by the base love of pleasure; for these keep thee away, and permit thee not to be with Christ. Remove that which separates thee; break down the enmity; burst open the hedge that is between; for then thou wilt be with Christ. But if the hedge which keeps thee from communion with Him be not yet destroyed, in what manner canst thou follow Him?

That such then was the case with the man before us, He shews by the indirect rebuke which He gave him, not in order to reproach him, but rather for his correction, that he might of his own accord grow better, and become earnest in following the ways of virtue. Therefore He says, "The foxes have holes, and the birds of heaven a place to lodge in: but the Son of man hath not where to lay His head." And the simple meaning of the passage, and that ready to hand, is as follows: that the beasts and birds have dens and dwellings; but I have nothing to offer of those things which are the objects of general pursuit: for I have no place where to dwell, and rest Myself, and lay My head. But the inner and secret signification of the passage is attained to by more profound thoughts. For He seems to mean by the foxes and birds of heaven, those wicked, and cunning, and impure powers, the herds of demons. For they are so called in many places in the inspired Scripture. For the blessed Psalmist says of certain men, "They shall be the portions of foxes." And in the Song of Songs it is written again: "Catch for us the foxes, the little foxes that destroy the vines." And Christ Himself somewhere says of Herod, who was a bad man, and crafty in his wickedness; "Tell that fox." And elsewhere He said of the seeds that fell upon the pathways, "the birds of heaven came and devoured them." And this we affirm that He said, not of the material and visible birds, but rather of those impure and wicked spirits, who oft-times, when the heavenly seed has fallen upon the hearts of men, remove and, so to speak, carry it away, that they may not bring forth any fruit. As long therefore as the foxes and birds have holes and dens in us, how can Christ enter? Where can He rest? What communion is there between Christ and Belial? For He lodgeth in the saints, and dwelleth in them that love Him: but withdraws from the impure and the unclean. Expel the beasts: hunt out the foxes: drive away the birds: free thy heart from their impurity, in order that the Son of man may find a place in thee to lay His head: even the Word of God Who was incarnate and became man. For light has no concord with darkness, nor the impure with the holy. It is a thing altogether incredible for there to be stored up in one vessel perfume and filthiness. It is impossible for a man to be invested with apostolic honour, and conspicuous for his virtues, and every good and manly quality, if he have not admitted Christ into him. And so most wise Paul has taught us saying: "Or seek ye a proof of Christ, Who

speaketh in us?" But he in whom Christ dwells is a temple, not of one of those gods falsely so named, but of Him Who by nature, and in truth is God. For we have been taught to say, that "we are the temples of the living God." But to a divine temple incense is suitable, such as is of a most sweet scent: and every virtue is a rational incense, altogether acceptable to the God of all.

"Let us therefore cleanse ourselves from every stain of the flesh, and of the spirit." "Let us put to death those members which are upon the earth." Let us close the entrance to impure spirits. Let not reprobate and wicked birds lodge within us. Let our heart be holy and unpolluted, as far as is possible and may be. For so shall we follow Christ, according as He giveth us the grace, and He will dwell joyfully in us. For then He will have where to lay His head, and rest in us as in saints. For it is written; "Become ye holy, because I am holy." And devoting ourselves to these earnest pursuits, we shall also attain to the city that is above, by the aid of the same Christ: by Whom, and with Whom, to God the Father be praise and dominion with the Holy Ghost, for ever and ever, Amen.

Sermon 58

9:59-60. And He said unto another, Follow Me: but he said, Lord, suffer me to go first and bury my father. And Jesus said to him, Let the dead bury their dead: but go thou and preach the kingdom of God.

IN Christ we have the head and teacher of every virtue. For "we are taught of God," as the prophet declares, and moreover the wise Paul bears witness saying: "God, Who in manifold parts and manifold manners spake in old time to the fathers by the prophets, hath in these last days spoken unto us by the Son." And what spake He by the Son? Plainly the gospel message of salvation, by means of which we are successfully guided into every kind of virtue, and advance in the praiseworthy and admirable pathway of the better life, so that by following His footsteps we gain the treasure of His gifts. The manner, then, in which we follow Him, and are counted worthy of those perfect and surpassing honours which were first bestowed upon the apostles, the lesson just laid before us clearly teaches us. "For He said, it tells us, unto another, Follow Me."

Now the first point to consider is this: that in the preceding passage we learnt, that one drew near to Him, and said, "Teacher, I will follow Thee whithersoever Thou goest:" but was rejected with scorn by Christ; first as being self called, and thrusting himself into honours which God bestows upon those only who are fit to receive them, and who as being announced by every excellent quality, and skilful in practising every good work and deed, are crowned by Christ, and inscribed in the companies of the holy teachers. But inasmuch as this man was not so disposed, he met with rebuke; for his mind was the dwelling of evil spirits, and full of all impurity. For the Saviour, indirectly touching his case, said; "The foxes have holes, and the birds of heaven a place to lodge in: but the Son of man hath not where to lay His head."

Now at our last meeting; we sufficiently discussed the manner in which this is to be understood by us. But here it was no self-called disciple who came, nor one presumptuously forward in promises of deeds thus praiseworthy: but, on the contrary, it was one called by Christ to the apostleship, as not unfitted for it. For he was honoured by the divine decree, and was doubtless holy, and venerable; and able to conform himself to the intention of the evangelic message. But he did not as yet know clearly in what way he ought to conduct himself

in so great a matter; for he had perchance a father bowed down with old age: and thought himself acting in a manner highly pleasing to God in anxiously shewing him tenderness and tit-ting love. He knew, of course, as meeting with it in the books of the law, that the God of all has provided also for this, saying; "Honour thy father, and thy mother: that it may be well with thee: and that thou mayest live long upon the earth." On being, therefore, summoned to the sacred ministry, and to the office of proclaiming the Gospel message:----for this is what was signified by Christ's command to follow Him:----he is troubled in his human understanding, and asks for a delay of time enough to tend the old age of his parent. For "Suffer me," he said, "first to go and bury my father." And what we say is, not that he asked permission to bury his father, being already dead and laid out:---for Christ would not have forbidden this:---but he used the word "bury" instead of "that I may take care of his old age till his burial."

What, then, was the Saviour's answer? "Leave the dead burying their dead: but go thou, preach the kingdom of God." For there were, no doubt, other guardians and relatives of his father: but as I consider dead, because they had not yet believed in Christ, nor been able to receive the new birth by holy baptism unto the life incorruptible. Let them, He says, bury their dead, because they also have within them a dead mind, nor as yet have been numbered among those who possess the life that is in Christ. From this, then, we learn, that the fear of God is to be set even above the reverence and love due to parents. For the law of Moses also, while it commanded, in the first place, that "thou shalt love the Lord God with all thy soul, and all thy might, and all thy heart:" put as second to it the honour due to parents, saying, "Honour thy father and thy mother."

For come, and let us examine the matter in dispute, and inquire what is the reason why we consider the honour and love due to parents, not a thing to be neglected, but, on the contrary, carefully to be attended to. One may say, then, that is because we have our being by their means. But the God of all brought us into being, when we absolutely did not exist. He is the Creator and Maker of all: and, so to speak, the principle and radical essence of everything. For to everything existence is His gift. The father, then, and mother, were the means by which their offspring came into existence. Ought not, therefore, the primary Author justly to be loved more than the secondary and subsequent? And will not He Who gave the more precious gifts require of us the more marked honour? Our endeavours, therefore, to please our parents must give way to our love to God, and human duties must yield precedence to those which are divine. And this the Saviour has Himself taught us, saying, "He who loveth father or mother more than Me, is not worthy of Me: and he who loveth son or daughter more than Me, is not worthy of Me." He does not say that they are condemned for simply loving, but for loving them more than Me. He permits sons and daughters, therefore, to love their parents, but not more than they do Him. When therefore any thing which concerns God's glory has to be done, let no impediment stand in the way; let thy earnestness be without pretext: thy zealous exertions ardent and irrepressible. Forthwith let father and mother and children be disregarded, and the power of natural affection towards them cease, and yield the victory to the love of Christ.

So was that thrice-blessed Abraham tried: so was he justified, and called the friend of God: and counted worthy of surpassing honours. For what can equal in the balance the being a friend of God? What can this world offer comparable with a grace so glorious and admirable? He had one only-begotten and beloved son, who, after long delay, and scarcely, and in his old age had been given him. Upon him too rested all his hope of offspring: for it was said to him:

"In Isaac shall thy seed be called." But as the sacred Scripture saith, "God tried Abraham, saying: Take thy beloved son, even him whom thou lovest, Isaac, and go to the high land, and offer him to Me for a whole burnt-offering, upon one of the mountains that I will tell thee." Was God trying Abraham, as not foreknowing what would happen, and waiting to learn the result? But how can this be true? For He knows all things before they happen. Why therefore did He try him? That we by the fact might learn the old man's love of God, and ready obedience, and unchanging earnestness in the dutiful performance of God's will. And observe how God made him, so to speak, unready for the act, that the patriarch might obtain the more worthy admiration, as preferring nothing to his Lord's will. "Take," He says, not simply Isaac, but "thy son: the beloved one;---him whom thou hast loved." This strengthened in his case the sting of natural affection. Oh! how mighty a turmoil of bitter thoughts rose up in the old man! For the force of innate affection naturally called him to compassion for the child. He had wished to be a father: for he had even lamented his childlessness unto God, when He promised to give him all that land which had been told him, and said, "Lord, what givest Thou me? and I dwell childless." The law, therefore, of natural affection urged him to spare the lad; while the power of love towards God called him to ready obedience: and he was like some tree, driven to and fro by the violence of the winds; or like a ship at sea, reeling, so to speak, and staggering by the beating of the waves. But there was one true and powerful thought to which he held fast. For he considered, that though the lad were slain, and became the work and victim of the fire, as being a whole burnt-offering, well-pleasing to God: yet that He "was not unable to raise him up again, oven from the dead."

Much, therefore, at once was taught him by this event. For, in the first place, he learnt that ready obedience leads on to every blessing, and is the pathway to justification, and the pledge of friendship with God: and secondly, that God is able to raise again, even from the dead. And, moreover, he learnt what is more important, and more worthy of account, I mean the mystery of Christ: that for the salvation and life of the world God the Father was about to yield His own Son to the sacrifice: even Him, Who by nature was beloved, that is, Christ. And the blessed Paul confirms this, saying of Him: "He That spared not His own Son, but delivered Him up for us all." The patriarch Abraham therefore learnt what kind of and how great a thing it is, not to spare his own son, the only-begotten and beloved. He then was found approved, because he set nothing above those things that are well-pleasing to God. Such Christ requires us to be, so as to love and prize what concerns His glory far above the ties of fleshly relationship.

And once more to look at it in another light. It was right that the power of love towards Him should outweigh with us even that of those who begat us in the flesh. He has given us God as a Father; for He said: "Call not any one father upon earth: for One is your Father Who is in heaven: and ye are all brethren." And the wise John said of Him, "He came to His own, and His own received Him not: but to all who received Him He gave power to become the sons of God." Ought they therefore who have Him as Father Who is Lord of heaven and earth: Who transcends all created things: Who is guarded by mighty cherubim: Who excels thrones and dominions, principalities and powers;---ought such, I say, to fall into so great folly, as not to set Him above all natural relationship? Can it be that we shall be guilty if we disregard the honour due to parents and children and brethren: but free from guilt, if we pay not the honour due to the Father of all? Hear what He plainly saith; "The son honoureth his father, and the servant his master: if I am a Father, where is My honour? and if I am. a Master, where is My fear? saith the Lord Almighty."

Fitly therefore did Christ make him who was called to the apostleship acquainted with apostolic conduct, and the spiritual manliness required for its discharge, by saying, "Leave the dead burying their dead: but go thou, preach the kingdom of God." For such must the ministers of the divine message be. To whose wise teaching let us also in everything adhere, advancing onwards unto Christ: by Whom and with Whom to God the Father be praise and dominion, with the Holy Ghost, for ever, and ever, Amen.

Sermon 59.

9:61-62. *And another also said, I will follow Thee, Lord; but first let me bid farewell to the members of my house. But Jesus said to him, No man who putteth his hand to the plough, and looketh back, is fit for the kingdom of God.*

OF zeal in virtuous pursuits we say, that it is worthy of all praise. But those who have attained to this state of mind must be strong in purpose, and not feebly disposed towards the mark that is set before them. Rather they must plainly possess an unwavering and inflexible mind: for so, starting impetuously as from the barriers of the race-course, they will reach the goal, and gain the victory, and twine around their hair the conqueror's crown. And to this heartiness of purpose the Saviour of all encouraged us, as being a quality worth the gaining, where He says, "Who of you wishing to build a tower, sitteth not down first and counteth whether he have sufficient to finish it; lest, saith He, having laid the foundation, and not being able to finish it, the passers by say, This man began to build, and was not able to finish." One who so acts becomes an object merely of ridicule: for upon every honourable and virtuous undertaking a fitting conclusion ought to follow. And to teach this truth the law of Moses commanded those who were building a house to erect upon it also a battlement. For he who is not perfect in good, is not free from blame. Just then as discredit was of course attached to a house that had no battlements, so the passage just read to us from the Gospel teaches us a similar lesson.

"For one drew near saying, I will follow thee, Lord; but first let me go and bid farewell to those in my house." The promise then that he makes is worthy of emulation, and full of all praise: but the fact of his wishing to bid farewell to those at home shews him, so to speak, divided, and that he had not as yet entered upon the course with unshackled mind. For look how, like some colt eager for the race, there holds him back as with a bridle, the stream of worldly things, and his wish in part still to take interest in this world's occupations. For no one hinders him from hastening, if he will, to the wished for mark, according to the free inclinations of his mind. But the very wish to consult first with his relatives, and to make those his counsellors who were not likely to entertain sentiments similar to his own, nor to share at all in his resolution, sufficiently proves him infirm and halting, and not as yet fully inclined to act upon his desire of following Christ.

But He, as it were by gentle reproofs, corrected him, and taught him to practise a more determined zeal, saying, "No man putting his hand to the plough, and looking back, is fit for the kingdom of God." For just as the husbandman, who has begun to break up his land by the plough, if he grow weary, and leave his labour half done, sees not his field thick set with ears, nor his threshing-floor full of sheaves, and suffers of course the loss which is the natural result of idleness; the absence, I mean, of produce, and the consequent penury, and incurs also the ridicule of those that see him: so he who wishes to cleave unto Christ, but does not bid farewell to the things of the world, and abandon all love of the flesh, and even deny his earthly

relatives; for by so doing he attains to a resolute courage in all praiseworthy pursuits; is not fit for the kingdom of God. One who cannot attain to this resolution, because his mind is fettered with indolence, is not acceptable unto Christ, nor fit for His company, and necessarily is refused permission to be with Him.

Such were those of whom Christ spake, when forming that similitude in the Gospels. For He said, "A rich man made a banquet for his son; and sent therefore his servants to call them that were bidden, saying, My oxen and my failings are killed, and every thing is ready: come to the banquet. But they, it says, would not come: but one said, I have bought a field, and I cannot come. And another, I have bought a yoke of oxen: and another, I have taken a wife, hold me excused." Thou seest that they were called, and while it was in their power to partake of the feast, they excused themselves, and gave themselves up without restraint to those temporal and earthly matters, which rapidly fade, and the possession of which must quickly be abandoned. And yet surely it was their duty rather to have understood, that a wife and lands, and those other possessions, are but finite pleasures, short in duration, and fleeting like the shadows, and, as it were, a bitterness mingled with honey. But to be members of the church of God, from which they, I know not how, foolishly fled, would have procured for them an eternal and unchanging joy. Whoever would follow Christ, let him be thoroughly constant, and intent solely upon this end; let him not be divided; let him not be possessed by timidity and slothfulness; let him be free from all carnal lust, and prefer nothing to his love unto Him. But if he be not so disposed, nor so affected in his will, even if he do draw near, he will not be accepted.

Something of this sort the law of Moses also has taught us indirectly in figure. For whenever, as emergencies arose, the children of Israel went out to battle against their enemies, before they engaged in the combat, the herald of the host made proclamation, "Whosoever hath betrothed a wife, and hath not taken her, let him return to his house, that he die not in battle, and another man take her. Whosoever hath built a new house, and hath not dedicated it, let him return to his house, that he die not in battle, and another dedicate it. Whosoever is frightened in his heart, let him return to his house, that he make not the heart of his brother frightened as his own." Thou seest that the man who loves the world, or wealth, and whosoever is full of excuses, is not every where in his place: but we shall find the holy apostles very different from such as these. For when they heard Christ saying, "Follow Me, and I will make you to become fishers of men: they, it says, at once left the ship and their father, and followed Him." And the wise Paul also writes, "But when God willed to reveal unto me His Son, immediately I counselled not with flesh and blood." Thou seest the valiant mind, and the brave and hearty purpose, not subject to the bonds of indolence, but superior to all cowardice and fleshly lust. Such must they be who would follow Christ: not looking behind them, not walking, that is, so to speak, backwards, and turning their faces from that manly virtue which becometh saints, and excusing themselves from the duty of labouring: not loving things temporal, not of a double mind, but hastening onwards with perfect zeal to that which is well pleasing to Christ: by Whom and with Whom, to God the Father be praise and dominion, with the Holy Ghost, for ever and ever, Amen.

Sermon 60.

10:1-3. *After these things the Lord appointed seventy others, and sent them two and two before His face, unto every city and place, whither He was about to enter. And He said unto them, The harvest indeed is great, but the labourers*

few. Pray therefore the Lord of the harvest to send forth labourers into the harvest.

THE Holy Ghost by the mouth of the holy prophets commanded the ministers of the saving word of the gospel, saying, "Sound the trumpet on the new moon: on the solemn day of your feast." And to the new moon we may compare the time of our Saviour's coming. For a new world arose for us, in which all things have become new, as the very wise Paul assures us in his writings. For he says, "The former things have passed away: behold, all things have become new." By the new moon therefore, and solemn feast, we understand the time of the incarnation of the Only-begotten, when a trumpet sounded loudly and clearly, even that which proclaimed the saving message of the gospel. For is not that a time which invites us to keep festival, when we were justified by faith, and washed from the pollutions of sin, and death abolished, which had tyrannized over us, and Satan ejected from his mastery over us all; and in which by sanctification and justification we have been united to our common Saviour Christ, and enriched with the hope of unending life and glory. These are the loud trumpet's sounds, and they run not only through Judaea, like that law which was of old, but throughout the whole earth.

And this is pictured for thee in the writings of Moses. For the God of all came down in the likeness of fire on Mount Sinai, and there was a cloud, and darkness, and gloom, and the voice of the trumpet with a loud ringing sound, according to the Scripture. But the notes of the trumpet were, it says, few at first, but afterwards they waxed longer, and became louder and louder continually. What then was it which the shadow of the law signified to us by these things? Was it not this: that at first there were but few to publish the Gospel tidings; but afterwards they became many? And Christ began the work: and having first chosen the twelve apostles, He afterwards appointed, it says, seventy others. And that, not as though those who had been already called to the honour of the apostleship had been guilty of any neglect, or been led into anything unbecoming, but because a great multitude was about to believe in Him. For not Israel only was caught in the net, but also the crowds of the Gentiles. For that the message of salvation would take possession of the whole world, the God of all declared by one of the holy prophets, saying of it, "Judgment springeth up like couch-grass in the furrows of the field." For like as the couch-grass springs up in the furrows that are left without cultivation, and takes possession of them, and spreads everywhere, constantly advancing onwards, so in an exactly similar manner has judgment, that is to say, the grace that justifieth the world as declared in the saving tidings of the Gospel, taken possession of every city and place.

