

Sermon 99.

13:22-30. And He went about among the cities and villages teaching; and journeyed towards Jerusalem. And one said unto Him, Lord, are they few that be saved? And He said unto them; Strive to enter in at the strait door: for many, I say unto you, will seek to enter in, and shall not be able, directly that the master of the house arises, and shuts the door: and you begin to stand outside, and to knock at the door, saying, Lord, open to us; and He shall answer and say unto you, I know you not whence you are. Then you will begin to say, We have eaten and drunk in Your presence, and You have taught in our streets: and He will say, I tell you, I know you not, whence you are; depart from me, all you workers of iniquity. There shall be weeping and gnashing of teeth, when you shall see Abraham, and Isaac, and Jacob, and all the prophets, in the kingdom of God, and you yourselves cast out. And they shall come from the east, and from the west, and from the north, and from the south, and shall sit down to meat in the kingdom of God. And lo! there are last that shall be first, and first that shall be last.

A SHIP is guided to the right port by means of the helm; but the word of God pilots the soul of man, and leads him without risk of error to every thing that is necessary for salvation. For so spoke one of the holy prophets; "Take with you words:" even those which are inspired by the Holy Spirit: for no man of sense will say, that it means the words of the wise of this world. For their words lead men unto the pit of destruction, by bringing polytheism into the world, and by inciting unto carnal pleasure, and to the desire of the world's vain distractions: but the words of God point out the pathway to a better life, and beget in us an earnestness which makes us cheerfully advance unto the duty of performing all those things, by means of which we are made partakers of eternal life.

Let us listen therefore to the Saviour's words, which He addressed unto those who wanted to learn, whether they be few who are saved: and to whom the Saviour answered, "Strive to enter in by the strait door." Now this reply may seem perhaps, to wander from the scope of the question. For the man wanted to learn, whether they be few who are saved: but He described unto him the way whereby he might be saved himself, saying, "Strive to enter in by the strait door." What reply then do we make to this objection? We answer as follows; that it was the custom of our common Saviour Christ to meet His questioners, not of course according to what might seem good to them, but as having regard to what was useful and necessary for His hearers. And this He especially did when any one wanted to learn what was superfluous and un-edifying. For what good was there in wishing to learn, whether there be many or few that be saved? What benefit resulted from it to the hearers? On the contrary it was a necessary and valuable thing to know in what way a man may attain to salvation. He is purposely silent therefore with respect to the useless question which had been asked Him, but proceeds to speak of what was essential, namely, of the knowledge necessary for the performance of those duties by which men can enter in at the strait and narrow door. For this He has also taught us in another place, saying; "Enter in at the strait door: for wide is the door, and broad is the way that leads to destruction, and many are they that go in thereby. For strait is the door, and narrow is the way that leads unto life, and few are they that find it."

Now I consider it my duty to mention why the door is narrow, through which a man goes unto life. Whosoever then would enter must of necessity first before everything else possess an upright and uncorrupted faith: and, secondly, a spotless morality, in which is no possibility of blame, according to the measure of human righteousness. For so the prophet David also somewhere says, very excellently framing his supplications unto God, " Judge me, O Lord, according to my righteousness; and according to my innocency requite me." For the innocency and righteousness of the holy angels, being in proportion to their nature and glory, is entirely distinct from that which belongs to the inhabitants of earth: for theirs is of a lower kind, and inferior in every respect, just as they are inferior to them also in nature. Nevertheless those who wish to live holily cannot do so without labour: for constantly, so to speak, the pathway that leads unto virtue is rugged and steep, and for most men too difficult to walk upon. For labours spring up before us and we have need altogether of fortitude and patience, and nobleness of conduct: yes, moreover, and of a mind that cannot be prevailed upon dissolutely to take part in base pleasures, or to be led by irrational impulses into carnal lust. He who has attained unto this in mind and spiritual fortitude will enter easily by the strait door, and run along the narrow way. For it is written, that "by labours a man labours for himself, and violently gains the mastery over his destruction." You hear how the prophet plainly says, that he gains the mastery over his destruction by violence; for as the Lord himself again said, "The kingdom of heaven is gained by violence, and the violent seize it."