Besides these twelve therefore, there were also seventy others appointed by Christ. And again a type of this was prefigured in the words of Moses. For at God's command he also chose seventy, and God sent the Spirit upon those who had been chosen. And yet again, we find the twelve disciples, and these seventy also, indicated to us by the shadow of the law. For it is thus written in the Exodus concerning the children of Israel; "And they came to Marah: and the people could not drink the waters of Marah; for they were bitter. And Moses cried unto the Lord, and the Lord shewed him a tree; and he cast it into the waters, and the waters were made sweet." Now Marah, when translated, means bitterness; and is taken by us as a type of the law. For the law was bitter, in that it punished with death. And of this Paul is witness, saying, "He that hath despised Moses' law is put to death without mercy at the mouth of two or three witnesses." It was bitter therefore, and unendurable to those of old time, and was unacceptable on this account, just as were also those bitter waters. But it also was sweetened

by the precious cross, of which that tree there shewn by God to the blessed Moses was a type. For now that the shadow has changed to the spiritual contemplation, we behold with the eyes of the mind the mystery of Christ, that lay hid in the types of the law. Although therefore the law was bitter, it has now ceased to be so any longer.

"And after Marah, they came, it says, to Elim." And Elim again when translated means an ascent or increase. And what again was there at Elim? "Twelve wells of water, it says, and seventy palm trees." For as we ascend to more perfect knowledge, and hasten onward to spiritual increase, we find twelve wells, that is, the holy Apostles: and seventy palm trees, those, namely, who were appointed by Christ. And very excellently the disciples are compared to wells, and the seventy, who were subsequently chosen, to palm trees. For as from holy wells we draw from the disciples of our Saviour the knowledge of all good: while we praise the seventy also, and, so to speak, call them palms; for this tree is strong-hearted, and firm of root, and very fruitful, and constantly grows besides the waters. And such we affirm the saints to be: for their mind is pure, and steadfast, and fruitful, and habitually delights itself in the waters of knowledge.

Therefore, to return again to what we were at first saying, the Lord "appointed other seventy." But some may perchance imagine that the former had been dismissed, and deprived of the honours of the apostleship; and that these were promoted in their stead, as being better able to teach than they were. To remove therefore such thoughts from our minds, He Who knoweth hearts, and is acquainted with things to come, even as it were apologized, saying, "The harvest indeed is great; but the labourers are few: pray therefore the Lord of the harvest to send forth labourers into His harvest." For just as lands covered thick with produce, and broad and long, require numerous and able labourers; so the whole earth, or rather the company of those about to believe in Christ, being great and innumerable, required not a few teachers, but as many as would suffice for the work. And for this reason Christ appointed those who were to be the allies, so to speak, and assistants of the twelve disciples. They went therefore on their mission, being sent two and two to every city and village, crying, as it were, in the words of John, "Prepare ye the way of the Lord."

But observe this: that while He said, "Pray ye the Lord of the harvest to send forth labourers into His harvest," He did it Himself. And yet Who besides is Lord of the harvest, that is, of the dwellers on earth, but He Who by nature and truly is God. "For to Him belongs the whole earth and its fulness," as Scripture says: and He is the Creator of all, and its Fashioner. But inasmuch as it belongs to the supreme God alone to send forth labourers, how was it that Christ appointed them? Is He not therefore the Lord of the harvest, and God the Father, by Him and with Him, the Lord of all? All things therefore are His, and there is nothing of all things which are named that belongs to the Father, which is not also the Son's. For He also said to the Father, "Those whom Thou gavest Me out of the world, Thine they were, and Thou gavest them unto Me." For, as I said, all those things that belong to the Father are declared to be, and are, the property of the Son, and He is radiant with His Father's dignities. And the glory of the Godhead belongs to Him, not as a thing conferred and given Him by another; but rather He subsists in honours which are His by nature, as He also doth Who begat Him. And the wise John also affirms that we all are His, thus saying of Him: "I indeed baptize you in water: but after me cometh He Who is mightier than I: He [Who] shall baptize you in the Holy Ghost, and in fire. Whose fan is in His hand, and He will cleanse His floor, and will gather the wheat into His garner, but the chaff He will burn with unquenchable fire."

May it be our lot then as rational wheat, to be carried into God's treasure house, oven into the mansions that are above: that there, in company with the rest of the saints, we may enjoy the blessings which God bestows in Christ: by Whom, and with Whom, to God the Father be praise and dominion with the Holy Ghost, for ever and ever, Amen.

Sermon 61.

10:3. *Go: behold, I send you as sheep among wolves.*

ALL those who praise the divine and sacred Word correctly, and without error, are, we affirm, the allies of the doctrines of truth, and its host teachers; well knowing how to guide whosoever wish to advance in Christ, rightly unto every good work, and to the life incorruptible, and to participation in the blessings bestowed upon us. Of these most wise Paul also declares, that they are "the lights of the world, holding the word of life."

Now of these illustrious and famous men the divine disciples were the commencement, and stand foremost in order: for they had as a schoolmaster Him Who is the Giver of all understanding; and Who richly bestoweth His light upon those who love Him. For He is the true light Who illumineth the heavens, even the powers who are above; and delivereth from ignorance and darkness those also upon earth. And observe how He made the appointed teachers of all beneath the sun to be ready workmen, conspicuous for their earnest zeal, and able to win the glory of apostolic victories; preferring none of this world's affairs to the duty of proclaiming their sacred message, and so bravely disposed in their manly mind as to be superior to all fear, and no whit terrified at hardships, nor alarmed at death itself, when brought upon them for Christ's sake. For "go," He says: and in this word "go," He encourages them to be courageous; makes them eagerly desirous of saintly victories; establishes them in the steadfast resistance of all temptation; and permits them not to shrink from the violence of persecutions. For just as valiant generals, when the battle begins, and the enemy discharge their shafts, encourage those under their command bravely to resist the attacking foe, and to bear themselves manfully against the enemy; using such words as these; 'Fellow soldiers, let none of these things that ye see trouble your mind; we are not weak and inexperienced in warfare, but know well the ways of battle: we have coats of mail strongly made; armour and swords; bows too and darts: by exertion we shall purchase the victory; stoutheartedness will win for us a right glorious renown:' so does the Saviour of all, if we may so speak, send forth the disciples against the hosts of unbelievers, saying, "Go; behold, I send you as sheep among wolves."

What sayest Thou O Lord? How can sheep converse with wolves? When was a wild beast ever at peace with the sheep? Scarcely can the shepherds protect their flocks by gathering them into folds, and shutting them up in enclosures, and frightening the beasts of prey by the barking of dogs, yea, and even themselves fighting in their defence, and running risks to protect the more weakly members of their flock. How then does He command the holy Apostles, who are guileless men, and if we may so speak, sheep, to seek the company of wolves, and go to them of their own accord? Is not the danger manifest? Are they not set as a ready prey for their attacks? How can a sheep prevail over a wolf? How can one so peaceful vanquish the savageness of beasts of prey? Yes, He says, for they all have Me as their Shepherd: small and great; people and princes; teachers and taught. I will be with you and aid you, and deliver you from all evil. I will tame the savage beasts; I will change wolves into sheep; I will make the persecutors become the helpers of the persecuted: and those who

wrong My ministers I will make to be sharers in their pious designs. For I make and unmake all things, and there is nothing that can resist My will.

And that this was the actual result, we may see in instances which really occurred. For the divine Paul was a blasphemer, and persecutor, more injurious and cruel than any wolf against those who believed in Christ. Did he then persist in this conduct? Did he continue to be a wolf even unto the end? Far from it: for he was called by Christ, and experienced an unlooked for change. He who in old time was a wolf became more gentle than a lamb; and preached the faith which once he persecuted. And a change so unexpected in its manner was the wonder of all men, and Christ was glorified, Who had changed him from a beast of prey into a lamb. And this the divine Jacob had in his blessings before announced concerning him: "Benjamin is a ravening wolf: in the morning he shall eat flesh: and in the evening divide victual." For the wise Paul was of the tribe of Benjamin, and, at first, he resisted those who believed in Christ like a ravening wolf; but when a short time had elapsed, a space, so to speak, as from morning to evening, he divided victual. For he taught and preached Jesus: and to those that as yet were babes in intellect he offered milk; but set before the full grown strong meat. In the morning therefore he eats flesh, and in the evening divides victual.

And thus much then briefly respecting the blessed Paul: but let us next discuss from a similar point of view the calling of nations. Let us see whether they too also were not at one time beasts of prey, and fiercer than wolves against the ministers of the gospel message of salvation, but were transformed unto the gentleness and guilelessness which are by Christ's help. They too persecuted the holy apostles, not so much like men struggling with wolves, as like beasts of prey, raging savagely against sheep. And though they wronged them not, but rather called them to salvation, they stoned them, they imprisoned them, they persecuted them from city to city. And yet those, who thus acted at first, afterwards became gentle and guileless, and like the sheep which once they persecuted.

And who else accomplisheth all these things but Jesus Christ our Lord? For He also it is "Who hath broken down the fence wall that was in the middle, abolishing the law of commandments contained in doctrines; Who hath made the two nations into one new man; Who hath made peace, and reconciled both in one body unto the Father." For that there have been joined unto the faith in concord and unity of mind and will, the savage in company with the gentle; the impure and sin-stained with the saints; those, that is, of the herds of the Gentiles with those of Israel who believed; the prophet Isaiah shews, thus speaking in the Spirit: "And the wolf shall graze with the lamb; and the leopard rest with the kid; and the bear and the cow shall graze together; and the ox and the lion eat provender together, and their young ones shall be with one another." Consider, my beloved, and understand that those who were sanctified by faith did not conform to the habits of the heathen, but on the contrary those who were called of the heathen conformed to them. For such beasts as the wolf and lion, the bear and leopard, are eaters of flesh; but those animals which are of a gentle nature, kids and lambs, and steers, feed upon grass. But those beasts of prey, he says, shall graze with these gentle ones, and eat their food. It is not therefore the gentle ones who have conformed to the habits of the savage: but, on the contrary, as I said, the savage who have imitated them. For they have abandoned their cruel disposition for the gentleness that becometh saints, and been changed by Christ, so that the wolves have become lambs; for He it is Who hath made them gentle, and united, as I said, the two nations unto a mind full of the love of God. And this of old the hierophant Moses cried out, saying, "Rejoice, ye nations, with His people; ascribe majesty unto God." Let us therefore exalt Him and honour Him with praises because of the Saviour and Lord of all: by

Whom and with Whom to God the Father be praise and dominion, with the Holy Ghost, for ever and ever, Amen.

Sermon 62.

10:4-7. Carry neither purse, nor scrip, nor shoes; and ask not the peace of any one by the way. And into whatsoever house ye enter, first say, Peace to this house. And if there be there one worthy of peace, your peace shall rest upon him; but if not, it shall return to you. And in that house remain, eating and drinking of their things: for the labourer is worthy of his hire. Change not from house to house.

THE prudent and skilful bee visits the flowers in every field and meadow, and gathering the dew that has settled upon them, so makes sweet honey. And Solomon leads us to imitate her conduct, saying, "Draw near to the bee, and learn how industrious she is, and how excellent is her workmanship. She is beloved, therefore, and praised by every man, and her labours kings and private persons employ for their health." Come, therefore, and let us also, wandering, as it were, around some intellectual meadow, gather the dew let fall by the Holy Ghost upon the divine message of the Gospel, that so being enriched in mind we may bring forth the spiritual honey, even the word profitable and useful to all who thirst after the communication of the divine doctrines, whether they be noble and illustrious, or obscure and private persons in a humble rank of life. For it is written, "Good words are as honeycomb; and their sweetness is healing to the soul."

Now these fair and good words, what else are they than those certainly which Christ spake unto us, making those who love Him skilful by repeated teaching in virtuous pursuits? For take here also as a proof of what I have said the sense of the passage just read to us. "Carry," it says, "neither purse, nor scrip, nor shoes." Consider, I pray you, here again the nature of the pathway of apostolic virtue set before them. For it was right that they who were to be the lights and teachers of all beneath the heaven, should learn it from no other than from Him Who is the Word that came down from above---from heaven: the fountain of wisdom and intellectual light; from whom cometh all understanding, and the knowledge of every thing that is good. What, then, He requires of them is, that in preaching to men everywhere the Word that He spake, and in calling the inhabitants of the whole earth to salvation, they should travel about without purse, or scrip, or shoes; and journey rapidly from city to city, and from place to place. And let no man on any account say that the object of His teaching was to make the holy Apostles refuse the use of the ordinary articles of equipment. For what good would it do them, or what harm, to have shoes on their feet, or go without them? But what He does wish them to learn by this command, and to endeavour to practice is certainly this, that they must lay all thought of their sustenance upon Him, and call to remembrance the saint who said, "Cast thy care upon the Lord, and He shall feed thee." For He giveth the saints what is needful for life, nor speaketh He falsely where He saith, "Be ye not anxious for yourselves as to what ye shall eat, and what drink: nor for your body, what clothing ye shall wear: for your Father knoweth that ye have need of all those things. But seek first His righteousness, and all these things shall be added unto you."

For verily it was fitting and necessary that those who were adorned with apostolic honours, should have a mind free from covetousness, and altogether averse from the receiving of gifts, and content, on the contrary, with what God provides. "For the love of money is the root of all

evils" as Scripture declares. They, therefore, in every way must be free and exempt from that which is the root and nourisher of all evils, and must expend, so to say, all their zeal upon their necessary duties, not being exposed to Satan's attack, us taking with them no worldly wealth, but despising the things of the flesh, and desiring only what God wills.

For just as brave soldiers when they go out to battle carry nothing with them but such equipments only as are suitable for war, so also it was right that those who were sent out by Christ to carry aid to the world, and wage war in behalf of all who were in danger against the "world-rulers of this darkness," yea, and against Satan himself, should be free from the distractions of this world, and from all worldly anxiety; that being tightly girt, and clad in spiritual armour, they might contend mightily with those who resisted the glory of Christ, and had made all beneath the heaven their prey. For they had caused its inhabitants to worship the creature instead of the Creator, and to offer religious service to the elements of the world. Armed, therefore, with the shield of faith, and the breastplate of righteousness, and the sword of the Spirit, which is the Word of God, they must prove themselves invincible antagonists to their enemies; and not drag after them a heavy load of things worthy of blame and condemnation: such as are the love of wealth and hoards of base gains, and eagerness after them: for these things turn aside the mind of man from that behaviour which pleaseth God, and permit it not to mount upward to Him, but humble it rather to feelings set upon dust, and earthly things.

In enjoining them, therefore, to take neither scrip nor purse, nor, moreover, to trouble themselves about shoes, He clearly teaches them that his commandment requires them to abandon all carnal wealth, and that His wish is that they should be free from every impediment in entering upon the duty to which they were especially called, of preaching, namely, His mystery to men everywhere, and of winning unto salvation those who were entangled in the nets of destruction.

And to this He adds that "they were not to ask of the peace of any one by the way." But what harm would this have done the holy apostles? Come, therefore, come, and let us see the reason why it was not right for them to offer greeting to those that met them. Thou doubtless wilt say that it was because it might sometimes happen that those who met them were not believers: and that therefore it would not have been right for those who were ignorant of Him Who by nature and verily is God to be blessed by them. What, therefore, do we say to this? Does it not then seem an incredible supposition that this was the reason why they were commanded not to ask of the peace of any one by the way? For they were sent forth "not so much to call the righteous as sinners to repentance." And how, therefore, was it not fitting that they who were about to enlighten all who were in darkness, and to bring them unto the acknowledgment of the truth, should rather use gentleness and great kindness instead of roughly withdrawing themselves from associating with them, and even refusing to ask of their health? For certainly with other good qualities, gentleness of address becometh the saints, and greetings, provided they are made in a fitting manner. And, moreover, those who met them would, of course, sometimes not be unbelievers, but men of their own persuasion, or who had already been enlightened, and to whom it would even be their duty to offer an acknowledgment of love by a kindly greeting.

What, therefore, does Christ teach by this? He does not enjoin them to be rude, nor command them to lay stress upon the not making salutation: such conduct He rather teaches them to avoid. But it is not a thing unbefitting to suppose that when the disciples were travelling about

among the cities and villages, to instruct men everywhere in the sacred doctrines, they might wish to do this, perhaps, not with haste, but, so to speak, in a loitering manner, making deviations from the road, and permitting themselves to pay visits, because they wished to see some one or other as being an acquaintance or friend, and so would waste prodigally in unnecessary matters the fitting time for preaching. With great industry, therefore, says He, be zealous in delivering your sacred message; grant not to friendship an unprofitable delay, but let that which is well pleasing to God be preferred by you to all other things: and so practising an irresistible and unhampered diligence, hold fast to your apostolic cares.

Besides this He further commanded them "not to give holiness to dogs, nor again to cast the pearls before swine," by bestowing upon unbelievers their society in lodging with them: they were rather to grant it to such as were worthy of having it deigned them, by being sons of peace, and yielding obedience to their message. For it would have been a most disgraceful act for them to wish to be intimate with any who were still resisting Christ's glory, and guilty of the charge of ungodliness. "For what part hath the believer with the unbeliever?" For how could those who had not as yet even listened to their words, but made their instruction, however worthy it was of being embraced, an occasion sometimes even of ridicule, receive them as meriting their admiration? So too at Athens some once ridiculed the divine Paul. For he indeed taught them "that God dwelleth not in temples made with hands," being incorporeal and infinite, and That Which filleth all, but is contained by none: and declared that he preached unto them "Him Whom though they knew Him not, they imagined they rightly worshipped." But they being given up to superciliousness, and greatly priding themselves on their fluent tongue, said in their folly, "What would this seed-picker say? For he seemeth to be a setter forth of foreign gods." Seed-picker was the name they gave to a worthless bird, whose habit it was to pick up the seeds scattered on the roads: and in comparing to it the divine Paul, these foolish men were ridiculing the word of salvation then offered them.

Christ therefore commanded them to lodge with the sons of peace, and to eat at their cost, affirming that this was by a just decree; "for a labourer, He says, is worthy of his hire." And therefore, let not any of those who acknowledge the truth, disregard or be careless of the duty of honouring the saints: for they bless us, when "sowing to us things spiritual, they reap of us things carnal:" and "the Lord also commanded that those who preach the gospel shall live of the gospel:" since also according to the law of Moses, "those who offered sacrifices shared with the altar." And let those who are careless of honouring the saints, and illiberally close the hand, be assured that they are deprived of their blessing. But may it be our lot to be partakers of the blessing prepared for them with God, by offering to them as fruit whatever we possess; and by feeling pleasure in so doing; "for Christ loveth a cheerful giver:" by Whom and with Whom to God the Father be praise and dominion with the Holy Ghost, for ever and ever, Amen.

Sermon 63.

10:16 He that heareth you, heareth Me: and he that rejecteth you, rejecteth Me: and whosoever rejecteth Me, rejecteth Him That sent Me.

THOSE who adorn thrones of earthly royalty, and possess supreme authority, when they wish to render fitting men illustrious with this world's dignities, send them in the missives on which the decree commanding their appointment is inscribed, a declaration of their

praiseworthiness. And this we find that Christ did. For consider how great was the authority He gave the holy apostles, and in what manner He declared them to be praiseworthy, and adorned with the highest honours. For let us search the sacred Scripture, even the treasure of the written words of the Gospel: let us there see the greatness of the authority given unto them. "He that heareth you," He says, "heareth Me: and he that rejecteth you, rejecteth Me: and he that rejecteth Me, rejecteth Him That sent Me." O what great honour! What incomparable dignities! O what a gift worthy of God! Though but men, the children of earth, He clothes them with a godlike glory; He entrusts to them His words, that they may be condemned who in ought resist, or venture to reject them: for when they are rejected He assures them that He it is Who suffers this; and then again He shews that the guilt of this wickedness, as being committed against Him, mounts up to God the Father. See, therefore, see with the eyes of the mind, to how vast a height He raises the sin committed by men in rejecting the saints! What a wall He builds around them! How great security He contrives for them! He makes them such as must be feared, and in every way plainly provides for their being uninjured.

And there is yet another way in which thou mayest attain to the meaning of what is said by Christ. "For he," He says, who heareth you, heareth Me." He gives those who love instruction the assurance, that whatsoever is said respecting Him by the holy apostles or evangelists, is to be received necessarily without any doubt, and to be crowned with the words of truth. For he who heareth them, heareth Christ. For the blessed Paul also said; "Or seek ye proof of Christ That speaketh in Me? And moreover Christ Himself somewhere said to the holy disciples; "For it is not ye that speak, but the Spirit of your Father that speaketh in you." For Christ speaketh in them by the consubstantial Spirit. And if it be true, and plainly it is true, that they speak by Christ, how can that man err from what is fitting who affirms, that he who doth not hear them, doth not hear Christ, and that he who rejecteth them rejecteth Christ, and with Him the Father.

Inevitable therefore is the guilt decreed against the wicked heretics, who reject the words of the holy apostles and evangelists, and pervert them to that meaning only which without due examination seems to them to be right. These fall from the straight way, and wander from the doctrines of piety, "deceiving, and being deceived." For while, so to speak, they have bidden farewell to the sacred Scriptures, "they speak of their own heart, and not out of the mouth of the Lord," as Scripture saith. For though the blessed evangelist John wrote to us, that "in the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God;" they drag to the exact opposite both the tenet concerning Him, and the quotation which proves it: saying that the only begotten Word of God was not in the beginning, nor very God, and that He was not even with God; that is, in union with Him by nature, inasmuch as He Who is incorporeal cannot be imagined to be in any place. These most audacious men even say that He was made, and measure out for Him such glory as they forsooth please: for they elevate Him above created things, as far as the language goes of praise. And in inventing for Him this mere and naked majesty, they imagine that they are doing something wise, or even pious: not understanding that if in any respect He be regarded as a created being, it avails Him nothing for the proof of His being really God: and that if in any respect He be made, and His nature similar to that (of things which are made), that then it follows, as they (virtually) affirm, that He was not in the beginning. For one who is made is not without beginning. How therefore does the wise Paul say, "By Him the Father made the worlds?" For if He were created, He had, as I said, a beginning of existence, and there must have been a time previous to His existence: and there must have been a time also, in which even the Father apparently was not that which

the name signifies, but on the contrary, not a Father at all by nature. The word therefore that has come to us concerning Him is untrue, as also is that respecting the Son; and both forsooth are falsely so called.

And how then, I pray, can we believe the Son in saying, "I am the Truth;" for how is He the truth, Who is not what His name implies? Or how must not Paul be false in his words, when he thus writes, "For the Son of God, Jesus Christ, Who was preached unto you by me, and Sylvanus, and Timotheus, was not yea and nay? For how was He not yea and nay, if He is said to be God, and is not God by nature? if He is called a Son, and was not begotten of the Father? if the divinely inspired Scripture saith, that the worlds were made by Him, and there was a time before He existed? if all things were brought into being by His means, and He is Himself one of them, in that He is regarded as a thing made? if He is called the only begotten, and is not so in truth? For the things that have been made, those, I mean, which have been brought into existence from non-existence by having been created, are, so to speak, akin to one another.

But we follow not the vain words of these men, in disregard of the declarations of the holy apostles and evangelists. We reject not them, that we may not reject Christ, and with Him and by Him the Father. We believe that the Only-begotten Word of God is God, and was begotten of God by nature: that He is not created; not made; but the Creator of all: and not so much in all things, as rather supreme above all substantially with the Father. And when again we hear John saying, "And the Word became flesh," we do not falsify the expression: we do not use violence to the freeness of the the declarations: we do not pervert the mystery of Christ to that which is not right. We believe that the Word, though He was God, became flesh, that is, man; and not that He joined some man unto Him in equal honour: for this some venture to say and think, so that the Word from God the Father is to be regarded by us as one Son by Himself; and He Who sprang from the holy virgin as another beside Him, separately and by Himself: for such are the impure inventions of these men. We however agree with the divine Paul, who says: "There is one Lord; one faith; one baptism:" for we divide not Him Who is indivisible, but confess one Christ, the Word, Who is from God the Father, Who was made man, and incarnate, Whom the heavens worship, and the angels honour: and we too with them praise Him, crowning Him with divine honour, not so much as. a man Who was made God, but as God Who became man. And holding this opinion respecting Him, we shall also by His means enter the kingdom of heaven: by Whom, and with Whom, to God the Father be praise and dominion, with the Holy Ghost, for ever and ever, Amen.

Sermon 64.

10:17-20. And the seventy returned with joy, saying, Lord, even the devils are subject unto us in Thy Name. And He said unto them, I beheld Satan as lightning fall from heaven. Behold I have given you the authority to tread upon serpents and scorpions, and upon all the power of the enemy, and nothing shall hurt you. But in this rejoice not, that the spirits are subject unto you; but rejoice that your names are written in heaven.

IT is somewhere said by one of the holy prophets, "Will the Lord God do anything without revealing the teaching thereof to His servants the prophets?" For the God of all made known to the holy prophets those things which were hereafter to take place, in order that they might previously declare them, that so they might not be disbelieved, when in due time what had

been foretold arrived at its fulfilment. And those who will may see that what we have now affirmed is true, even from the present lessons. "For the seventy" it says, "returned with joy, saying, Lord, even the devils are subject to us in Thy Name." For first of all the twelve disciples had been appointed, holy and elect men, and worthy of all admiration. But inasmuch as, according to Christ's declaration, "the harvest indeed was great, but the labourers few," He further, in addition to those first chosen, "appointed seventy others, and sent them to every village and city of Judea before His face," to be, that is to say, His forerunners, and to preach the things that belonged to Him.

And in sending them, He ennobled them with the grace of the Holy Ghost, and crowned them with the power of working miracles, that they might not be disbelieved by men, nor be supposed to be self-called to the apostleship: just as of old there were some who prophesied, "though they spake not out of the mouth of the Lord," as Scripture saith, but rather vomited forth lies from their own heart. For God by the voice of Jeremiah somewhere also said, at one time, "I have not sent the prophets, yet they ran: I have not spoken unto them, yet they prophesied:" and again at another; "The prophets prophesied lies in My name: I sent them not, neither spake I unto them; neither had I commanded them." In order, therefore, that men might not subject to such a suspicion those who were commissioned by Christ, He gave them power over unclean spirits, and the ability to perform signs. For when the divine miracle followed close upon their word, no form, either of calumny or of Jewish false-speaking, could find a place against them. For they were convicted of accusing them without reason, or rather of choosing to fight against God. For to be able to work miracles is possible for no man, unless God give him the power and authority thereunto. The grace of the Spirit therefore witnessed of those who had been sent, that they were not persons who ran of themselves, nor self-called to the duty of speaking concerning Christ; but that, on the contrary, they had been appointed to be the ministers of His message.

The authority, however, which they bore to reprove evil spirits, and the power of crushing Satan, was not given them that they might themselves so much be regarded with admiration, as that Christ might be glorified by their means, and be believed on by those whom they taught, as by nature God, and the Son of God; and invested with so great glory and supremacy and might, as to be even able to bestow upon others the power of trampling Satan under their feet.

But they, it says, in that they were counted worthy of so great grace, "returned rejoicing, and saying, Lord, even the devils are subject to us in Thy name." For they confess the authority of Him Who honoured them, and wonder at the supremacy and greatness of His power. But they seem to have rejoiced, not so much because they were ministers of His message, and had been counted worthy of apostolic honours, as because they had wrought miracles: but it would have been better for them to have reflected, that He gave them the power to work miracles, not that they might be regarded by men with admiration on this account, but rather that what they preached might be believed, the Holy Ghost bearing them witness by divine signs. It would have been better, therefore, had they manifestly rejoiced on account of those rather who had been won by their means, and had made this a cause of exultation. Just as also the very wise Paul gloried in those who had been called by his means, saying, "My joy and my crown." But they said nothing at all of this kind, but rejoiced only in that they had been able to crush Satan.

And what is Christ's reply? "I saw Satan fall like lightning from heaven." That is, 'I am not unaware of this: for inasmuch as ye set out upon this journey, so to speak, by My will, ye have vanquished Satan. "I saw him fall like lightning from heaven." And this means that he was cast down from on high to earth: from overweening pride to humiliation: from glory to contempt: from great power to utter weakness. And the saying is true: for before the coming of the Saviour, he possessed the world: all was subject to him, and there was no man able to escape the meshes of his overwhelming might: he was worshipped by every one: everywhere he had temples and altars for sacrifice, and an innumerable multitude of worshippers. But because the Only-begotten Word of God has come down from heaven, he has fallen like lightning: for he who of old was bold and supercilious, and who vied with the glory of Deity; he who had as his worshippers all that were in error, is put under the feet of those that worshipped him. Is it not then true, that he has fallen from heaven to earth, by having suffered so great and terrible an overthrow?

Who then is He That hath destroyed his might, and humbled him to this misery? Plainly it was Christ. And this He announced to us in the words, "Behold, I have given you the authority to tread upon serpents and scorpions, and upon all the power of the enemy; and nothing shall hurt you." 'But, O Lord, some one may reply, behold already we rejoice in the glory and grace bestowed upon us by Thee: for we have acknowledged that even the devils are subject to us in Thy name. And how then dost Thou proclaim to those who know it, and have openly acknowledged it, "Behold I have given you the authority to tread upon serpents and scorpions?"' Yes, He saith, I have carefully on purpose called you to the remembrance of those things which lo! already ye know, that ye may not be carried away with the ignorance of the Jews, who, not understanding the mystery of My incarnation, approach Me as a mere man, and persecute Me, saying, "Why dost Thou, being a man, make Thyself God? And yet it was rather their duty, He says, to have known, that not "as being a man," to use their words, I affirm of Myself that I am God; but rather that being by nature God, I have put on the form of a slave, and appear on earth as a man like unto you. And what is the proof of these things? "Behold, I have given you the authority to tread upon serpents and scorpions." But it was not the act of a mere man, nor of one such as we are, to bestow on others an authority so glorious and admirable, as for them to be able to tread upon all the power of the enemy: rather it was a deed suitable to God alone, Who is supreme over all, and crowned with surpassing honours.

it is capable also of being explained in another way. For thus He leaves them no excuse for giving way to cowardice, but rather requires of them to be very hearty and courageous. For such ought those to be who are ministers of the divine word: not subject to timidity, nor overpowered by sloth, but preaching "with great power," as Scripture saith, and bold in pursuing after those who are drawn up in array against them, and bravely struggling against the enemy; as having Christ to help them, Who will also humble the impure powers of evil under their feet, and with them even Satan himself. What man is there more powerful than "the world-rulers of darkness," or than that wicked serpent and prince of evil? He therefore who "brake the heads of the dragons," how can He be too weak to save them from the attacks of any of this world's inhabitants "Not without benefit, therefore, did Christ proclaim to His disciples: "Behold I have granted you to tread on serpents and scorpions, and upon all the power of the enemy."

But He also further benefits them by immediately adding; "But in this rejoice not, that the spirits are subject unto you; but rather rejoice that your names are written in heaven.": 'Dost Thou not, O Lord, permit those who have been honoured by Thee to rejoice in their honours?

And yet it is written of those who were appointed to the apostleship: "They shall walk, O Lord, in the light of Thy countenance, and in Thy name shall they exult all the day, and in Thy righteousness shall they be exalted. For Thou art the glory of their strength, and in Thy good pleasure shall our horn be exalted." How then didst Thou command them not to rejoice in the honour and glory which Thou didst Thyself bestow?' What can we say to this? I answer, that Christ raises them to something greater, and commands them to account it their glory that their names were written in heaven. For it is of the saints that God is thus addressed, "And in Thy book they are all written."

But besides, to rejoice solely in the fact that they were able to work miracles, and crush the herds of demons, was likely to produce in them possibly the desire also of vainglory:---and the neighbour, so to speak, and kinsfellow of this passion constantly is pride. Most usefully, therefore, does the Saviour of all rebuke the first boasting, and quickly cuts away the root, so to speak, that had sprung up in them of the base love of glory, imitating good husbandmen, who, immediately that they see a thorn springing up in their pleasure grounds or gardens, tear it up with the teeth of the mattock, before it strike its root deep.

Even though, therefore, we receive some gift from Christ not unworthy of admiration, we must not think too highly of it, but rather make the hope prepared for us our cause of rejoicing, and that our names are written in the companies of the saints, by Christ's gift, the Saviour of us all, Who, from His love to man bestows, with all besides that we have, this also upon us: by Whom, and with Whom, to God the Father be praise and dominion with the Holy Ghost, for ever and ever, Amen.

Sermon 65.

10:21. In that same hour, Jesus rejoiced in the Holy Ghost, and said, I thank Thee, O Father, Lord of the heaven and the earth, that Thou hast hid these things from the wise and prudent, and revealed them unto babes. Even so, Father; for so it was good in Thy sight.

ONE of the holy prophets has said; "Whoever thirst, come ye to the waters." For he sends us to the writings of the holy Evangelists as to fountains of water. For just as "waters are pleasant to the thirsty soul," as Scripture saith, so to the mind that loveth instruction is the life-giving knowledge of the mysteries of our Saviour. Let us, therefore, draw from the sacred springs the living and life-giving waters, even those that are rational and spiritual. Let us take our fill: and weary not in thy drinking: for in these things more than enough is still for edification: and greediness is great praise. What then it was the Saviour said:---That fountain which came down from heaven, That river of delight,---we learn from what has here been read to us. "In that same hour, Jesus rejoiced in the Holy Ghost, and said,"---Whosoever then loveth instruction, must approach the words of God not carelessly, and without earnestness; but, on the contrary, with eagerness: for it is written, "That for every one that taketh care, there is something over." Let us, therefore, examine them, and especially what is meant by the expression, that He "rejoiced in the Holy Ghost."

The Holy Ghost then proceedeth from God the Father as from the fountain; but is not foreign from the Son: for every property of the Father belongeth to the Word, Who by nature and verily was begotten of Him. Christ saw therefore that many had been won by the operation of the Spirit, Whom He bestowed on them that were worthy, and whom He had also commanded

to be ministers of the divine message: He saw that wonderful signs were wrought by their hands, and that the salvation of the world by Him,---I mean by faith,---had now begun: and therefore He rejoiced in the Holy Ghost, that is, in the works and miracles wrought by means of the Holy Ghost. For He had appointed the twelve disciples, whom He also called apostles, and after them again seventy others, whom He sent as His forerunners to go before Him unto every village and city of Judaea, preaching Him, and the things concerning Him. And He sent them, nobly adorned with apostolic dignities, and distinguished by the operation of the grace of the Holy Ghost. "For He gave them power over unclean spirits to cast them out." They then, having wrought many miracles, returned saying, "Lord, even the devils are subject unto us in Thy Name." And therefore as I have already said, well knowing that those who had been sent by Him had benefited many, and that above all others, they had themselves learned by experience His glory, He was full of joy, or rather of exultation. For being good and loving unto men, and wishing that all should be saved, He found His cause of rejoicing in the conversion of those that were in error, in the enlightenment of those that were, in darkness, and in the answer of the understanding to the acknowledgment of His glory, of those who had been without knowledge and without instruction.

What then does He say? "Father, I confess Thee, Lord of the heaven and the earth." And these words, "I confess Thee," He says after the manner of men, instead of, "I accept Thy kindness," that is, "I praise Thee." For it is the custom of the divinely inspired Scripture to use the word confession in some such way as this. For it is written, that "they shall confess, O Lord, Thy great name; for it is terrible and holy." And again, "I will confess Thee, O Lord, with all my heart, and I will tell all Thy wonders."

But I perceive again, that the mind of these perverted men departs not from its depravity; and some of them perhaps will object to us the following argument: 'Lo! the Son makes confession of gratitude to the Father: and how must He not be inferior to Him?' But whosoever is skilful in defending the doctrines of truth may well reply to this: 'And what hinders, O worthy sir, the Son, though equal in substance, from thanking and praising His Father, for saving by His means all beneath the heaven? But if thou thinkest that because of this thanksgiving He is inferior to the Father, observe that also which follows; for He calls the Father "Lord of the heaven and the earth." But of a certainty the Son of Almighty God is equally with Him Lord of all, and above all: not as being inferior, or different in substance, but as God of God, crowned with equal honours, and possessing by right of His substance equality with Him in all things.' And thus much then in answer to them.

But let us consider the words which He addresses to His Father respecting us and in our behalf. "Thou hast hid, He says, all these things from the wise and prudent, and revealed them unto babes: Yea, O Father, that so it seemed good in thy sight." For God the Father has revealed unto us the mystery, which before the foundations of the world was hidden and reserved in silence with Him: even the Incarnation of the Only-begotten, which was foreknown indeed before the foundations of the world, but revealed to its inhabitants in the last ages of the world. For the blessed Paul writes, that "to me who am the least of all saints, has this grace been given, that I should preach among the Gentiles the unsearchable riches of Christ; and clearly teach them all, what is the dispensation of the mystery that for ages has been hid in God Who created all." The great and adorable mystery of our Saviour was hidden therefore even before the foundations of the world, in the knowledge of the Father. And in like manner we also were foreknown and foreordained to the adoption of sons. And this again the blessed Paul teaches us, thus writing, "Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus

Christ, Who has blessed us with every spiritual blessing in heaven in Christ, according as He has chosen us in Him before the foundations of the world, that we should be holy and without blame before Him, having foreordained us in love to the adoption of sons by Jesus Christ unto Himself." To us therefore, as unto babes, the Father has revealed the mystery that for ages had been hidden and reserved in silence.

And yet multitudes of men have preceded us in the world past numbering, who, as far as words went, were wise, who had a practised and skilful tongue, and beauty of stylo, and grandeur of expression, and no mean reputation for wisdom: but as Paul said, "They had become empty in their reasonings, and their foolish heart was darkened: while professing to be wise, they had made themselves fools, and changed the glory of the incorruptible God into the likeness of the image of corruptible man, and into that of birds, and four-footed beasts and reptiles. For this cause they were given up to a reprobate mind;" "and God made the wisdom of this world to be folly:" neither did He shew unto them the mystery. And to us too it is written, "Whosoever seemeth to be wise in this world, let him become foolish, in order that he may become wise: for the wisdom of this world is foolishness with God." It may truly therefore be affirmed, that he who possesses merely and by itself the wisdom of the world, is foolish and without understanding before God: but that he who seems to be a fool to the wise men of the world, but possesses in his mind and heart the light of the true vision of God, is wise before God. And Paul again confirms this, saying, "For Christ sent me not to baptize, but to preach: not with wisdom of speech, lest the cross of Christ be made ineffectual. For the speech of the cross is to them who are perishing foolishness; but to us who are being saved, it is the power of God. For it is written, I will destroy the wisdom of the wise, and take away the understanding of the prudent." And to others also he sent, saying, "For see your calling, brethren: that there are not among you ¹⁵ many wise men after the flesh: nor many mighty, nor many of high birth; but God hath chosen the foolish things of the world, that He may confound the wise." To those therefore who seemed to be foolish, by which is meant, men of an innocent and guileless mind, and simple as a child in wickedness, the Father hath revealed His Son, as being themselves also foreknown and foreordained to the adoption of sons.