"For wide is the door, and broad the way that brings down many to destruction." And what are we to understand by its broadness? It means an unrestrained tendency to carnal lust; a base and pleasure loving life; luxurious feastings, and revellings and banquetings, and unresisted inclinations unto every thing which is condemned by the law, and displeasing to God: a stiff-necked mind that will not bow to the yoke of the law: a life accursed, and relaxed in all dissoluteness, thrusting from it the divine law, and utterly unmindful of the sacred commandments: wealth and the vices that spring from it, scorn and pride, and the vain imagining of transitory boastings. From all such things must those withdraw who would enter in by the strait door, and be with Christ, and keep festival with Him.

And that such as are not thus minded cannot walk upon this way, He showed at once by a plain example. For those who were too late, and so to say, did not arrive at the feast, their lot was to be at once rejected. "For when," He says, "the master of the house enters in, and shuts the door, and they begin to say from without, Lord, open to us; he will say, I know you not whence you are." For in the character as it were of some householder, who has gathered many of his neighbours to his house and table, and has afterwards entered in with his guests and closed the door, He says that those who subsequently knock, shall have for answer, "I know you not whence you are:" and though, He says, you importune, saying, "we have eaten before You and drunk; and You have taught in our streets; you shall hear none the less, I know you not whence you are. Depart far from Me, all you workers of iniquity." For the light has no communion at all with the darkness: nor can any one be near unto the perfectly pure God who is held by the pollutions of sin, and whose stain is not yet washed away.

We must however next inquire who we are to understand by those who say unto Christ, 'We have eaten and drunk in Your presence, and You have taught in our streets? Such an assertion then would suit the Israelites, to whom also Christ said, "you shall see Abraham, and Isaac, and Jacob, and all the prophets in the kingdom of God, and you yourselves cast out." But how then were they eating and drinking before God? I answer, by performing the service enacted in the law: for when offering unto God sacrifices by the shedding of blood, they ate and made

merry. And they heard also in their synagogues the writings of Moses, interpreting God's messages: for constantly he prefaced his words with, 'Thus says the Lord.' These then are they who say, "We have eaten and drunk in Your presence, and You have taught in our streets." But the worship by the shedding of blood is not sufficient for justification, nor verily does a man wash away his stains by having become a hearer of the divine laws, if he does nothing of what has been commanded.

And in another way, as long as they refused to accept the faith, which justifies the wicked, nor would follow the evangelic commands, by means of which it is possible to practice the excellent and elect life, how could they enter the kingdom of God? The type therefore profits not: for it justifies no man, and it is a thing impossible for the blood of bulls and of goats to take away sins.

With the above-named, you may number certain others also as able to say to the Judge of all, "we have eaten and drunk in Your presence, and You have taught in our streets." And who again are these? Many have believed in Christ, and celebrate the holy festivals in His honour; and frequenting the churches they also hear the doctrines of the Gospel: but they lay up in their mind of the truths of Scripture absolutely nothing. And it is with difficulty that the practice of virtue is brought with them even to this extent, while of spiritual fruitfulness their heart is quite bare. These too shall weep bitterly, and gnash their teeth; for the Lord shall deny them also. For He has said, that "not every one that says unto Me, Lord, Lord, shall enter into the kingdom of heaven, but he that does the will of My Father Who is in heaven."

But that the Jews were about to fall utterly from their rank of being in a spiritual sense His household, and that the multitude of the Gentiles should enter in their stead, He showed by saying, that "there shall come from the east and from the west, from the north and from the south, many who received the call, and shall rest with the saints; but they shall be driven away: and whereas they once had the first rank, they shall now take the second, by reason of others being preferred before them." Which also happened; for the Gentiles have been honoured far above the Jewish herd. For it was guilty both of disobedience and of the murder of the Lord: but they honoured the faith that is in Christ; by Whom and with Whom to God the Father be praise and dominion, with the Holy Spirit, for ever and ever, Amen.