Nor is it in my opinion unreasonable to add also the following. The Scribes and Pharisees, who held high rank among the Jews, as having the reputation of legal learning, were regarded as wise men. But they were convicted by the very result of not being so in reality. For even the prophet Jeremiah thus somewhere addressed them: "How say ye, that we are wise, and the word of the Lord is with us? The lying cord of the scribe is for emptiness. The wise men are ashamed; they fear and are taken: what wisdom is in them, because they have rejected the word of the Lord?" Because then they rejected the word of the Saviour, that is, the saving message of the Gospel, or in other language, the Word of God the Father, Who for our sakes became man, they have themselves been rejected. For again the prophet Jeremiah said of them, "Call ye them reprobate silver, because the Lord hath rejected them." And the mystery of Christ was also hid from them: for He somewhere even said to his disciples concerning them, "To you it is given to know the mysteries of the kingdom of heaven; but to them it is not given." "To you," that is, to whom? Plainly to those who believed: to those who have recognised His appearing, who understand the law spiritually, who can perceive the meaning of the previous revelation of the prophets, who acknowledge that He is God and the Son of God, to them the Father is pleased to reveal His Son: by Whom and with Whom, to God the Father be praise and dominion, with the Holy Ghost, for ever and ever. Amen.

Sermon 66.

10:22. Every thing has been delivered to Me by My Father; and no one knows Who the Son is but the Father; and Who the Father is but the Son; and to whomsoever the Son will reveal Him.

OUR Lord Jesus Christ again reveals to us His glory, and the dignity of His godlike majesty, and the skilful method of the dispensation in the flesh; and plainly shows how great is the benefit which the dwellers upon earth derive from it. Let us ask of Him wisdom: let us seek understanding, that we may be able to perceive the exact meaning of His words. For it is He "Who reveals deep things out of darkness, and brings to light those things that are hidden; and gives wisdom to the blind, and makes the brightness of the truth shine forth upon those that love Him. And among these are we: for lo! you have again come, as being, so to speak, thirsty, and the church is full of men loving to hear; and all are true worshippers, and searchers into the doctrines of piety. Come therefore, and let us approach the Saviour's words, opening wide the eye of the mind. And His words are, "Every thing has been delivered to Me by My Father."

For He was and still is Lord of heaven and earth, and sits with the Father on His throne, and equally shares His government over all. But inasmuch as, by humbling Himself to our estate, He became man, He further speaks in a manner not unbefitting the dispensation in the flesh, nor refuses to use such expressions as suit the measure of His state, when He had emptied Himself, that He might be believed upon as having become like to us, and put on our poverty. He therefore Who was Lord of heaven and earth, and, in a word, of all things, says, that "everything was delivered to Him by the Father." For He has been made ruler of all under heaven; since of old only the Israel after the flesh bowed the neck to His laws: but God the Father willed to make all things now in Him, and by His means reconcile the world to Himself. For "He became Mediator between God and men," and "was made our peace," in that He united us by Himself to God the Father: for He is the door and the way whereby this is done; for He has even plainly said, "No man comes to the Father but by Me." He then Who of old delivered Israel by the hand of Moses from the tyranny of the Egyptians, and appointed the law to be their schoolmaster, has now called the whole world, and Himself has spread for it the net of the Gospel message, according to the good-will of God the Father. And this then is the reason why He says, "Every thing has been delivered to Me of My Father."

But though we may affirm that these things are thus rightly understood and explained by us, the heretic will not submit to the conditions of the dispensation, but betakes himself, it may be, to his usual audacity, and makes what is said food, so to speak, for the wickedness of his mind; and, forsooth, proceeds to say, 'Lo! the Father gives every thing to the Son; but the Son would not have needed to receive any thing, had it been lawful for Him to obtain it of Himself. How, then, is He equal to the Father, as you say, when He receives from Him authority over what He did not previously possess?' Let us see, therefore, whether in any thing at all He is inferior to the glory and supremacy of the Father, as you in your folly say.

Now there are many arguments one might use when wishing to defend the doctrines of truth, but on the present occasion let us enquire what is true from the lessons now set before us, even from His own words. For after having said, "Everything has been delivered to Me of My Father," honouring thereby the mystery of His Incarnation, and using expressions suitable to the manhood, He mounts at once, as I said, to His own glory and supremacy, and shows that

He is in no way whatsoever inferior to His Father. For what were the words which He next spoke? ----"No one knows Who the Son is but the Father, and Who the Father is but the Son, and to whomsoever the Son will reveal Him." Let us ask, then, those who have resisted His glory, and still resist it, Does Christ speak falsely, or is He true? For if He speaks falsely, and you affirm that this is truly the case, you are void of all understanding, you have fallen from your senses, having drunk of the wine of "the vine of Sodom," and stumbled like drunkards upon unrighteous courses. But if you believe that He speaks truth, for "He is the Truth," how do you, while He says that "no one knows the Son but the Father only," venture both to think and say that He is inferior to the Father, as though you exactly know who He is? And yet how must not He, Who is known of His Father only, far transcend all understanding and all powers of speech: just as also the Father Himself does, as being known of His Son only? For the holy and consubstantial Trinity alone knows Itself, being far above all speech and understanding. How do you say then that He is inferior to the Father, seeing that no one knows Who He is but the Father alone Who fathered Him?

And I will add this too; Do you say that He is inferior to the Father as being "true God," but yet inferior to Him Who is "true God and Father;" or as being something made and created? If, indeed, as something made, you canst not compare them at all: for the interval between the Maker and the thing made is infinite; between the Lord and the slave; between Him Who is by nature God, and him who has been brought into existence. For whosoever is made is not merely inferior to God, but altogether different, both in nature, and in glory, and in every attribute that appertains to the divine substance. But if He is made, as you affirm, how can "no one know Who He is?" For He would not be above all understanding, even though it may surpass the mind of man to be able to know the nature of a created thing. If, on the other hand, you affirm that He is true God, and being such by nature, yet say that He is inferior to the Father, I cannot understand how this can be. Tell me, I pray, in what this inferiority consists. I mean, for instance, thus: those who are of the same nature and substance are, of course, equal to one another in all those qualities which belong to them as pertaining to their substance: as, for instance, one man is in no respect inferior to another man with regard to the manhood which is common to them both: and so neither is one angel to another angel. How, then, can true God be inferior to true God?

For come, if you will, and let us raise ourselves to the investigation of the Father's prerogatives and attributes: those, namely, which specially belong to Him as God. God the Father is by nature Life, Light, and Wisdom. But the Son also is in like manner the same, as the divinely inspired Scripture everywhere testifies. For He is Light, and Wisdom, and Life. But if He be inferior to the Father, then of course He is indebted to Him for it, and that not in one particular only, but in every attribute that appertains to His substance. Nor is He perfectly Life; nor Light perfectly; nor Wisdom perfectly. And if this is true, then there exists in Him something of corruption; something also of darkness; and something also of ignorance. But who will assent to you in so arguing? For if He be a creature, then, as I said, you must not compare Him with the Creator and Lord of all. Bring down His place to the level of creation, while you extol to incomparable supremacy that Nature Which created all, and transcends all. But if He is true God, as sprung from Him Who is true God and Father, perhaps, forsooth, the Father has fathered one not equal to Himself in nature, and His nature alone has suffered this, while certainly of all created beings there is not one that has endured so strange a mischance. For man is born of man, the definitions of his father's substance existing fully in him; and all the other animals in like manner are regulated by the law of their own nature.

And how then can the all-transcending nature of God suffer that which even we do not suffer, nor any other being which has the power of generation?

Let those, therefore, hear who think scorn of the greatness of the glory of the Son; let those that are drunken awake from their wine; worship with us Him Who is equal in substance with the Father, and crowned with equal praises, and indistinguishable preeminence. "For to Him every knee shall bow, of things in heaven, and things in earth, and things under the earth: and every tongue shall confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father," Amen.

Sermon 67.

10:23-34. *And He turned to the disciples when they were alone, and said, Blessed are the eyes which see the things that you see. For I say to you, that many prophets and kings have desired to see the things which you see, and have not seen them; and to hear the things which you hear, and have not heard them.*

THE shows which the world offers (in its games and theatres) lead men often to the sight of things unprofitable, or rather, to what constantly does them great injury. For the frequenters of such places either give themselves up to the admiration of dancers, and yielding to the soft langour they produce, are dissolved in effeminate emotions; or they extol the declaimers of cold sentiments; or delight themselves in the sounds and vibrations of pipes and harps. But vain and altogether unprofitable are such things, and able to lead the mind of man astray from all good. But us, who practise a virtuous course of life, and are earnest in upright deeds, Christ gathers in His holy courts, that delighting ourselves in singing His praise, we may again be made happy by His sacred words and doctrines, which invite us to eternal life.

Let us, therefore, see here too what gifts He has deigned to bestow upon us, who have been called by faith in Him to the knowledge of His glory. "And He turned," it says, "to the disciples when they were alone, and said, Blessed are the eyes which see the things that you see." Now, perchance, some one may object, 'Why did He not address to all who were assembled there His words describing these blessings? and what made Him turn to the disciples, so as to say to them when they were alone, "Blessed are the eyes which see the things that you see?"' What then shall be our reply? That it is right to communicate matters of a more secret nature, not to any chance person, but to the most intimate friends. But His friends are whosoever have been deemed by Him worthy of discipleship: and the eye of whose mind is enlightened, and their ear ready for obedience. For He also said on one occasion to the holy apostles, "No longer do I call you servants; you are My friends: for the servant doesn't know what his lord does: but I have called you friends, because I have made known to you all things which I have heard from My Father." There were, no doubt, many assembled there and standing in His presence besides His chosen followers, but they were not all believers; and how then could He with truth say to them all, without distinction, "Blessed are the eyes which see the things that you see, and who hear the things that you hear?" It was, therefore, with good reason that, having turned Himself to the disciples. having, that is, averted His face from those who would neither see nor hear, but were disobedient, and their mind darkened, He gave Himself entirely to those who loved Him, and, looking upon them, said, Blessed are the eyes which see, or rather, gaze upon, those things which they were the first, before all others, to behold.

Now the expression which is here used is taken from the common custom of men, and we must bear in mind that in such passages "seeing" does not refer to the action of our bodily eyes, but rather to the enjoyment of those things which are bestowed by Christ on such as fear God. Just, for instance, as if any one say, "So and so saw happy times," instead of "enjoyed happy times." Or you may understand it in the same way as that which is written in the book of Psalms, addressed to those who constantly fixed their thoughts on things above; "And you shall see the good of Jerusalem," instead of, "you shall take part in the happiness of Jerusalem," even of that which is above, in heaven, which the wise Paul calls "the mother of all saints." For what doubt can there be that those who were spectators of the godlike miracles wrought by Christ, and of the admirable works He performed, were not necessarily in all cases blessed? For all the Jews saw Christ working with divine majesty, yet it would not be right to account them all as blessed; for they by no means believed, nor did they see His glory with the eyes of the mind. Truly, therefore, they were only the more guilty, and cannot properly be regarded as blessed, for though they saw Jesus possessed of divine glory by the ineffable deeds which he wrought, yet they did not accept faith in Him.

But come, in what way has blessedness befallen our eyes? and what have they seen? and for what reason did they attain to this blessing? They saw that God the Word, Who was in the form of God the Father, had become flesh for our sakes: they saw Him Who shares the Father's throne, dwelling with us, in our form, that by justification and sanctification He might fashion us after His own likeness, imprinting upon us the beauty of His Godhead in an intellectual and spiritual manner. And of this Paul is witness, who thus writes: "For as we have been clothed with the image of the earthy, we shall also be clothed with the image of the heavenly:----meaning by the earthy man, Adam, the first created: but by the heavenly, the Word Who is from above, and Who shone forth from the substance of God the Father, but was made, as I said, in our likeness. He Who by nature is a Son took the form of a slave, not that by taking upon Him our state, He might continue in the measure of slavery, but that He might set us free, who were chained to the yoke of slavery,----for every thing that is made is by nature a slave,----enriching us with what is His. For through Him and with Him we have received the name of sons, being ennobled, so to speak, by His bounty and grace. He Who was rich shared our poverty, that He might raise man's nature to His riches: He tasted death upon the tree and the cross, that He might take away from the midst the offence incurred by reason of the tree (of knowledge), and abolish the guilt that was thereby, and strip death of his tyranny over us. We have seen Satan fall: that cruel one broken: that haughty one laid low:----him who had made the world submit to the yoke of His empire, stripped of his dominion over us: him in contempt and scorn, who once was worshipped: him who seemed a God, put under the feet of the saints: him who rebelled against Christ's glory, trampled upon by those who love Him. "For they received power to rebuke the unclean spirits, and to cast them out." And this power is a very great honour, and too high for human nature, and fit only for the supreme God.

And of this too the Word manifested in human form was the first to set us the example: for He also rebuked the impure spirits. But the wretched Jews again vomited forth against Him their envious calumnies; for they said, "This man casts not out devils, but by Beelzebub, the prince of the devils." But these wicked words of theirs the Lord refuted, saying; "If I cast out devils by Beelzebub, by whom do your sons cast them out? But if I cast out devils by the Spirit of God, then has the kingdom of God come upon you." For if I, He says, being a man like to you, can thus exercise a divine power, this great and excellent blessing has come upon you: for human nature, He says, is ennobled in Me, by trampling down Satan. Upon us, therefore, the

kingdom of God has come, by the Word having been made like to us, and working in the flesh deeds worthy of God.

He also gave the holy Apostles power and might even to raise the dead, and cleanse lepers; and heal the sick, and to call down upon whomsoever they would the Holy Ghost from heaven by the laying on of hands. He gave them power to bind and to lose men's sins; for His words are, "I say to you, Whatsoever you shall bind on earth, shall be bound in heaven: and whatsoever you shall lose on earth, shall be loosed in heaven." Such are the things of which we see ourselves possessed: and blessed are our eyes, and those of all who love Him. We have heard His ineffable teaching: He has given us the knowledge of God the Father: He has shown Him to us in His own nature. The things that were by Moses were but types and symbols: Christ has revealed the truth to us. He has taught us that not by blood and smoke, but rather by spiritual sacrifices, we must honour Him Who is incorporeal and immaterial, and above all understanding. Many holy prophets desired to see these things; yes, and many kings: for we find them at one time saying, "Show me Your mercy, O Lord: and, O Lord, grant us Your salvation." For they call the Son Mercy and Salvation. At another time again; "Remember me, O Lord, with the favour of Your people: and visit me with Your Salvation: that we may see the happiness of Your chosen, and rejoice in gladness with Your people." And who the people are, that are chosen in Christ by God the Father, the wise Peter tells us, when saying to those who have been ennobled by faith: "But you are a chosen generation: a royal priesthood: a holy people, a redeemed multitude: that you may tell forth His virtues, Who has called you out of darkness into His marvellous light."

And to this we have been called by Christ: by Whom and with Whom, to God the Father be praise and dominion, with the Holy Ghost, for ever and ever, Amen.

Sermon 68.

10:25-37. And see, a certain lawyer stood up, tempting Him, and saying, Teacher, what shall I do to inherit eternal life? And He said to Him, What is written in the law? how do you read? And he answered and said, That you shall love the Lord your God from all your heart, and from all your soul, and with all your strength, and with all your mind: and your neighbour as yourself. And He said to him, You have answered rightly: this do, and you shall live. But he, wanting to justify himself said to Jesus; And who is my neighbour? And Jesus answered, and said; A certain man went down from Jerusalem to Jericho, and fell among thieves, who, when they had stripped and beaten him, went away, leaving him half dead. And by chance there came down a certain priest that way: and when he saw him, he passed him by. And in like manner also a Levite, when he came to the place, and saw him, passed him by. But a certain Samaritan, as he journeyed, came to him; and when he saw him, he felt pity: and he went to him, and bound up his wounds, and poured upon them oil and wine. And having mounted him on his own beast, he brought him to an inn, and took care of him. And the day after he took out two denarii, and gave them to the host, and said to him, Take care of him: and if you spend any thing more, when I come again I will repay you. Which therefore of these three do you think was neighbour to him that fell among the thieves? And he said; He that was merciful to him. And Jesus said to him, Go, and do likewise.

A MOST base pest, my beloved, is double-dealing and hypocrisy in our actions and conduct; and for a man to make pretence of pleasant-spoken words, and of a tongue anointed, so to speak, with the honey of deception, while the heart is full of utter bitterness. Of such we say, in the words of one of the holy prophets, "Their tongue is a piercing arrow: the words of their mouth are deceitful: he speaks peacefully to his neighbour, and enmity is in his heart." And again; "Their words are smoother than oil, yet are they arrows:" by which is meant that they have the force of darts falling violently and shot forth from bows.

The proof of my assertion is close at hand: for let us examine the lawyer's words: let us strip off his borrowed countenance: let us lay bare his scheming: let us view his pleasant words sprung from deceit, and the guile which they conceal. "For see," it says, "a certain lawyer stood up, and tempted Him, saying, Teacher, what shall I do to inherit eternal life?" By a lawyer, the blessed evangelist here meant, according to the custom of the Jews, one acquainted with the law, or at least having the reputation of knowing it, though in reality he knew it not. This man imagined that he could entrap Christ; and in what way I will mention. Certain tale-makers, accustomed to talk at random, went about everywhere in Judaea and Jerusalem itself, accusing Christ, and saying, that He taught that the commandment given by Moses was of no use, and refused to pay any attention to the law given of old to the fathers, while He Himself introduced new doctrines, and spoke to all who would fear God things out of His own mind, which were not in accordance with the law that was given of old. There were even then believers, who resisted the words of these men, everywhere accepting the saving tidings of the gospel. The lawyer therefore wishing, or even expecting to be able to entrap Christ, and get Him to say something against Moses, and affirm that His own doctrine was far better than the commandment of which Moses was the minister, drew near tempting Him, and saying, "What shall I do to inherit eternal life?"

But any one who thoroughly understands the mystery of the Incarnation may well say to him, If you had been skilful in the law, and in the meaning of its hidden teaching, it would not have escaped you Who He is you venture to tempt. For you thought that He was a mere man, and that only; and not rather God, Who appeared in human likeness, and Who knows what is secret, and can look into the hearts of those who approach Him. In manifold ways is the Emmanuel depicted to you by the shadowing of Moses. You saw Him there sacrificed as a lamb, yet vanquishing the destroyer, and abolishing death by His blood. You saw Him in the arrangement of the ark, in which was deposited the divine law: for He was in His holy flesh like as in an ark, being the Word of the Father, the Son that was fathered of Him by nature. You saw Him as the mercy-seat in the holy tabernacle, around which stood the Seraphim [Cherubim]: for He is our mercy-seat for pardon of our sins. Yes! and just like man, He is glorified by the Seraphim, who are the intelligent and holy powers above; for they stand around His divine and exalted throne. You saw Him as the candlestick with seven lamps in the Holy of Holies: for abundant is the Saviour's light to those who hurry into the inner tabernacle. You saw Him as the bread placed upon the table: for He is the living bread, that came down from heaven, and gives life to the world. You saw Him as the brazen serpent that was raised on high as a sign, and being looked upon healed the bites of the serpents: for though He was like us, in the form therefore of that which is evil, as being in our form, nevertheless He is by nature good, and continues to be that which He was. For the serpent is the type of wickedness; but yet, by being lifted up, and enduring the cross for us, He rendered powerless the bites of those rational serpents, who are no other than Satan, and the wicked powers under his command.

But though the lawyer was invested with the reputation of being instructed in the law, nevertheless He Who is marked out by the shadowing of the law was completely unknown to him, even though He was proclaimed of old by the words of the holy prophets. For had he not been sunk in utter ignorance, how could he have drawn near to Him as to a mere man? Or how have ventured to tempt God, Who tries the hearts and reins, and to Whom nothing that is in us is hidden? For he says, "Teacher, what shall I do to inherit eternal life?" Do you call Him Teacher, when you wilt not submit to learn? Do you make a pretence of honouring Him, Whom you hope to entrap, and do you place as the bait upon your hook the pleasantness of words?

But what would you learn? "For what, he says, shall I do to inherit eternal life?" Observe again, I pray, the malice in the lawyer's words. For he might have said, What shall I do to be saved, or to please God, and receive reward of Him? But this he passes by, and uses rather the Saviour's expressions, pouring ridicule upon His head. For as it was the custom of our common Saviour Christ to speak constantly of eternal life to as many as drew near to Him, the haughty lawyer to ridicule Him, as I said, makes use of His own expressions.

Now had you been truly desirous of learning, you would have heard from Him the things that lead on to eternal life: but as you wickedly tempt Him, you will hear nothing more than those commands only which were given to them of old time by Moses". For "What," says He, "is written in the law? How do you read?" And on the lawyer's repeating what is enacted in the law, as if to punish his wickedness, and reprove his malicious purpose, Christ, as knowing all things, says, "You have answered rightly: this do, and you shall live." The lawyer has missed his prey; he has shot wide of the mark, his wickedness is unsuccessful, the sting of envy has ceased, the net of deceit is torn asunder, his sowing bears no fruit, his toil gains no profit: and like some ship that misfortune has overwhelmed, he has suffered a bitter wreck. Let us therefore cry out against him in the words of Jeremiah, "You are found, and caught, because you have stood up against the Lord."

But having, as I said, missed his prey, he falls headlong into vanity; he is hurried from one pitfall to another, from snare to snare, from deceit to pride: vices, so to speak, lend him to one another, and he is tossed about everywhere, one wickedness as soon as it has seized him thrusting him on to another, and carrying him wherever it may chance, and easily making him wander from destruction to destruction. For he does not ask in order that he may learn, but as the Evangelist said, "wishing to justify himself." For observe how from self-love as well as pride he shamelessly called out, "And who is my neighbour?" And is there no one, O lawyer, like you? Do you raise yourself above every one? Be less supercilious: Remember what the author of the book of Proverbs says, "that those who know themselves are wise." He exalts himself therefore, and breathes forth proud things, and boasts himself in vain imaginations: but he learnt of Christ, that as he was destitute of love towards his neighbours, the bare profession only of being learned in the law profited him in no way whatsoever. For God over all looks at works rather, and gives not praise to bare and merely fictitious professions.

Very skilfully therefore does the Saviour of all weave the parable of him who fell into the hands of thieves, saying, that when he was lying half dead, and in the last extremity of evil, a priest passed by, and in like manner a Levite, without feeling towards him any sentiment of humanity, or dropping upon him the oil of compassionate love; but rather, their mind was unsympathizing and cruel towards him. But one of another race, a Samaritan, fulfilled the law of love. Justly therefore He asked, which of these three he thinks was the sufferer's neighbour.

And he said, "He that wrought mercy with him." And to this Christ added, "Go you also, and act in like manner." You have seen, O lawyer, and it has been proved by the parable, that it is of no avail whatsoever to any man, to be set up by empty names, and to pride himself upon unmeaning and ridiculous titles, so long as the excellence of deeds does not accompany them. For the dignity of the priesthood is unavailing to its owners, and equally so is the being called learned in the law, to those who are so reputed, unless they excel also in deeds. For lo! a crown of love is being twined for him who loves his neighbour: and he proves to be a Samaritan. Nor is he rejected on this account: for he who was foremost among the disciples, even the blessed Peter, testified, thus writing, "In truth I perceive that God is not a respecter of persons: but in every nation, whosoever fears Him, and works righteousness, is accepted by Him." For Christ, Who loves our virtues, accepts all who are diligent in good pursuits: by Whom and with Whom, to God the Father be praise and dominion with the Holy Ghost, for ever and ever, Amen.

Sermon 69.

10:38-42. And it came to pass as they journeyed, that he entered into a certain village, and a certain woman named Martha received Him into her house. And she had a sister called Mary, who also sat at our Lord's feet, and heard His word: but Martha was distracted with much service. And standing before Him, she said, Lord, do You not care that my sister has left me to serve alone? Bid her help me. But our Lord answered and said to her, Martha, Martha, you are anxious and busied about many things: but few things are required, or one: and Mary has chosen the good part, which shall not be taken away from her.

You who love the virtues which adorn piety, and carefully practice every art which become the saints, again come and listen to the sacred doctrine, and let not the method of hospitality be unknown to you. For it is a great and valuable quality, as the wise Paul testifies, where he writes, "Forget not hospitality: for thereby some have entertained angels unawares." Let us learn therefore of Christ, the Saviour of all, this also, as well as all other things. For it would be a disgrace to us, that while those who desire worldly wisdom, and gather written learning, select the best teachers for their instructors; we who are encouraged to pay earnest heed to doctrines of such surpassing value, and may have as our instructor and teacher Christ the Giver of all wisdom, do not imitate this woman in her love of learning, even Mary, who sat at the Saviour's feet, and filled her heart with the doctrines He taught, feeling as if she could never have enough of what so profited her.

For the Saviour lodged with the holy women, but Mary, it says, listened to Him as He taught; while the other, Martha, was distracted with much service. She therefore besought Him that her sister might share her carefulness with her. But Christ consented not, saying, "Martha, Martha, you are anxious and busied about many things: only few things are required, or but one." And He further praised Mary, that "she had chosen the good part, which shall not be taken away from her." For the acquisition of spiritual blessings is never lost.

The first thing however which we must examine is the manner in which the Saviour again benefits His disciples, by setting Himself before them as an example, in order that they may know how and in what manner to behave in the houses of such as receive them. For they must not immediately on entering indulge themselves in relaxation, or suppose that this is the reason why they lodge with men, but rather that they may fill them with every blessing, and

the divine and sacred doctrines. So somewhere the blessed Paul also sends a message to certain: "For I desire to see you, that I may give you some spiritual gift, that you may be confirmed." Observe therefore, that our Lord Jesus Christ, on entering to lodge with these holy women, did not cease from giving instruction, but still grants them, without stint, the sober doctrines of salvation. And one of these women was steadfast in her love of hearing: but Martha was distracted with much service. Does any one then blame her for being occupied with careful service? By no means. For neither does the Saviour chide her for having proposed to herself the discharge of this duty; but rather He blamed her, as one who was labouring in vain, by wishing to procure more than was necessary. And this He did for our benefit, that He might fix a limit to hospitality. For far better is that other part, of earnestly desiring the divine doctrine.

We do not then say that the wish to entertain strangers, when it does not aim at anything excessive, is to be despised, and is no service. The saints especially are bound to be content with little, and when they eat, and are prevailed upon to draw near to the table, they do so, rather to appease the infirmity of the body, in accordance with the laws of nature, than as caring about pleasure and relaxation. When therefore we lodge with the brethren, in wishing to reap their corporeal things, let us first sow for them things spiritual; and imitating therein careful husbandmen, let us lay bare their hearts, lest some root of bitterness spring up and injure them: lest the worm of human innovation attack them, and work in them secret decay. And if anything like this has happened, then thrusting forthwith into their minds the saving word of instruction, like the teeth of the mattock, let us eradicate the root of ungodliness; let us pluck up the heretical darnel from the very bottom; let us implant the knowledge of the truth: thus we may reap the corporeal things of those who have a superfluity, receiving them as a matter of debt: for the workman, He says, is worthy of his hire. And the law of Moses, hinting at the same truth, says somewhere in like manner, "You shall not muzzle the trampling ox." And as Paul said, "Does God care about oxen? Or does He say it altogether for our sakes?" You therefore will give things more valuable than those you receive from men: for things temporal. You will give things eternal: for earthly things things heavenly: for the things of sense, things intellectual: for the things that perish, things that endure. And thus much of those who receive hospitality.

But let those who open to them their house, meet them cheerfully, and with alacrity, and as their fellows: and not so much as those who give, but as those who receive: as those who gain, and not as those who expend. And the more so as they profit doubly; for in the first place they enjoy the instruction of those whom they hospitably entertain: and secondly, they also win the reward of hospitality. Every way therefore they are profited. When however they receive the brethren into their house, let them not be distracted with much service. Let them not seek any thing beyond their means, or more than sufficient. For every where and in every thing excess is injurious. For often it produces hesitation in those who otherwise would be glad to receive strangers, and causes but few [houses] to be found fit for the purpose: while it proves a cause of annoyance to those who are entertained. For the rich in this world delight in costly banquets; and in many kinds of viands, prepared curiously often with sauces and flavours; a mere sufficiency is utterly scorned, while that which is extravagant is praised, and a profusion beyond all satiety is admired, and crowned with words of flattery. The drinkings and revellings are excessive; and the draining of cups, and courses of wines, the means of intoxication and gluttony. But when holy men are assembled at the house of one who fears God, let the table be plain and temperate, the viands simple, and free from superfluities: but little to eat, and that meagre and scant: and a limited sufficiency of drink. In every thing a

small supply of such necessaries as will allay the bodily appetite with simple fare. So must men receive strangers. So too Abraham by the oak at Mamre, received those three men, and won as the reward of his carefulness, the promise of his beloved son Isaac. So Lot in Sodom honoured the angels, and for so doing, was not destroyed by fire with the rest; nor became the prey of the inextinguishable flame.

Very great therefore is the virtue of hospitality, and especially worthy of the saints: let us therefore also practise it, for so will the heavenly Teacher lodge and rest in our hearts, even Christ; by Whom and with Whom, to God the Father be praise and dominion, with the Holy Ghost, for ever and ever, Amen.

Sermon 70.

11:1-4. And it came to pass, that as He was in a certain place praying, when He ceased, one of His disciples said to Him, Lord, teach us to pray, as John also taught his disciples. And He said to them, When you pray, say, Our Father, hallowed be Your Name, Your kingdom come, Your will be done, as in heaven, so in earth; give us every day the bread of our necessity; and forgive us our sins, for we also forgive every one that is indebted to us; and bring us not into temptation.

O warm and fervent in spirit, now also you have come, and we see God's sacred court full of eager listeners. The purpose doubtless of your assembling is a pious one, and you have met together to be taught; and He Who is the Dispenser of the divine gifts, again satisfies you with those things of which you wish to be accounted worthy, and prepares a spiritual table, crying out and saying, "Come, eat of My bread, and drink the wine which I have mingled for you:" and as the Psalmist says, "Bread strengthens man's heart, and the intellectual wine gladdens it." Let us therefore draw near to the table now spread before us, even to the signification of the gospel lessons: and let us attentively consider what advantage it brings us, and what it begets in us of these qualities which are necessary for the fitting honour of the saints.

"Christ," it says, "was praying alone:" and yet He is true God, and the Son of God over all; and Himself dispenses to the creation all those things by means of which it flourishes and is kept in being; and Himself is absolutely in need of nothing: for He is "full," as He said Himself. 'Of what then,' some one asks, 'is He in need, Who by right of nature possesses all that belongs to the Father? For He said plainly, "All that the Father has is mine." But it is the property of the Father to be full of all good, and of such prerogatives as befit Deity: and this too belongs to the Son. And knowing this the saints say, "Of His fulness have all we received." But if He give as from His own godlike fulness, of what, can one say that He is in need, or what does He want to receive from the Father, as though He had it not already? And for what, forsooth, does He pray, if He be full, and needs nothing that is the Father's!'

To this we reply, that He permits Himself, in accordance with the manner of the dispensation in the flesh, to perform human actions whensoever He wishes, and as the season requires, without being liable to blame for so doing. For if He ate and drank, and is found partaking of sleep, what is there absurd, if also having humbled Himself to our measure, and fulfilled human righteousness, He not unfitly offered up prayer? And yet certainly He is in need of nothing; for "He is full," as we already said. For what reason therefore, and in the performance of what necessary and profitable duty, did He pray? It was to teach us not to be

slack in this matter, but rather to be constant in prayers, and very urgent; not standing in the middle of the streets; for this some of the Jews used to do, the scribes namely and Pharisees; nor making it an occasion of ostentation, but rather praying alone and silently, and by ourselves: and, so to speak, conversing alone with God alone, with pure and undistracted mind. And this He clearly taught us in another place, saying of those who were wont to make a show of their prayers; "For they love to pray standing in the corners of the streets, and in the synagogues. But you, when you pray, enter your chamber, and shut your door, and pray to your Father Who is in secret; and your Father Who sees in secret shall reward you."

For there are men who make a gain of the reputation of piety, and while earnestly attending to outward appearances, within are full of the love of vainglory. These often, when entering the church, first of all glance about in every direction, to observe the number of those standing there, and see whether they have many spectators. And as soon as the assembly pleases them, then raising their hand to their forehead, not once merely, but again and again they make there the sign of the precious cross. And so spinning out a long prayer according to their own fancy, they babble in a loud tone, as though praying to the bystanders, rather than to God. To such we say in the words of the Saviour, "You have received your reward:" since you pray as hunting after the praises of men, and not as seeking any thing of God. Your wish is fulfilled; you have been praised as being religious; you have gained vainglory: but you have traded in a fruitless labour; you have sown emptiness, and you shall reap nothing. Would you see the end of your artifices? Hear what the blessed David says; that "God has scattered the bones of them that please men." And by bones he here of course means not those of the body; for there are no instances of any men having suffered this: but rather the powers of the mind and heart, by means of which a man is able to effect good. The powers then of the soul are that earnestness which leads on strenuously to perseverance, spiritual manliness, patience and endurance. These qualities God will scatter in such as please men.

In order therefore that we, withdrawing far from these disgraceful ways, and escaping from the snares to which they are exposed who seek to please men, may offer to God prayer, holy and blameless and undefiled, Christ made Himself our example, by going apart from those who were with Him, and praying alone. For it was right that our Head and Teacher in every good and useful deed should be no other than He Who is first among all, and receives the prayers of all, and with God the Father bestows on those who ask Him whatsoever they require. If therefore you see Him praying as a man, that you may learn how to pray, withdraw not from the belief and conviction, that being by nature God Who fills all, He became like to us and with us on earth as a man, and fulfilled human duties as the dispensation required: but that even so He was seated in heaven with the Father, dispensing of His own fulness all things to all, accepting the prayers of the dwellers upon earth, and of the spirits that are above, and crowned by them with praises. For He ceased not to be God by becoming like to us, but continued even so to be whatsoever He had been. For it became Him to be that which He had been, since He is unchangeable, and, as Scripture declares, not subject even to a "shadow of turning."

But inasmuch as a long discourse is required for what remains, holding it in for the present, as it were, with a bridle, lest it should become tedious to the hearers, we will hereafter with God's help explain it to you, when next Christ the Saviour of us all assembles us here: by Whom and with Whom, to God the Father be praise and dominion with the Holy Ghost for ever and ever, Amen.

Sermon 71.

11:2. Upon, "Our Father, Who art in heaven"

OUR Lord Jesus Christ counted the insatiate desire of learning as worthy of all praise, thus saying: "Blessed are they that hunger and thirst after righteousness, for they shall be satisfied." For it is right constantly to hunger and thirst after those things, by means of which a man becomes a warm lover of saintly glories, and earnest in every good work. And to all who are thus minded, Christ reveals the way by which they can accomplish their desire. But serviceable is it above all things besides for the religious to salvation, that they know how to pray, and offer not supplications displeasing to Almighty God. For as the wise Paul wrote to us, "We know not what to pray for as we ought." Let us therefore draw near to Christ, the Giver of wisdom, and say, "Teach us to pray." Let us be like the holy apostles, who above all other things asked of Him this profitable and saving lesson.

Now at our last meeting we heard the gospel read, which says of Christ, the Saviour of us all, that "it came to pass, that as He was in a certain place praying by Himself." And we addressed you, explaining as well as we could the dispensation, by reason of which Christ prayed: and when we had carried our argument to this point, we reserved the rest for some fitting occasion. This has now arrived, and is present. Let us then proceed to what follows; for the Saviour said, "When you pray, say, Our Father." And another of the holy evangelists adds, "who is in heaven."

O boundless liberality! O incomparable gentleness, and that befits Him alone! He bestows upon us His own glory: He raises slaves to the dignity of freedom: He crowns man's estate with such honour as surpasses the power of nature: He brings that to pass which was spoken of old by the voice of the Psalmist: "I said, You are gods: and all of you children of the Most High." For lo! He rescues us from the measure of slavery, bestowing upon us by His grace that which by nature we possessed not: and permits us to call God Father, as being admitted to the rank of sons. Of Him have we received this, together with all our other privileges: and the wise John the Evangelist witnesses thereto, thus writing of Him: "He came to His own, and His own received Him not: but to all who received Him He gave power to become the sons of God, even to those who believe in His Name: who were born, not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but of God." For we have been fashioned to the sonship by that birth which is spiritually wrought in us, "not by corruptible seed, but rather by the living and abiding Word of God, as Scripture says. "By willing it He fathered us by the Word of truth, that we might be a kind of first-fruits of His creatures;" for so one of the holy apostles declares. And Christ Himself, in a certain place, clearly explained the manner of this birth by declaring; "Verily I say to you, that unless a man be born of water and Spirit, he cannot enter the kingdom of God." Or rather,----for to you it is right to speak even of those things that are mysterious,----He Himself became both the way and the door, and the cause of a grace being bestowed upon us thus glorious and worthy of our gaining by having taken upon Him our likeness. For although in that He is perceived to be, and is God, He is free, yet He took the form of a slave, that He might bestow upon us those things which are His, and enrich the slave with His own excellencies. For He alone is by nature free, because He alone is Son of the Father, even of Him Who is supreme above all, and rules over all, and Who is by nature and truly free. For whatsoever has been brought into existence bows the neck of slavery to Him Who created it. For the Psalmist sings to Him, saying, that "all things are Your slaves:" but inasmuch as in the dispensation He transferred to Himself what was ours, He has given us

what was His. And most wise Paul, the minister of His mysteries, is our proof, thus writing: "That when He was rich, He made Himself poor, that we by His poverty might be rich." For our things, by which is meant the condition of human nature, is poverty to God the Word: while it is wealth to human nature to receive what things are His. And of these one is the dignity of freedom,----a gift peculiarly befitting those who have been called to sonship. And this, as I mentioned, is also His gift: for He said to us, "And call no man your Father on earth: for One is your Father, Who is in heaven: and you all are brethren." And again, He Himself too, from His infinite love to mankind, is not ashamed to call us brethren, thus saying; "I will preach Your name to My brethren." For because He became like to us, we thereby have gained brotherhood with Him.

He commands us therefore to take boldness, and say in our prayers, "Our Father." We children of earth and slaves, and subject by the law of nature to Him Who created us, call Him Who is in heaven Father. And most fittingly He makes those who pray understand this also: that if we call God Father, and have been counted worthy of so distinguished an honour, must we not necessarily lead holy and thoroughly blameless lives, and so behave as is pleasing to our Father, and neither think nor say anything unworthy or unfit for the freedom that has been bestowed upon us? And so one of the holy apostles spoke: "If you call Him Father, Who without respect of persons judges according to every man's work, let your conversation during the time of your sojourning be in fear." For it is a most serious thing to grieve and provoke a father, by turning aside to those things which are not right. How do earthly fathers act, or what is their feeling towards their sons? When they see them willing to conform themselves to their wishes, and choosing that course of conduct which is pleasing to them, they love and honour them; they open to them their house; they multiply their presents of whatsoever they wish, and acknowledge them as their heirs. But if they are disobedient, and intractable, having no respect for the laws of nature, and indifferent to that affection which is implanted in us, they drive them from their house, and deem them unworthy of any honour, or indulgence, or love: they even refuse to acknowledge them as sons, and do not write them as their heirs.