Sermon 100.

13:31-35. That same hour there drew near certain Pharisees, saying unto Him, Depart, and go hence: for Herod desires to kill you. And He said unto them, Go you, and tell this fox, Behold I cast out devils, and I do cures today and tomorrow, and on the third I shall be perfected. Nevertheless I must walk today and tomorrow and the day afterward: for it cannot be that a prophet perish out of Jerusalem. Jerusalem, Jerusalem, that kills the prophets, and stones them that are sent unto her, how often would I have gathered your children, as a hen gathers her chickens under her wings, and you would not. Behold your house is abandoned for you: and I say unto you, that you shall not see Me, until you say, Blessed is He That comes in the name of the Lord.

THE Pharisaic crew was always, so to speak, wicked and designing, and eager for fraud, gnashing their teeth at Christ, whenever He was regarded with admiration, and with their heart consumed by the fire of envy. And yet how was it not rather their duty as being the

people's guides, and set over the ordinary multitude, to lead them on unto the confession of Christ's glory, as being the purpose both of the enactment of the law, and of the preaching of the holy prophets. But this in their great wickedness they did not do: yes! rather in every way they resisted Him, and provoked Him incessantly to anger; and therefore Christ said unto them, "Woe unto you, Scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites: for you have taken away the key of knowledge: you enter not in yourselves, and those that were entering you have hindered." For one can see that they had fallen into such a state of malice, and into a disposition so contrary to the love of God, that they were not willing for Him even to dwell in Jerusalem, lest He should benefit men, partly by filling them with wonder at His divine miracles, and partly by shedding upon them the light of the accurate vision of God by means of the teaching of truths superior to those of the law.

Such are the thoughts to which we are here led by the purport of the lessons now set before us. "For in that same hour, it says, certain Pharisees drew near, and said unto Him, Depart and go hence: for Herod desires to kill You." Come, then, and let us fix the scrutinizing eye of the mind on what is here said by them. Let us accurately examine which of the two is the case, whether the speakers are to be reckoned among those who love Him, or among those who would oppose Him. But, as it appears, there is no difficulty whatsoever in perceiving that they were His thorough opponents. For Christ, for instance, raised the dead from the grave, employing therein a power such as belongs to God: for He cried, "Lazarus, come forth:" and to the widow's son, "Young man, I say unto you, arise." But they made the miracle food for their envy, and even said, when gathered together, "What do we, because this man does many miracles? If we thus leave Him alone, the Romans will come, and take away our people and our land." And then, even then, it was that Caiaphas, planning wicked murder against Him, said; "As for you, you know nothing at all, that it is expedient for you that one man die for the people, and not that the whole people perish."

And they resisted Him also in other ways; at one time treating Him with scorn, and mocking His miraculous power, and venturing even to accuse His godlike authority, saying, that whatever was done was wrought by the help of Beelzebub: and at another even endeavouring to give Him up to Caesar's satellites. For as though He prohibited the Israelites from paying tax unto Caesar, they drew near to Him in treachery and guile, saying, "Is it lawful to give tribute unto Caesar or not?" Can those then who laid for Him all kinds of snares; who, in their audacity and hardihood, did not even abstain from murder; who, being cunning for wickedness, attacked Him with remorseless violence, and readily practised all such arts as those do who hate utterly; how, I say, can such be reckoned among those who love Him?

Why then did they draw near, saying, "Depart hence: for Herod wishes to kill You:" and what object had they in so doing? The Evangelist tells us this, by saying, "That same hour they drew near to Him." And what is the meaning of this carefulness of language? Why was there this exactitude? or what hour does he mean as that in which the Pharisees said these things to Jesus? He was occupied in teaching the Jewish multitudes, when some one asked Him whether there be many that are saved. He passed by the question, however, as unprofitable, and turned to that which was fitting for Him to tell, the way, namely, by which men must walk to become heirs of the kingdom of heaven. For He said, "Strive to enter in at the strait door: and told them that if they refuse so to do, they will see Abraham and Isaac and Jacob, and all the prophets in the kingdom of God, and themselves cast out." And He added thereunto, that "whereas they had been the first, they should be the last," upon the calling namely of the heathen. These remarks goaded the mind of the Pharisees unto anger: they saw the