Mount now, I pray, from things as they are with us to those that transcend us. You call God Father: honour Him with ready obedience: yield submission as that which is His due: live so as He pleases: show not yourself harsh or proud, but, on the contrary, tractable and submissive, and ready without delay to follow His directions, so that He may honour you in return, and appoint you fellow-heir with Him Who is the Son by nature, For if "He gave Him for us, how will He not with Him also give us all things," according to the expression of the blessed Paul. But if you have no regard for yourself, and therefore heed not the bounteous gift that is bestowed, you are proved to be bold, and, so to speak, without salt, loving pleasure more than you love the Father. Fear, therefore, lest of you also God say that which was spoken of the Israelites by the word of Isaiah; "Hear, O heavens; and give ear, O earth, for the Lord has spoken: I have begotten and brought up children, but they have rejected Me." Heavy in every way, my beloved, is the guilt of those who rebel; and most wicked the crime of rejecting (God). Very wisely therefore, as I said, does the Saviour of all grant us to call God Father, that we, well knowing that we are sons of God, may behave in a manner worthy of Him Who has thus honoured us; for so He will receive the supplications which we offer in Christ: by Whom and with Whom to God the Father be praise and dominion, with the Holy Ghost, for ever and ever, Amen.

Sermon 72.

11:2 Upon "*Hallowed be Your Name.*"

ALL who desire the sacred words of God, the prophet Isaiah commands, saying; "You who thirst come to the waters:" for whosoever will may draw from the life-giving fountain. And who is this fountain? Plainly it is Christ, and His doctrines. For He has somewhere said to us, "Whosoever thirsts, let him come to Me and drink." Let us then once again come as to a fountain: let us fill our souls: let us satiate ourselves of the torrent of pleasure. For the blessed David somewhere in a psalm thus speaks of Him to God the Father: "They shall be satisfied with the fatness of Your house: and You shall make them drink of the torrent of Your pleasure. For with Thee is the fountain of life." For the river of pleasure is richly poured forth for us, and the fountain of life, even that which is in Christ: Who also by one of the prophets has thus spoken concerning us; "Behold, I bend down to them as a river of peace, and as a torrent flooding them with the glory of the Gentiles."

For observe how Christ waters us with rich streams of spiritual blessings. For what will He next teach us? When you pray, He says, say, "Our Father, Hallowed be Your Name." Now see! already we have discoursed to you not without profit, when explaining in what manner it is right for us to say, "Our Father." And you, I think, remember my words, in that you are, as I said, eager after learning. In order, therefore, that we may not say the same things; for that were tedious to attentive listeners, who store up in the treasure-house of their heart whatever they have already understood, and wish constantly to advance to something further, let us proceed to that which follows, namely, "Hallowed be Your Name:" and let us consider in what way this also must be understood.

Do we then pray that additional holiness may accrue to the all-holy God? And how would not this be absolutely absurd? For if indeed there be anything wanting to God over all, in order to his being perfect, and in need of nothing, He may need additional holiness: but if He be full, as He says, and in every respect perfect in and by Himself, and the Giver of holiness to the creation out of His own fulness; what addition can He receive? For all things are His. and He has reached the highest perfection in every good: for this is also an attribute of His by nature. And besides it is a foolish and ridiculous thing for those who pray to imagine that they offer their supplications not on their own behalf but on His. What therefore is the meaning of "Hallowed be Your Name?"

We say then, that men do not supplicate for any addition of holiness to accrue to God over all: for who is greater than He, and able to give Him any increase? "For without all doubt the less is blessed of the greater." But they supplicate rather that this may be granted to them and all mankind. For when it is our settled conviction and belief, that He Who by nature is God over all, is Holy of the Holies, then we confess His glory and supreme majesty: then we receive His fear into our mind, and lead upright and blameless lives, that by thus becoming ourselves holy, we may be able to be near to the holy God. For it is written; "Become you holy: for I am holy." And He once also said to the hierophant Moses, "I will be hallowed in them that draw nigh to Me." The prayer therefore is, May Your Name be kept holy in us, in our minds and wills: for this is the signification of the word "Hallowed." For just as one who suffers under a disease in his bodily sight, and is able to see but little, and with difficulty; and prays, saying, 'O Lord of all, grant that the light of the sun's radiance may illuminate me also,' does not, we affirm, make his supplications on the sun's behalf, but, on the contrary, upon his own: so also

if a man say, "Our Father, hallowed be Your Name," he is not requesting any addition to be made to God's holiness, but rather asks, that he may himself possess such a mind and faith, as to feel that His Name is honourable and holy. The act therefore is the source of life, and the cause of every blessing: for to be thus affected towards God, how must it not be a thing worthy of the highest estimation, and useful for the salvation of the soul?

But do not imagine, that when those who depend upon His love are earnest in their supplications towards God, that they ask these things of Him for themselves alone: but know rather, that their purpose is to intercede for all the dwellers upon earth: for those who already have believed; and for those who have not as yet received the faith, nor acknowledged the truth. For for those who already have believed, they ask that their faith may be established, and that they may be able to practise the glories of the more excellent life: while for those who as yet are not believers, they ask that they may be called, and their eyes be opened; even in this following the footsteps of Christ, Who according to the words of John is "the Advocate with the Father for our sins: and not for our's only, but for the whole world." He therefore Who is the Intercessor for the saints, and for the whole world, wills that His disciples be like Himself. When therefore men say to the Father, "Hallowed be Your Name," bear in mind, that among those who have not as yet gained the light of truth, nor received the faith, the Name of God is despised. It does not as yet seem to them to be holy, honourable, and adorable. But no sooner has the light of truth risen upon them, and they have with effort awoken as from some night and darkness, then learning Who and how great He is, they acknowledge Him as Holy of the Holies, and have correspondent sentiments and belief.

But that the phrase, that God is hallowed by us, is a confession of our regarding Him as Holy of Holies, and does not bestow on Him any additional holiness, you may understand hence. One of the holy prophets said, "Hallow the Lord, and He shall be Your fear: and if you trust in Him, He shall be holiness unto you." Do we then make God holy? Is it the act of human nature to bestow ought on God? Does the thing made benefit the Maker? Does any man imagine that He, Who of His fulness richly distributes to the creature His gifts, will Himself receive ought of us, whose place it is to listen to the words of the blessed Paul; "What have you that you have not received? When, therefore, the prophet said, "Hallow the Lord, and He shall be your fear, and holiness to you;" we affirm that what he teaches is, 'Believe that He is holy, for then you will fear Him; and so He will thus be to you the means of holiness.' And it is written again of Christ the Saviour of us all; "Hallow Him, Who despised Himself." For He did despise Himself, by deeming His life of no account, and laying it down for our sakes. But let Him be hallowed, it says, by you: that is, let Him be acknowledged as holy. For such He is by nature, as being true God, and the Son of God. For to be essentially holy suits not any one whatsoever of those things, which from nonexistence have been brought into being: but only that supreme nature which transcends all. By believing therefore that He is by nature holy;----for this is the meaning of our hallowing Him; ---- we further acknowledge Him to be true God.

For ourselves therefore and not for God let us pray, saying, "Hallowed be Your Name." For if we are thus disposed, and with free mind offer up prayers such as this, God the Father will accept us, and Christ with Him will bless us: by Whom and with Whom to God the Father be praise and dominion, with the Holy Ghost, for ever and ever, Amen.

Sermon 73.

11:2. Upon "*Your kingdom come.*"

THOSE who love riches, and whose mind is set on wealth and gain, gather by every means in their power the wished for object, and there is no labour they will not undertake. But their pursuit ends in no happy issue: "For what," as the Saviour says, "is a man profited, if he gain the whole world, but lose himself?" But those who love the Word of salvation, and unroll the divine Scripture as a treasure, and carefully search out the things therein concealed, find the life-giving knowledge which leads them on to every virtuous pursuit, and makes them perfect in the knowledge of the doctrines of truth. Let us search therefore into the sense of the passage set before us. And our object is intelligently to see what the Saviour commanded. For we must, He said, when we pray say, "Your kingdom come." Nevertheless He reigns over all with God the Father: nor can any addition be made to His kingly glory, either as accruing to Him from without, or as given Him by another. Nor did it gather by the course of time, but, so to speak, sprang up with Him without a beginning. For He at all time was and is that which He was. Altogether therefore, and in every way it follows upon His being God by nature and truly, that He must be omnipotent, and that this glorious attribute is, so to speak, His without a beginning, and without end. For one also of the holy prophets said to Him, "The Lord shall reign for ever and ever, and yet." And the divine Psalmist too says, "Your kingdom is an everlasting kingdom." And again; "God is our king before the worlds." Since, therefore, God ever reigns, and is omnipotent, with what view do those who call God Father offer up to Him their supplications, and say, Your kingdom come?

They seem, therefore, to desire to see Christ the Saviour of all rising again upon the world. For He will come, He will come and descend as Judge, no longer in low estate like to us, nor in the meanness of human nature; but in glory such as becomes God, and as He dwells in the unapproachable light, and with the angels as His guards. For so He somewhere Himself said, that "the Son of man shall come in the glory of His Father, with His holy angels." And I think, therefore, that I ought to add this too: that at the consummation of this world He will descend from heaven, but no longer to instruct those on earth, as He did of old, nor again to show them the way of salvation; ----the season for this has passed away;----but to judge the world. And the wise Paul also bears witness to what I say, declaring that "we all must be revealed before the judgment seat of Christ, that every man may be requited for those things that were by means of the body, according to what he has done, whether it be good, or whether it be bad."

Terrible, therefore, is that judgment seat; without respect of persons is the Judge; it is a time of pleading, or rather of trial, and of retribution. The fire is prepared for the wicked, and enduring punishment, and eternal torments:----and how can men pray to see that time? Observe, I pray again, the Saviour's skilfulness, and His admirable management in every particular. For He commanded them to ask in prayer that this dread time may come, to make them know that they must live, not carelessly, nor dissolutely, nor moreover as beguiled into laxity and the love of pleasure; but, on the contrary, as becomes saints, and according to God's will: that so that time may prove the bestower upon them of crowns, and not of fire and condemnation. For for the wicked and impure, in that they lead base and lascivious lives, guilty of every vice, it were in no way fit for them in their prayers to say, Your kingdom come.

Rather let them know that in so saying they, as it were, charge God with blame, because the time of their punishment does not quickly arise and manifest itself. Of them one of the holy prophets said, "Woe to those that desire the day of the Lord! What will the day of the Lord be to you? For it is darkness, and not light; and that thick darkness in which is no brightness."

The saints, therefore, ask that the time of the Saviour's perfect reign may come, because they have laboured dutifully, and have a pure conscience, and look for the requital of what they have already wrought. For just as those who are expecting a festival and merriment about forthwith to come, and shortly to appear, thirst for its arrival, so also do they. For they trust that they shall stand glorious in the presence of the Judge, and hear Him say: "Come, you blessed of My Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundations of the world." They were wise and zealous stewards, when their Lord set them over His household, to give them their meat in its season. Well and wisely did they distribute to their fellow servants those things by the receiving of which they had themselves before been made rich; for they remembered Him Who said: "Freely you have received, freely give." When they received of Him the talent, they did not bury it in the earth. They were not like that slothful, and indolent, and careless servant, who drew near, saying, "Lord, I knew that You are a hard man; reaping where others sowed, and gathering where others scattered: and I was afraid, and hid the talent. Behold! You have Your own." They, on the contrary, traded: and so they brought it greatly multiplied, saying, "Lord, Your pound has made ten pounds," and were admitted to yet further honours. They possessed an active, and right hearty, and courageous disposition; they had put on the panoply of God; the breastplate of righteousness; the helmet of salvation; had taken the Spirit's sword: It did not escape them that they had a war, not against blood and flesh, but against magistracies, against powers, against the world-rulers of this darkness, against the spirits of wickedness in the heavenly regions. For many wove for themselves crowns of martyrdom, and by enduring conflicts, even to life and blood, were made "a spectacle to the world, and to angels, and to men," and were accounted worthy of all admiration. There were others who endured labours and persecutions, eagerly contending for His glory. "Cruel wolves sprang in upon Christ's flocks, not sparing the flock," as the divine Paul declares. "Deceitful workers; false apostles," vomiting forth the gall of the malice of the devil, and "speaking perverse things," such as lead ignorant souls to destruction, and "wound their weak conscience." These, by flattering the powers of this world, brought persecutions and distresses upon the champions of the truth. But they made no great account of what they suffered, for they looked to the hope which they had in Christ. For it was not unknown to them that "by suffering for Him they would reign with Him." They know that at the time of the resurrection, "He will change the body of their humiliation into the likeness of His glorious body." They fully believed what He said about the consummation of the world, that when He shall appear to them again from heaven, "they shall shine like the sun in the kingdom of their Father." Justly, therefore, in their prayers they say, "Your kingdom come." For they feel confident that they shall receive a recompense for their bravery, and attain to the consummation of the hope set before them.

May it be our lot also to be counted worthy of this great inheritance in Christ; by Whom and with Whom to God the Father be praise and dominion, with the Holy Ghost, for ever and ever, Amen.

Sermon 74.

11:2 Upon " Your will be done; as in heaven, so on earth."

THE prophet David made his supplications to Christ the Saviour of all, saying, "Lead me to Your truth, and teach me that You are God my Saviour." For all those are taught of God who are in Christ by faith; and among these are we. Of Him, therefore, let us ask the explanation of His words: for whosoever would understand correctly and without error what He wishes to teach, are in need of divine light: but He is the Giver of all wisdom, and sheds His light upon the mind and heart of those that ask Him. For again the Psalmist said, "Open mine eyes, and I shall see Your wonders out of Your law." Let us, therefore, examine this part also of the prayer: for it will profit us in no slight degree to the salvation of the soul. Why then did He command the saints to say to God the Father in heaven, "Your will be done; as in heaven, so in earth?"

Worthy of the saints, and full of all praise is this petition also. For for them to ask that the good-will of God may prevail on earth, what else is it but to ask that all mankind may lead praiseworthy and elect lives, and practise and know all virtue? By so doing, the holy angels, we affirm, dwell in glory in heaven: for it is written; "Bless the Lord all you His powers; His ministers who do His will." For by adhering to the will of their Lord, and fulfilling that righteousness which transcends human things, they preserve their high estate, whereas those who acted otherwise fell therefrom.

But to gather to a head, and, so to speak, collect briefly the meaning of the words, we supplicate, that power may be given to the dwellers upon earth to do the will of God, and imitate the conduct practised above in heaven by the holy angels. Let us see, therefore, as well as we can, in what way the powers above and the ranks of the holy angels successfully perform their duty. How do they honour God? Is it by sacrifices of blood? Is it by perfume and frankincense, as forsooth the Israel after the flesh did? But this I think is |338 altogether incredible both to think and say. For it is rather true to affirm that they fulfil a spiritual and not a material service, ever crowning with lauds and praises the Creator of all, and fulfilling that righteousness which is suitable to holy spirits. Those, therefore, who in their prayers ask that the will of God may be done also on earth, ought necessarily themselves to live blamelessly, and to pay no regard to these earthly things, but free themselves from all impurity, and leap out of the pitfalls of iniquity, and "perfect holiness in the fear of God;" that as Paul also says, even while walking upon earth, "their conversation may be in heaven." And above all others let those who belong to the Jewish multitude, but have been enriched with the righteousness that is in Christ by faith, know that it is altogether fitting for them if they would fulfil the word of God, to cease from the shadows of the law, and abandon the service that consists in semblances and types: and choose rather the service which is spiritual, and pure, and immaterial. For as the Saviour somewhere said, "God is a Spirit; and they that worship Him must worship Him in spirit and in truth. For such the Father also requires those to be who worship Him."

For that the legal manner of service is not what He requires, is a thing in no respect difficult to see from the prophetic and apostolic writings. For by the word of Jeremiah He says, "Why do you bring Me the frankincense from Sheba; and cinnamon from a far country? Your whole burnt-offering is not acceptable, and your sacrifices please Me not." And by the voice of David, "I will not take bullocks from your house, nor he goats out of your flocks: should I eat the flesh of bulls, or drink the blood of goats?" And the blessed Paul also shows that the service that is by the law is powerless to justification, thus saying; "For that no man is justified by the law before God is evident." The will therefore of God, that will which we pray may be done upon earth, is not that we should conform to the law, and live according to the grossness of its

letter, but that we should endeavour to live by the gospel. And this is effected by a faith correct and free from error, and by a holy life, possessed of the sweet savour of every virtue, and proved by the testimony of good and noble conduct in every thing that is excellent.

And to explain also in another way the sense of what is laid before us, we say, that those who utter to God the petition "Your will be done, as in heaven so on earth," pray that they may see the cessation of sin. For the law of Moses was given to the Israelites to be their schoolmaster; but those who received it paid but slight heed to its commands: they were "lovers of pleasure more than lovers of God;" and turned aside to follow their own will: for they wandered after the doctrines and commandments of men. For God also somewhere said of them; "This people draws near to Me; with their lips they honour Me, but their heart is far from Me. But in vain fear they Me, while teaching the doctrines and commandments of men." And He also said of them by the word of Jeremiah; "Hear, O earth, see I bring upon this people evils; the fruit of their turning aside: because they have not regarded My Word, and have rejected My law." Such then was the state of the Jews. But that other multitude, spread over the whole earth, was in error in manifold ways. "For they served the creatures instead of the Creator:" and having humbled their mind to submission to unclean spirits, were led by them readily and without understanding, into every thing base, and every kind of wickedness was honoured among them, and "they gloried in their shame," as Scripture says.

The saints therefore supplicate, that both of these, as well Israel as the Gentiles, may be counted worthy of peace from on high, and be comforted in that they were in misery, and caught, so to speak, in the net of sin, without possibility of escape: that having received the righteousness which is in Christ by faith, they may become pure, and skilful in every good work. For this reason they pray, "Your will be done, as in heaven, so in earth:" for as I said, the will of God over all is, that the dwellers upon earth should live holily, and piously, and without blame, being washed from all impurity, and diligent in imitating the spiritual beauty of the spirits above in heaven; so that the church on earth, being, as it were, the visible likeness and image of the "church of the firstborn" that is above, may please Christ; by Whom, and with Whom, to God the Father be praise and dominion with the Holy Ghost, for ever and ever, Amen.

Sermon 75.

11:3 Upon "Give us every day our needful bread."

THOSE who possess earthly riches invite to their house such of their friends as they wish to honour, and setting before them a costly banquet, make them enjoy themselves, though providing for them nothing further than the satiating of the appetite. But the Saviour and Lord of all, feasts us not with bodily enjoyments; for this is profitless, and injurious even to the body itself: rather He banquets with spiritual feasts the hearts of those who would live virtuously, bestowing on them the saving doctrine of the gospel, by means of which a man becomes full of all good, and an heir of eternal life. And what I have said is clearly taught us in the passage now set before us. For when you pray, He says, you must say, "Give us every day the bread of our necessity."