multitudes already repenting, and receiving with eagerness faith in Him; and that they needed now but a little more instruction to learn His glory and the great and adorable mystery of the incarnation. As being likely therefore to lose their office of being chiefs of the people, and as already fallen and expelled from their authority over them, and deprived of their profits,---- for they were fond of wealth, and covetous, and given to lucre,----they made pretence of loving Him, and even drew near, and said, "Depart and go hence: for Herod desires to kill You." But, O stonyhearted Pharisee, had you been wise; had you been well acquainted with the law of the most wise Moses; had you really fixed your mind upon the declarations of the holy profits; it could not have escaped you that there was no possibility of your being undetected in feigning a false show of affection, while your mind was full of gall. He was not a mere man, and one of those like unto us, and so liable to deception; but God in our likeness: God Who understands everything, and "knows secrets," as it is written, and "tries the hearts and reins;" "to Whom all things are naked, and spread open," and from Whom nothing is hid. But you knew not this precious and mighty mystery: you thought that you could deceive even Him Who says; "Who is this that hides from Me his mind, and shuts up words in his heart, and thinks that from Me he hides them?"

What then does Christ answer to these things? He replied to them gently, and with His meaning veiled, as was His wont: "Go and tell, He says, this fox." Attend closely to the force of the expression: for the words used seem forsooth to be directed, and to have regard, as it were, to the person of Herod: but they really rather refer to the craftiness of the Pharisees. For while He would naturally have said, "Tell that fox," He does not do so, but using very skilfully a middle sort of expression, He, so to speak, pointed to the Pharisee, who was close beside Him, and said, "this fox." And He compares the man to a fox: for it is constantly a very crafty animal, and, if I may so speak, malicious, such as were the Pharisees.

But what did He bid them say? "Behold, I cast out devils, and do cures today and tomorrow, and the third I shall be perfected." You see that He declares His intention of performing what He knew would grieve the troop of Pharisees: for they drive Him from Jerusalem, lest by the display of miracles He should win many unto faith in Him. But inasmuch as their purpose herein did not escape Him as being God, He declares His intention of performing what they hated, and says, that "He shall also rebuke unclean spirits, and deliver the sick from their sufferings, and be perfected;" which means, that of His own will He would endure the passion upon the cross, for the salvation of the world. He knew, therefore, as it appears, both how and when He would endure death in the flesh.

The Pharisees, however, imagined that the power of Herod would terrify Him, and humble Him unto mean fears, although He is Lord of powers, and begets in us spiritual bravery by His words, "Fear not them who kill the body, but cannot kill the soul," And that He too makes no account of the violence of men He showed, saying, "But I must walk today and tomorrow and the day after." And in saying, "I must," He does not imply that an inevitable necessity, so to speak, was laid upon Him, but rather that by the power of His own will, freely and without danger He would go wherever He chose, and traverse Judaea without any one opposing Him or plotting Him ill, until of His own accord He received His consummation upon the precious cross.

Let not therefore those murderers of the Lord pride themselves, or superciliously vaunt themselves against Him. You did not win a victory over One Who fled from suffering. You didst not seize One unwilling. You didst not prevail over One Who refused to be caught in the

meshes of your craftiness. Of His own will He consented to suffer, as being well assured that by the death of His flesh He would abolish death, and return again to life. For He arose from the dead, having raised up with Him the whole nature of man, and having fashioned it anew unto the life incorruptible.

But He shows that Jerusalem is guilty of the blood of many saints, declaring, "that it is not possible for a prophet to perish out of her." And what follows from this? That they were about to fall from being members of God's spiritual family; that they were about to be rejected from the hope of the saints, and entirely deprived of the inheritance of those blessings which are in store for them who have been saved by faith. For that they were forgetful of God's gifts, and intractable, and slothful unto everything that might have profited them, He showed, saying; "Jerusalem, Jerusalem, that kills the prophets, and stones them that are sent unto her, how often would I have gathered your sons, as a hen gathers her chickens under her wings, and you would not: behold your house is abandoned unto you." For He taught them by the most wise Moses, and ordained for them the law to direct them in their conduct, and be their ruler and guide in the life worthy of admiration, and which though it was but as yet in shadows, nevertheless possessed the type of the true worship: He admonished them by the holy prophets: He would have had them under His wings, under the protection, that is, of His power: but they lost blessings thus valuable by being evil-disposed and ungrateful, and despisers.

"But," says He, "you shall not see Me henceforth until you say, Blessed is he that comes in the Name of the Lord." And what again is this? The Lord withdrew from Jerusalem, and left as unworthy of His presence those who said, "Depart and go hence." And afterwards having traversed Judaea, and saved many, and performed miracles which no words can adequately describe, He returned again to Jerusalem. And then it was, even then, that He sat upon a foal and an ass, while vast multitudes and young children, holding up branches of palm-trees, went before Him, praising Him, and saying, "Hosanna to the Son of David. Blessed is He That comes in the Name of the Lord." Having left them therefore as being unworthy, He says that He will then barely be seen by them when the time of His passion has arrived. For then again He went up to Jerusalem, and entered amid praises, and at that very time endured His saving passion in our behalf, that by suffering He might save, and renew unto incorruption the inhabitants of the earth. For God the Father has saved us by Christ: by Whom and with Whom to God the Father be praise and dominion, with the Holy Spirit, for ever and ever, Amen.

Sermon 101.

14:1-6. And it came to pass, when He had gone into the house of one of the chief Pharisees on the sabbath day to eat bread, that they watched Him. And behold there was a certain man before Him who had the dropsy. And Jesus answered and spoke unto the lawyers and Pharisees, saying; Is it lawful to heal on the sabbath day or no? And they were silent. And He took him, and healed him, and sent him away. And He answered them, saying; Which of you shall have a son or an ox fall into a pit, and will not immediately draw him out on the sabbath day? And they could not return Him an answer to these things.

AGAIN the Lord works miracles, and exercising a divine and supreme power, performs His accustomed acts, and manifests His glory. He benefits then in more ways than one the intractable and contentious Pharisee. For just as maladies of more than usual violence will not

yield to the skill of physicians, but require the main force of persons of blunter feelings: so also the human mind, that has turned aside to wickedness, rejects all that could benefit it, directly that it has once become the victim of an uncontrollable tendency to disobedience, being brought into this state by unreprieved departures from the right path. ¹

And that this is undeniably true, any one may see who will give his attention to the lessons here set before us. For a Pharisee, of higher rank than usual, invited Jesus to a banquet: and He, although He knew their malice, went with him, and dined in their company. And He submitted to this act of condescension, not to honour His inviter, but rather to benefit those in whose company He was, by such words and miraculous deeds as might lead them to the acknowledgment of the true service, even that which is taught us by the gospel. For He knew that even against their will He would make them eyewitnesses both of His power, and of His more than human glory, if perchance even so they might believe that He is God and the Son of God, Who assumed indeed our likeness, but continued unchanged, nor ceased to be that which He had been.