But some, perchance, may think and even say, that it is unsuitable and not fitting for the saints to ask of God these corporeal things; and may therefore divert what is said to a spiritual sense; and affirm that they ask not earthly bread, nor that for the body, but rather That Which

came down from above, from heaven, and gave life to the world. And I too without all doubt would say, that it most becomes the saints earnestly to endeavour to be accounted worthy of spiritual gifts. We must, however, also understand, that though they ask simple bread, and this be what the Saviour bids them do, that their address to God is nevertheless free from all blame, and suitable to the piety of their lives. For examine what is the sense concealed in these words, and with what doctrines it is pregnant. For in that He commanded to ask for the bread, that is, for the food of a day, it is evident, that He does not permit them to possess any thing, but requires them rather to practise a saint-like poverty. For to ask is not the part of those who have, but of those rather who are in need of what the body indispensably requires, and cannot do without. Should then any one who is in want of nothing, say to the omniscient God, "Give us the bread of a day," he would of course seem to wish to receive in derision, or perchance even to ridicule the meaning of the command, and to imagine as some do, "That the Lord does not see, neither the God of Jacob understand." By this very command therefore, inasmuch as they ask what they have not, we may perceive, that He does not wish His disciples to set their desire upon wealth. And this He is found elsewhere clearly enjoining: "Be not anxious for yourselves, what you shall eat, or what you shall drink; neither for your body what you shall put on: for all these things the Gentiles seek after. But seek you chiefly the kingdom of God and His righteousness: and all these things shall be added to you. For your heavenly Father knows that all these things are needed by you."

The word ἐπιούσιος, applied here to the bread, some explain as meaning that which is coining, and about to be given in the future world, understanding it again spiritually: while others give the word a different sense. But if it be true, that the bread men make mention of when they pray, is that which is to be given them in the world to come, why do they add, "Give it us every day?" For by this we may see, that what they request is their daily provision, asking not as loving wealth, but as free from all earthly anxiety. We must explain therefore ἐπιούσιος as meaning that which is necessary and sufficient. The blessed Paul has somewhere applied this phrase to Christ the Saviour of us all, with a slight alteration; for he said that "He has prepared for Himself a people περιούσιος," using περιούσιος instead of ἐπιούσιος, and meaning a people sufficient, and not falling short of perfection. When therefore they ask food for the day, understand, that they offer the request as men free from the desire of riches, and who count it their boast to be entirely destitute of earthly things.

For it is fitting for those who are appointed to the priesthood, to be free from all worldly distraction and care, whoring after none of those things which overwhelm men with necessary cares, and cast them as in a slough into the filth of worldly lusts. "For the love of money is the root of all evil." And it is right that I should say to those who would renounce such faults, that they must strip off for the world what belongs to it, and deny these bodily things, and seek from God those things only which are necessary for existence, protesting as it were against the weakness of the body, which constantly requires food; and ready, were it lawful utterly to escape from it, and life could so be prolonged, even to accept this with great joy. For just as those who know how to contend in bodily strife, and are skilled in the combats of the games, strip off even their garments, and stand up manfully against the vigorous strength of their opponents; so also the saints, withdrawing from all worldly anxiety, and bodily lusts; and careless even of having abundance of food, and stripping as I said to oppose Satan and the enemies of the truth, apply themselves to the contests of the priestly office, and conquer as combatants. And the divine Paul too somewhere said of those that war in the flesh: "No man that wars entangles himself with worldly merchandise, that he may please him who has

chosen him for a soldier." For he does not go forth to the combat laden with superfluities, but on the contrary only taking with him such equipments as are fit for warriors.

It becomes therefore the saints, as having a combat to wage, not only "against blood and flesh, but also against magistracies and powers, and against the world-rulers of this darkness, and against the spirits of evil in the heavenly regions," to be so well prepared in mind, as not to be open to the grasp of those who resist them, and who war against the message which they proclaim. And it is right also for them to be single-minded, that is, to think only of those things which please the Lord, not being partly given up to worldly anxiety, but being all of them entirely holy and without blame, so to make their conduct a sacrifice to God. For it is written that "every sacrifice of the priest shall be a whole burnt-offering." For the lives of the worldly are "divided," according to the expression of the blessed Paul; but of the saints not so: but they are entirely consecrated, completely holy, emitting a sweet savour to God: and this we say is a whole burnt-offering. But when ought that is unsaintly is found in any, it pollutes the sacrifice, alters and divides it: or rather filth is mingled with the ointment; for its sweet savour has utterly perished. But the love of money is an unsavoury thing; and the being anxious for the things of the body; for God has everywhere promised the saints that they shall not want. If then we do not believe that He will grant this, we become partakers of the unbelief of the Jews. For when God over all wonderfully and ineffably brought out for them water from the rock, they murmured at Him saying; "Can God prepare a table in the wilderness?" And why can He not, and wherefore should He not give what He has promised? For all men of good character abide faithfully by their words: and how shall God Who transcends all, be false in ought that He has promised? Men moreover, after having promised some good, are often too weak to fulfil their engagements: but He who knows no weakness, but rather is the Lord of powers, Who does whatsoever He will without labour and with ease, how shall not He accomplish whatsoever He promises to men?

"Casting therefore upon Him our care," let us ask of Him what suffices for life; food, that is to say, and clothing, and whatever is sufficient for us, avoiding all wish to be rich, as that which threatens us with destruction. For if such be our will, Christ will accept and bless us; by Whom, and with Whom, to God the Father be praise and dominion with the Holy Ghost, for ever and ever, Amen.

Sermon 76.

11:4 And forgive us our sins: for we also forgive every one that is indebted to us.

THE blessed prophet Isaiah, when revealing the way of salvation by the preaching of the Gospel, thus somewhere speaks: "There shall be there a level way, and it shall be called the holy way." For it leads those who walk thereon to holiness by a spiritual service, and a righteousness superior to the law. We remember also Christ, Who says to those who love Him; "Verily I say to you, that unless your righteousness be more than that of the scribes and pharisees, you shall not enter the kingdom of God." And I say that it is the duty of those who have been called by faith to the acknowledgment of the glory of our universal Saviour Christ, and have Him for their head, to delight in imitating His actions, and be in earnest in letting their light shine by holy conduct, such as was unknown to them of old time. "For all things are become new in Christ," He requires therefore His disciples to be gentle, and slow to anger, that so they may be able to say blamelessly in their prayers, "Forgive us our sins: for we also forgive every one that is indebted to us." Oh! what great and admirable skill! what sagacious

thought! or rather, oh! the depth of the riches, both of the wisdom and knowledge of God! He first commands them to ask forgiveness of the sins they commit, and then to confess that they also entirely forgive others: and if I may so say, they ask God to imitate the long suffering which they practise: and that same gentleness which they show to their fellow servants, they pray that they may receive in equal measure from God, Who gives justly, and knows how to show mercy to every man.

Come, therefore, and let us endeavour to perceive more clearly the meaning of the prayer, by entering upon a more extended and exact consideration of the passage before us. As I said, therefore, He has commanded us when we draw near to say: "Forgive us our sins." And we will examine, if you please, what the benefit is which we receive from this. Those then who thus speak are not supercilious: they do not think great things of themselves: do not vaunt themselves over the weak: but, as Scripture says, "they know themselves," For they are not like that ignorant and haughty Pharisee, who even made the Lord his witness, according to the parable which says: "Two men went up into the temple to pray; the one a Pharisee and the other a publican: and the Pharisee stood and said thus: God, I thank Thee that I am not as the rest of mankind, extortioners, unjust, adulterers; or as this publican. I fast twice in the week; and tithe every thing I possess. But the publican stood afar off, smiting upon his breast, and saying; God, be merciful to me a sinner. I say to you, that this one went down to his house justified rather than the other." Observe therefore how ruinous it is to vaunt oneself over those who are weak, imagining that our conduct is in no respect whatsoever worthy of blame. We ought rather to consider and reflect, that "in many things we all of us are guilty," and, so to speak, are always in sins, sometimes even involuntarily: for it is written; "Who can understand his offences?" We find also the blessed Psalmist very anxious in making his supplications to God, and plainly saying: "Both cleanse me from my secret doings: and from the deeds of others spare Your servant, lest they overpower me: then shall I be blameless, and purified from great sin." And further also, the very patient Job offered sacrifices for the unknown, or rather undiscovered sins of his sons, considering and saying; "It may be my sons have spoken evil in their heart against God." We remember also the very wise Paul, who, when he had written, "For I am not conscious of any fault in myself:" thoughtfully added, "but I am not hereby justified: but He That judges me is the Lord."

It is therefore greatly to our profit constantly to fall down before God, Who loves what is good, and say, Forgive us our sins. For He said by one of the holy prophets, "Declare you first your unlawfulnesses, that you may be justified." And inasmuch as this was not unknown to the blessed David, he thus sings; "I said that I will confess of myself my iniquity to the Lord; and You forgave the wickedness of my heart." For God readily accepts, and has mercy on those who do not forget their offences, but fall down before Him, and ask of Him forgiveness: but He is severe, and very justly so, upon the obdurate and the proud, and on him who in his great ignorance acquits himself of blame. For He said to one thus disposed, "Behold, I have a suit against you, because you say, I have not sinned." For who can boast that he has a pure heart? or who can have confidence that he is undefiled by sins? The road then to salvation, and which delivers those who earnestly walk thereon from the wrath of God, is the confession of offences, and to say in our prayers to Him Who purifies the wicked, Forgive us our sins.

There is also another way in which it benefits us. For those truly who own that they have sinned, and wish to obtain pardon from God, necessarily fear Him, as One Who is about to be the Judge: they are not forgetful of God's terrible judgment-seat. For, as the very wise Paul writes; "We shall all be manifested before the judgment seat of Christ, that every man may be

requited for the things done by the body, according to what he has done, whether it be good, or whether it be bad." Those in whose mind the conviction is present, that they must stand before Him, and make their defence; and if they are accused of wicked conduct, will suffer bitter punishment; but will be praised, if they have well and wisely lead the life that is in the flesh on earth; thirst, on the one hand, for the forgiveness of the sins they have already committed, that they may escape the unending torment and eternal punishment: and, on the other, they hasten to live uprightly and blamelessly, that they may receive the crown that becomes the excellence of their lives. For so will the Judge be gentle towards them, nor remember evil: "for the iniquity, He says, of the wicked shall not harm him in the day that he shall repent of his iniquity."

And let not any one imagine that it is lawful for men without distinction to say, "Forgive us our iniquities." For it is not fitting for those who still continue in wickedness, and wish to do so to the last, to say, Forgive us our sins: but for those rather, who have abandoned their former wicked deeds, and now earnestly desire to live as becomes saints. Were it not so, nothing would prevent men who are still wicked, smiters of their fathers, and matricides, and adulterers, and sorcerers, and whoever are guilty of these most abominable crimes, to continue in the practice of them, and cherish their evil propensities unchanged, and be polluted by the pursuit of every thing that is base; and nevertheless to draw near, and presumptuously say, "Forgive us our sins." For with good reason the Saviour of all and Lord did not conclude this clause of the prayer at this point, but commanded us to add, "For we also ourselves have forgiven every one who is indebted to us." But this is fitting only for those to say, who have chosen a virtuous life, and are practising without remissness that will of God, which, as Scripture says, is "good and acceptable and perfect." These honour a long-suffering temper, and acquit of all blame those who have wronged them: and even though any one afflict them, they think nothing of the matter. To be slow then to anger, is a virtue altogether excellent, and the fruit of that love which the wise Paul even declares to be "the fulfilling of the law."

And consider, I pray, the exceeding beauty of this virtue, even from the deformity of the vice opposed to it. For irascibility is in truth a serious malady, and whoever is subject to it in mind becomes irritable and morose, harsh and obdurate, the abode and habitation of wrath and vexation; and this long continued, and that cannot be charmed away. Ever does he see with evil eyes whoever has wronged him: he watches him sternly; seeks for time and place in which to injure him: and that generally not in equal measure, but many times greater than the wrong: he is secret and plotting. Is not such a one full of all deformity, hateful to God, and rejected by Him, and therefore in utter misery? "For the ways of the angry," as it is written, "are to death." But he who is simple, and not irascible, is full of forbearance, and that not so much the forbearance which men practise, as that which comes from above, and from God. His heart is not subject to the fester of vexation: it masters its anger, and repels the bitter feelings which spring therefrom. He is forgiving, kind to his companions, gentle and affable, and humbles himself to the infirmity of his neighbour. Such was the character of the disciples of the Saviour: for the blessed Paul wrote; "Being reviled, we bless: being persecuted, we bear patiently: being defamed, we entreat." For they have grown like their Lord, "Who, when He was reviled, reviled not again: and when He suffered, threatened not; but committed His cause to Him that judges righteously."

We must ask, therefore, of God the forgiveness of the sins we have committed, when we have ourselves first forgiven whoever have offended in ought, provided that their sin is against us,

and not against the glory of the supreme God. For over such actions we are not lords, but only over those which have been committed against ourselves. And by thus forgiving the brethren what they do to us, we shall then certainly find Christ, the Saviour of all, gentle and ready to show us mercy: by Whom and with Whom to God the Father be praise and dominion, with the Holy Ghost, for ever and ever, Amen.

Sermon 77.

11:4 *And lead us not into temptation.*

O ALL you who love the divine will, and are enamoured of a blameless life, draw near to God over all, and say, "Show me Your ways, O Lord, and teach me Your paths." For all wisdom and understanding is from Him; and the knowledge of all good comes to us from above from the supreme throne, as from a fountain; and no man can accomplish any thing praiseworthy, unless he receive the ability from Him. And this He teaches us Himself, saying, "Without Me you can do nothing." He therefore Who gives to every man all things whatsoever wherein they can justly glory, now leads us on to another of those things which are necessary to salvation. For He commands us when we are instant in prayer to say, "Lead us not into temptation."

With these words Luke concludes the prayer; but Matthew is found to add, "but deliver us from evil." And there is a certain close connection in the clauses: for plainly it follows from men not being led into temptation, that they are also delivered from evil; or perchance, were any one to say, that the not being led into it is the same as the being delivered from it, he would not err from the truth. But let us consider this: Does the Saviour and Lord of all wish His friends to be cowardly? Are they to be lazy and abject, and in earnest rather in avoiding the contest than in winning renown? And yet the Spirit said in the book of Psalms, "Be strong, and let your heart be firm, all you who trust in the Lord." And the Saviour Himself somewhere says, "Blessed are they who are persecuted for righteousness' sake: for theirs is the kingdom of heaven." If then He crown with such splendid honours him who is persecuted, and to be persecuted is undeniably a temptation, in what sense does He command them to avoid temptation? For certainly it is not inactivity, and an unprofitable dilatoriness, and a thankless sloth, which render those trained for gymnastic contests successful, and worthy of honours, and the clapping of hands, but, on the contrary, severe toil. Moreover, it is not in time of peace that one sees the man who is well acquainted with the tactics of war, and bold withal, and tried in battle, but he must have shown himself a hardy combatant against the enemy. And why then does Christ, so to speak, even hamstring those who love Him, by making them say, "Lead us not into temptation."

To this we reply, gathering after our manner those ideas which are best, that He does not wish His followers to be abject, nor yet indolent in any other way; that He even incites them to courageousness in all things praiseworthy, saying, "Enter in at the strait door: for narrow is the door, and constricted the way, that leads to life, and few are they who find it." There must therefore be in us an unchangeable and manly spirit of ardour: and a mind patient in endurance, such as was that of the blessed Paul, who said, "Who shall separate me from the love of Christ? Shall tribulation, or distress, or persecution, or famine, or nakedness, or danger, or the sword?" But even though we be thus minded, and attain to these measures of manliness, yet we must think humbly of ourselves, being "poor in spirit," according to the Saviour's word, and not imagine that always and necessarily we shall conquer all temptations. For sometimes an unendurable alarm falling upon the mind of a man terrifies it into abject

fear; as also does Satan, who hates whatever is good; and the severity of the temptation unbends sometimes even the most courageous mind. So do the violent and unendurable blows of the waves dash to pieces a firmly built and well-manned ship: and so does a dense mass of darts shot from the hands of the enemy put to flight the most steadfast soldier. No one therefore ought to be over-confident, or rash in encountering temptations, even though he be brave in mind: but rather let us reflect upon the infirmity of our mind, and fear with soberness, lest perchance we prove a cause of ridicule to our tempters, by not being able to bear the brunt of the battle.

Let us therefore pray that we may not be tempted: for it is a thing difficult to escape from, and difficult to most men to endure to the end. But when the conjuncture summons us of necessity thereto, then indeed, exerting all our strength, we must enter the conflict, and struggle for our souls, nothing fearing, but, on the contrary, calling to mind what Christ the Saviour of all said to us; "Fear you not them who kill the body, but cannot kill the soul; but rather fear Him Who is able to destroy both soul and body in hell." As also that holy apostle who thus wrote, "Blessed is the man that endures temptation: who, when he is proved, shall receive the crown of life, which God has promised to them that love Him,"

There are however many kinds of temptation; of which two are of universal occurrence, and common and very general. And what these are, we must tell. There are in the world many heresies; false apostles, and false teachers, who gathering the wearisomeness of frigid inventions, and glorying in the arts of worldly wisdom, adulterate the language of the sacred proclamations, and multiply blasphemous words against their own pates: and as the Psalmist says, "they set up their horn on high, speaking iniquity against God:" yes, and against God the Word the Maker of all, Who, they say, is to be reckoned among those things that were made by Him; and is a servant, and not a son; and a creature, and not the Lord. These, resisting the champions of the truth, persecute those whose choice it is to hold sound doctrine, and who defend the divine glory, and endeavour to crown the only-fathered Word of God with incomparable praises. When therefore any temptation arrive on this account, be not you found one who throws away his shield, nor a soldier who runs from the battle, nor an athlete destitute alike of skill and courage. Wish not an unseasonable peace, the cause of future ruin; but remember that Christ the Saviour of all said, "Think not that I am come to bring peace upon earth; I am not come to bring peace, but a sword." And if perchance it happen that the persecutors possess worldly power, fear not the harm they can do you, nor the danger even of blood, and the risk of life; but remember again the exhortation of the holy apostle, who says, "Therefore let those also who suffer according to the will of God commend their souls to a faithful Creator." And again, For let no one of you suffer as a thief, or as an evil doer, or as one busy with other men's things; but if as a Christian, let him not be ashamed, but glorify God on this account."

For it follows as a matter of course upon having to suffer, that we shall justly be accounted worthy of eternal honours. The struggle is not unrewarded; the labour is not in vain; for as Paul said, "God is not unrighteous to forget your labour and your love, which you have shown in His Name." These then are the conflicts ordained for all who fear God, to give the proof of him who knows how to endure patiently. For the blessed martyrs are crowned, as "having fought a good fight, and finished their running, and kept the faith."

Furthermore, other kinds of temptations there are besides this, common, so to speak, to every one, but which happen to each one differently. For as one of the holy apostles said, "Let no

man say when he is tempted, I am tempted of God; for God does not tempt with evils: neither does He tempt any one. But every one is tempted, when he is drawn away and enticed of his own lust. And afterward lust, having conceived, brings forth sin: and sin when it is consummated brings forth death." A struggle therefore and great danger is laid upon every one, lest he fall into sin, and be led away from that which is seemly, wandering into wrongful deeds. Violent is the force of passions, and there wars against the mind of every one a motley crowd and furious multitude of base pleasures. For some humble men into fleshly lust and filthy lewdnesses; while others lead them to the desire of gain, making their victims lovers of sordid hoards, and drawing them on to every blameful crime. Well therefore does it become us who are exposed to such serious evils, even though as yet we have not fallen into them, to pray, saying, "Lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil." For it were good for a man to run his course apart from evil: but if temptation assail, then be brave and unconquerable; rebuke the flesh, put a bridle on the mind, ask aid of God, the safety vouchsafed by power from on high. Be established and confirmed, not feeble, not easy to be ensnared; rather be cautious, and a lover of God more than a lover of pleasure: for then He will aid you and grant you victory Who is Saviour and Lord of all: by Whom and with Whom, to God the Father be praise and dominion, with the Holy Ghost, for ever and ever, Amen.

Sermon 78.