He became the guest then of His inviters, to fulfil, as I said, a necessary duty: "but they, it says, watched Him." And for what reason did they watch Him, and on what account? To see forsooth whether He would disregard the honour due to the law, and so do something or other forbidden on the sabbath day. But, O senseless Jew, understand that the law was a shadow and type, waiting for the truth: and the truth was Christ, and His commandments. Why then do you arm the typo against the truth? why do you set the shadow in array against the spiritual interpretation? Keep your sabbath rationally: but if you will not consent so to do, then art you cut off from that sabbath keeping which is well pleasing to God, and know not the true rest, which He requires of us Who of old spoke the law of Moses. Let us cease from our sins; let us rest from our offences; let us wash away our stains; let us abandon the impure love of the flesh; let us flee far from covetousness and extortion; and from disgraceful gains, and the love of lucre. Let us first gather provisions for our souls for the way, the meat that will suffice us in the world to come: and let us apply ourselves to holy works, thereby keeping the sabbath rationally. Those whose office it was to minister among you according to the law used to offer unto God the appointed sacrifices, even upon the sabbath: they slew the victims in the temple, and performed those acts of service which were laid upon them: and no man rebuked them, and the law itself was silent. It did not therefore forbid men ministering upon the sabbath. This then was a type for us: for, as I said, it is our duty, keeping the sabbath in a rational manner, to please God by a sweet spiritual savour. And, as I have already before said, we render this when ceasing from sins, we offer unto God as a sacred oblation a life holy and worthy of admiration, steadily advancing unto all virtue. For this is the spiritual sacrifice well pleasing unto God.

But if, having nought of this in your mind, you cleave solely to the grossness of the legal Scripture, abandoning the truth as something you can not attain to, listen unto God, Who tells you by the voice of the prophet Isaiah; "The heart of this people is waxed gross, their eyes they have closed, and made their ears heavy, lest they should see with their eyes, and hear with their ears, and understand with their heart, and should be converted, and I should heal them." For how were not they heavy and without understanding, and of a mind past helping, who when they might have perceived that He was the Christ by His teaching being superior to the law, and by the wonderful works that He wrought, were obdurate, and regarded only their own preconceived idea of what was right: or rather that only which brought them down to the pit of destruction?

But what was the miracle of which they were spectators? There was a certain man before Him who had the dropsy: the Lord therefore asks the lawyers and Pharisees, whether it is lawful to heal on the sabbath day or not? "But they, it says, were silent." But why, O lawyer, were you silent? Quote something from the scriptures; show that the law of Moses ever blamed the doing good on the sabbath: prove to us that it wishes us to be hardhearted and unmerciful, because of the rest for our bodies;---that it forbids kindness, in order that we may honour the sabbath. But this you can not prove from any part of it. And as they were silent from malice, Christ refutes their immitigable shamelessness by the convincing arguments which He uses. For "whose son of yours," He says, "or whose ox shall fall into a pit, and he will not immediately draw him out on the sabbath day?" If the law forbids the showing mercy on the sabbath, why do you yourself take compassion on that which has fallen into the pit? Trouble not yourself about your son's danger upon the sabbath; rebuke the sting of natural affection, which incites you to feel a father's love. Commit your child with joy to the grave, that you may honour the Giver of the law, as knowing that He is harsh and unmerciful. Let your friend be in danger, but pay not you the slightest heed thereto: nay though you hear a young child weeping, and asking for help, say to it, Die: such is the will of the law. But you will not assent to such reasonings; you will stretch out your hand to one who is distressed, esteeming him of more account than the honour due to the law, or rather than a senseless rest, even if you will not as yet acknowledge that the sabbath ought to be kept in a spiritual manner. The God of all ceases not to be kind: He is good and loving unto men: He instituted not the law of Moses as the mediator of harshness, nor appointed it as a teacher of cruelty, but rather to lead you on to the love of your neighbour. How you was it fitting that a commandment thus venerable and worthy of admiration should by the will of God lose its force upon the sabbath day? Why therefore were you silent, O lawyer? Confessedly because you had nothing to say. For the force of truth is something great, and invincible, able to confound the envious mind, and to muzzle the faultfinding tongue.

Paying then no further heed to the envyings of the Jews, He delivers from his malady the man afflicted with the dropsy, and tyrannized over by an incurable disease. You have seen O Jew, the miracle: extol then the Worker of it. Understand His might, and the gloriousness of His dominion: acknowledge that He is God: offer Him your faith: be not obdurate; but as the prophet Jeremiah says, "Rend your hearts, and not your garments." Expand your mind: open the eye of your heart: understand that the acts which He works are those of Deity, even though in appearance He be a man like unto us. Recognize therefore Him Who for our sakes bore our likeness, but even so was far above us: or rather far above all creation by His ineffable generation from God the Father. For He is the Son of Him Who transcends all, but though He was Lord He took the form of the slave, that He might make the slave like unto Himself: yet He did not cease to be God, but remains the Same, Whom angels worship, and principalities, and thrones, and lordships. The Seraphim praise Him: and let us also serve Him in faith, mounting upward by His aid to the lot of the saints; by Whom and with Whom, to God the Father be praise and dominion with the Holy Spirit, for ever and ever, Amen.