11:5-10. And He said to them, Who of you shall have a friend, and shall go to him at midnight, and say to him, Friend, lend me three loaves: for my friend has come to me from the way, and I have nothing to set before him. And he from within shall answer and say, Trouble me not: lo! the door is shut, and the children are with me in bed: I cannot rise and give you. I say to you, that though he will not rise and give him, because he is his friend; because of his urgency he will rise and give him as much as he needs. And I also say to you, Ask, and it shall be given you: seek, and you shall find: knock, and it shall be opened to you. For every one that asks receives; and he that seeks finds: and whosoever knocks, it shall be opened to him.

THE language of the divinely inspired Scripture is constantly, so to speak, profound; nor will it bend itself for those to be able to understand it who merely wish to do so, but only for those who know how to search it well, and are enriched with the divine light in their mind, by means of which they attain to the meaning of hidden truths. Let us therefore ask for the understanding which comes from above, from God, and the illumination of the Holy Ghost, that we may attain to a correct and unerring method, whereby we may be enabled to see the truth contained in the passage set before us.

We have heard then what the Saviour said in the parable now read to us, which if we understand we shall find to be laden with benefits. And the order of the ideas is very wonderful. For the Saviour of all had taught at the request of the holy apostles, in what way we ought to pray. But it was possible that those who had obtained from Him this precious and saving lesson, might sometimes make indeed their supplications according to the pattern given them, but would do so wearily and lazily. And so, when not heard at their first or second prayer, would desist from their supplications, as being unavailing to their benefit. In order therefore that we may not experience this, nor suffer the injury that would result from such littleness of mind, He teaches us that we must diligently continue the practice, and in the form of a parable plainly shows that weariness in prayer is to our loss, while patience therein is

greatly to our profit: for it is our duty to persevere, without giving way to indolence. And this He teaches us by saying, that "though he will not rise and give him because he is his friend, because of his importunity he will rise and give him as much as he needs."

And now come, and let us transfer to the truth what was shown in the form of a parable. Be urgent in prayer; draw near to God Who loves to be kind; and that very constantly. And if you see that the gift of grace is delayed, yield not to weariness: despair not of the expected blessing: abandon not the hope set before you; nor further foolishly say within yourself, 'I have drawn near frequently; I have gained absolutely nothing; I have wept, and received not; I have supplicated, but not been accepted: for of all I asked, nothing has been accomplished.' Rather think thus within yourself, that He Who is the universal treasure house better knows our state than we do, in that He weighs to every man what is due and suitable to him. You ask sometimes what is beyond your measure; you wish to receive those things of which you are not yet worthy. The Giver Himself knows the time suitable for His gifts. Earthly fathers do not immediately and without discretion fulfil the desire of their sons: but often delay in spite of their asking, and that not because they have a grudging hand, nor again because they regard (merely) what is pleasant to the petitioners, but as considering what is useful and necessary for their good conduct. And how will that rich and bounteous Giver neglect the due accomplishment for men of what they pray for, unless of course, and without all doubt, He knows that it would not be for their benefit to receive what they ask? We must therefore offer our prayers to God with knowledge, as well as with assiduity: and even though there be some delay in your requests, continue patiently with the vineyard workers, as being well assured that what is gained without toil, and readily won, is usually despised: whereas that which is gathered with labour is a more pleasant and abiding possession.

But perchance to this you say; 'I draw near frequently, making requests; but the vintage therefrom has wandered far away. I am not slothful in supplications, but persevering and very importunate: who will assure me that I shall receive? who is my security that I shall not labour in vain?' "Therefore I also say to you;" and it is the Bestower of divine gifts Who Himself enters, and speaks;----"I also say to you, Seek, and you shall find; knock, and it shall be opened to you: for every one that asks receives; and he who seeks finds: and whosoever knocks, it shall be opened to him." In those words, "I say to you" has the full force of an oath: not that God is false, even though the promise be not accompanied with an oath; but to show that the littleness of their faith was groundless, He sometimes confirms His hearers by an oath. For the Saviour is also found in many places prefacing His words by saying, "Verily, truly, I say to you." As therefore He makes this very promise on oath, it is not a thing free from guilt to disbelieve it.

In telling us therefore to seek, He bids us labour: for by labour, that which is needed is always, so to say, found; especially when it is something fit for us to possess. He who knocks, not once merely, but again and again, rattles the door with his hand, it may be, or with a stone, so that the master of the house, unable to endure the annoyance of the knocks, will open it even against his will. Learn therefore, even from what happens among us, the way to gain that which is to your profit. Knock, be urgent, ask. So must all act who ask any thing of God: for wise Paul writes, "Pray without ceasing." We are in need of urgent prayer, because many are the turmoils of worldly matters which encircle us around: for that many headed serpent greatly distresses us, involving us sometimes in unexpected difficulties, that he may humble us to baseness and manifold sin: and, besides this, there is also the inbred law of voluptuousness lurking in our fleshly members, and warring, as Scripture says, "against the

law of our mind:" and lastly, the enemies of the doctrines of truth, even the impure and polluted gangs of heretics, oppose those who wish to hold correct opinions. Constant and earnest prayer therefore is necessary. For arms and the implements of warfare are needed for soldiers, that they may be able to overcome those who are drawn up against them: and for us prayer, "for our weapons," as Scripture says "are not carnal, but mighty to God."

And this too we ought to add, as being in my opinion amply sufficient to quicken us to prayer. The Saviour and Lord of all is seen again and again passing the night in prayer. And when too He was about to undergo His saving passion upon the precious cross, He knelt down and prayed, saying; "Father, if it be possible, let this cup pass from Me." Was this because Life was afraid of death? Was it because there was no escape for Him from the net, no deliverance from the snare, in that the hand of the Jews was mightier than His power? And how is it not altogether abominable to think or speak thus? He was by nature God, and the Lord of powers, even though He was in form like to us. Of His own will He took upon Him the suffering upon the cross, because He was the helper of us all. What need was there then of prayer? It was that we might learn that supplication is becoming and full of benefits, and that we must be constant in it whenever temptation befall, and the cruelty of enemies press upon us like a wave.

And to put it in one more light; for man to converse with God is a very great honour to human nature. And this we do in prayer, being commanded to address the Lord as Father; for we say, Our Father. But if He be a Father, necessarily He both loves and generously cherishes His sons, and honours them of course, and counts them worthy of indulgence. Draw near therefore in faith with perseverance, as being well assured that to those who ask urgently Christ bows His ear: by Whom and with Whom, to God the Father be praise and dominion, with the Holy Ghost, for ever and ever, Amen.

Sermon 79.

11:11-13. *And which of you that shall ask his father bread, will he offer him a stone? or if he ask of him a fish, will he for a fish offer him a serpent? If he ask an egg, will he offer him a scorpion? If you therefore, who are evil, know how to give good gifts to your children; how much more shall the heavenly Father give a good spirit to them that ask Him?*

TO love instruction and be fond of hearing becomes saints: but those who are thus minded must, I say, keep in remembrance, and store up in the treasure-house of their heart, whatsoever has been spoken by those who are skilful in teaching right doctrine, and whose study it is ably to initiate men in the truth. For this is both profitable to themselves for their spiritual improvement; and besides, it rejoices the teacher, just, for instance, as the seed also gladdens the husbandman when it springs up, as having been well covered in the furrow, and escaped being the food of birds. You therefore remember that at our last meeting we addressed you on the duty of praying without ceasing, and making supplication continually in offering our requests to God: and that we must not give way to any littleness of soul, nor at all grow weary, even though He somewhat delay His gift, considering that He knows whatsoever is to our benefit, and that the fitting season for His bounties is not forgotten by Him.

And in to-day's lesson from the gospel, the Saviour again teaches another point most useful for our edification. And what this is, come, that we may declare it as to sons. We sometimes

draw near to our bounteous God, offering Him petitions for various objects, according to each one's pleasure: but occasionally without discernment, or any careful examination what truly is to our advantage, and if granted by God would prove a blessing; and what would be to our injury if we received it. Rather, by the inconsiderate impulse of our fancy, we fall into desires replete with ruin, and which thrust the souls of those that entertain them into the snare of death and the meshes of hell. When therefore we ask of God ought of this kind, we shall by no means receive it: on the contrary, we offer a petition fit only for ridicule. And why shall we not receive it? Is the God of all weary of bestowing gifts upon us? By no means. Why then, some one forsooth may say, will He not give, since He is bounteous in giving? Let us learn of Him; or rather, you have already heard Him here saying, What man is there of you, whom if his son ask bread, will he give him a stone? Understand, he says, by an image or plain example taken from what happens among you, the meaning of what I say; You are the father of children; you have in you the sharp spur of natural affection towards them; in every way you wish to benefit them: when therefore, He says, one asks of you bread, without delay and with pleasure you give it, as knowing well that he seeks of you wholesome food. But when, from want of understanding, a little child that knows not yet how to distinguish what it sees, nor moreover what is the service and use of the various objects that fall in our way, asks for stones to eat, do you, He says, give them, or rather do you not make him desist from any such desire as would be to his injury?

And the same reasoning holds good of the serpent and fish, and the egg and scorpion. If he ask a fish, you will grant it: but if he see a serpent, and wish to seize it, you will hold back the child's hand. If he want an egg, you will offer it at once, and encourage his desire after things of this sort, that the infant may advance to riper age: but if he see a scorpion creeping about, and run after it, imagining it to be something pretty, and as being ignorant of the harm it can do, you will, I suppose, of course stop him, and not let him be injured by the noxious animal. When therefore He says, "You who are evil;" by which He means, you whose mind is capable of being influenced by evil, and not uniformly inclined to good like the God of all; "you know how to give good gifts to your children: how much more shall your heavenly Father give a good spirit to them that ask Him? And by "a good spirit" He means spiritual grace: for this in every way is good, and if a man receive it, he will become most blessed, and worthy of admiration.

Most ready therefore is our heavenly Father to bestow gifts upon us: so that whosoever is denied what he asks, is himself the cause of it: for he asks, as I said, what God will not give. For God wishes us to be holy and blameless, and to advance uprightly and boldly in every good work; walking apart from every thing that defiles, and from the love of fleshly pleasure, and rejecting the anxieties of worldly pursuits; not involving ourselves in worldly business; not living profligately and carelessly; not delighting in unruly pleasures; nor moreover practising a dissolute mode of life; but desiring to live well and wisely, and in accordance with God's commands, making the law which He gave us the regulator of our conduct, and earnest in the pursuit of whatever tends chiefly to our edification. If therefore you wish to receive ought of this kind, draw near with joy: for our Father Who is in heaven, because He loves virtue, will readily incline His ear.

Examine therefore your prayer: for if you ask ought by receiving which you will become a lover of God, God, as I said, will grant it: but if it be any thing unreasonable, or that is able to do you an injury, He will withhold His hand: He will not bestow the wished-for object; in order that neither He may give nothing of an injurious nature,---for this is completely alien

from Him,----nor let you harm yourself by receiving it. And let me explain how: for which purpose I shall bring forward examples. When you ask for wealth, you will not receive it of God: and why? Because it separates the heart of man from Him. Wealth begets pride, voluptuousness, and the love of pleasure, and brings men down to the pitfalls of worldly lusts. And so one of the disciples of our Lord has taught us, saying; "Whence are there wars, and whence quarrels among you? Is it not hence; from your lusts, that war in your members? You lust, and have not: you seek, and find not: you ask, and receive not, because you ask wickedly, that you may spend it on your pleasures." When you ask worldly power, God will turn away His face: for He knows that it is a most injurious thing to those who possess it. For constantly, so to speak, charges of oppression attach themselves to those who possess worldly power: and those are for the most part proud, and unbridled, and boastful, who are set in temporal dignities. When you ask for any to perish, or be exposed to inevitable tortures, because they have annoyed or molested you in any way, God will not grant it. For He wills us to be long-suffering in mind: and not to requite any one with evil for evil, but to pray for those who spoil us: to do good to those who injure us, and be imitators of His kindness. For this reason Solomon was praised; for when offering up prayers to God, he said: "And you shall give Your servant a heart to hear, and to judge Your people righteously." And it pleased the Lord that Solomon asked this thing. And what did God, Who loves virtue, say to him? "Because you have not asked for you many days: nor have asked the lives of your enemies; but have asked for you understanding, and to hear judgment: see! I have done what you said: see! I have given you a heart prudent and wise."

You, therefore, should ask the bestowal without stint of spiritual gifts. Ask strength, that you may be able manfully to resist every fleshly lust. Ask of God an uncovetous disposition; long suffering; gentleness; and the mother and nurse of all good, I mean, patience. Ask calmness of temper; continence; a pure heart; and further, ask also the wisdom that comes from Him. These things He will give readily: these save the soul: these work in it that better beauty, and imprint in it God's image. This is the spiritual wealth; the riches that has never to be abandoned: these prepare for us the lot of the saints, and make us members of the company of the holy angels; these perfect us in piety, and rapidly load us onward to the hope of eternal life, and make us heirs of the kingdom of heaven, by the aid of Christ, the Saviour of us all; by Whom, and with Whom, to God the Father be praise and dominion, with the Holy Ghost, for ever and ever, Amen.

Sermon 80.

11:14-18. And He was casting out a dumb devil: and it came to pass, when the devil was gone out, the dumb spoke. And the multitudes wondered: but some of them said, He casts out devils through Beelzebub, the prince of the devils: and others tempting, sought of Him a sign from heaven. But He, knowing their thoughts, said to them; Every kingdom divided against itself is laid desolate: and a house against a house falls. And if Satan also be divided against himself how shall his kingdom stand? Because you say that I cast out devils through Beelzebub.

"I HAVE been very jealous for the Lord," as Scripture says; and I too would say, fixing an accurate attention upon the lessons from the Gospel set before us, that the frantic tongue of Israel was bold and unbridled in insult, tyrannized over by harsh and unrestrainable wrath, and vanquished by unappeasable envy. For consider how, so to speak, they were even

gnashing their teeth at Christ, the Saviour of all, because He made the multitudes wonder by His many divine and astonishing miracles; and because the very devils cried out at His ineffable and godlike power and authority. And this, I suppose, was what was celebrated by David when thus addressing Him: "Through the greatness of your power shall Your enemies be found liars to You."

But the reason for which those who warred against His glory thus acted, this lesson plainly teaches us. "There was brought to Him one who was possessed with a dumb devil." Now dumb devils are, so to speak, difficult for any one whatsoever of the saints to rebuke; and are more obstinate than any other kind, and excessively audacious. But there was nothing difficult to the all-powerful will of Christ, the Saviour of us all. For He immediately set the man who was brought to Him free from the wicked and impure devil; and he whose tongue had before been closed by door and lock, once again poured forth his customary speech. For we say that he is called dumb in this passage as being without tongue, that is, without speech. And upon the accomplishment of this wonderful act, the multitude extolled Him with praises, and hastened to crown the worker of the miracle with godlike honour. But certain of them, it says, being Scribes and Pharisees, with hearts intoxicated with pride and envy, found in the miracle fuel for their malady; and not only did they not praise Him, but betook themselves to the very opposite. For having stripped Him of the godlike deeds He had wrought, they assigned to the Devil almighty power, and made Beelzebub the source of Christ's might. "For by him, they said, He casts out devils," And others being afflicted, so to speak, with a kindred wickedness, and running without discernment into a disgraceful forwardness of speech, and being stung by the like goadings of envy, required, it says, to see of Him a sign from heaven; calling out, as it were, and saying, 'Even if You have expelled from a man a bitter and malicious demon, that as yet

is no such great matter, nor worthy of admiration. What as yet is done is no proof of divine ability. We see nothing as yet equal to the miracles of old. Show us some deed of which there is no doubt of its being wrought by power from above. Moses made the people pass over, having caused the sea that was between to become capable of being walked upon: the waters were piled up like a wall. He smote the rock with his rod, and made it the mother of rivers, so that fountains burst forth from the flinty stone. Likewise also Jeshua, his successor, made the sun stand still in Gibeon, and the moon in the valley of Arnon. He laid bonds on the streams of Jordan. But You show no such deed as these. You cast out a devil: this authority the prince of the devils, even Beelzebub, grants to men. Of him You borrow the power of doing those things, which in unlearned and ignorant people beget wonder.' Such were their forward fault-finders. For the fact of their wishing to ask a sign from heaven proves nothing else than that they entertained such thoughts as these respecting Him.

And what said Christ to these things? First, indeed, He proves Himself to be God, by knowing even that which was secretly whispered among them: for He knew their thoughts. And it is an act that altogether belongs to God, to be able to know what is in the mind and heart, and even what is spoken anywhere by men secretly. To draw them away then from so obdurate a crime, He says, that "Every kingdom divided against itself is laid desolate: and a house against a house falls. And if Satan be divided against himself, how shall his kingdom stand? For He well might have said to those who babbled thus foolishly about Him, You depart from the right way: truly you err, and without doubt are ignorant of My nature. The greatness of My might, and the splendour of My glory, is unperceived by you. Moses was a servant: I am Lord. He was the minister of the law: but I the legislator; for I am by nature God. He was the minister of the

signs; but I the doer of them, and the worker of the miracles. I divided the sea: it was the work of My power, that the waters were divided, and the people passed over: I displayed the flint stone as the mother of rivers. I made the sun stand still in Gibeon, and the might of My commands stayed the moon in the valley of Arnon. It was I Who laid bonds on the streams of Jordan. Had He, however, used words such as these, it is perhaps not improbable to imagine that they would have conceived in them a yet more violent flame of envy: for they would at once have said, 'He exalts Himself above the glory of the saints: He boasts Himself over the illustrious patriarchs, who, He says, were nothing: He appropriates to Himself their glory.' And they would have added to these other words, which in unlearned persons would have given occasion for wickedness towards Him.

Very wisely therefore, omitting these things, He proceeds to arguments, drawn indeed from common things, but which have the force of truth in them; "For every kingdom," He says, "divided against itself, becomes desolate; and every house against a house, falls: and if Satan be divided against himself, how shall his kingdom stand?" For that which establishes kingdoms is the fidelity of subjects, and the obedience of those under the royal sceptre: and houses are established when those who belong to them in no way whatsoever thwart one another, but, on the contrary, accord both in will and deed. And so I suppose it would establish the kingdom too of Beelzebub, had he determined to abstain from every thing contrary to himself. How then does Satan cast out Satan? It follows then that devils do not depart from men of their own accord, but retire unwillingly. Satan, He says, does not fight with himself. He does not rebuke his own satellites. He does not permit himself to injure his own armour-bearers. On the contrary, he aids his kingdom. It remains, therefore for you to understand, that I crush Satan by divine power.

So must we be persuaded who believe in Him, and have departed far away from the wickedness of the Jews. For what is at all impossible to that Almighty right hand? Or what is great and difficult to Him, Who can accomplish every thing by His will alone? He Who established the heavens, and founded the earth, Who is the Creator of all, Who is perfect power, how can He be in need of Beelzebub? Oh, thoughts never to be spoken! Oh, wickedness never to be endured! A people foolish and without understanding! Very justly may one say of the Israelites, "They have eyes, and see not: they have ears, and hear not." For though they were spectators of the wonderful deeds wrought by Christ, and by the holy prophets, and heard of them, and knew them long before, nevertheless they continued obdurate and intractable. Therefore "they eat the fruit of their way," as Scripture says. But let us be earnest in extolling Christ with endless praises; for thus shall we be heirs of the kingdom of heaven, by the gift of the same Christ: by Whom, and with Whom, to God the Father be praise and dominion with the Holy Ghost, for ever and ever, Amen.

Here ends the first portion of the Explanation of the Evangelist Luke, by the holy Cyril, Patriarch of Alexandria; containing eighty Sermons.

Blessed be God for ever; and praised be His Name for generations.

Glory be to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Spirit, now and always, and for ever and ever, Amen and Amen.