Sermon 102.

14:7-11. And He spoke a parable unto them which were bidden preventing how they chose the foremost seats: saying unto them, When you are bidden of any one, seat not yourself at the head of the seat, lest a more honourable man than you be bidden of him; and when he that bade you and him comes, he say to you, Give this man place; and then you begin with shame to take the lowest place.

But when you are bidden, go seat yourself in the lowest place, that when he that bade you comes, he may say unto you Friend, go up higher; then shall you have honour before all who sit with you at meat. For whosoever exalts himself shall be abased, and He that humbles himself shall be exalted.

NEVER does the Saviour cease from doing some act or other replete with benefit, guiding by admonitions and counsels all who draw near unto Him into propriety of conduct, and teaching them that sobriety which becomes saints, that as Paul says, "the man of God may be perfect, complete unto every good work." Seizing therefore every opportunity, however slight, for His words, He wove for us admonitions well worthy of our attention, therein resembling an active husbandman; for whatsoever is liable to blame and reprehension, and covers with utter infamy those who are guilty of it, this He cuts away from our minds, and plants, so to speak, every fruit of virtue: for "we, as Scripture says, are God's husbandry."

What benefit then He has here too discovered for us, we learn from the passage now read. For He was dining on the sabbath day with one of the Pharisees, at his special request.

And his purpose in so doing, and motive we explained unto you when last we met together. But inasmuch as He saw certain of those who were invited foolishly seizing the uppermost seats as a thing of importance, and worth the taking, and that they were eager after vainglory, for the benefit both of them and us He utters an urgent warning, saying; "When you are bidden of any one, seat not yourself at the head of the seat, lest a more honourable man than you be bidden of him, and when he that bade you and him comes, he say unto you, Give this man place; and then you begin with shame to take the lowest place."

Now such things may seem perchance to some to be but trifling matters, and not worthy of much attention. But when any one fixes upon them the eye of his mind, he will then learn, from what blame they deliver a man, and how great orderliness they produce in him. For in the first place to hurry inconsiderately after honours neither suitable,, nor due to us, shows us to be foolish, rude, and arrogant, seizing what is not fitting for us, but for others rather, who are greater than and superior to ourselves. Whoever he is that thus acts, is hated, and often too becomes an object of ridicule, when he has to restore to others, and that often against his will, the honour which in no respect belongs unto him. "For when, He says, a more honourable man than you comes, he that bade you and him will say, Give this man place." O! what great ignominy is there in having so to do! It is like a theft, so to speak, and the restitution of the stolen goods. He must restore what he has seized; for he had no right to take it. But the modest and praiseworthy man, who might without fear of blame have claimed the dignity of sitting among the foremost, seeks it not, but yields to others what might be called his own, that he may not even seem to be overcome by vainglory; and such an one shall receive honour as his due: for he shall hear, He says, him who bade him say, "Come up hither."

A modest mind therefore is a great and surpassing good: for it delivers those who possess it from blame and contempt, and from the charge of vaingloriousness. 'But yes! says the lover of vainglory, I wish to be illustrious and renowned, and not despised and neglected, and numbered among the unknown.' If however you desire this transitory and human glory, you are wandering away from the right path, by which you might become truly illustrious, and attain to such praise as is worthy of emulation. For it is written, "All flesh is grass, and all the glory of man as the flower of grass." And the prophet David also blames those who love

temporal honours; for he also thus spoke of them, "Let them be as the grass upon the housetops, which withers before it is plucked up." For just as the grass that springs up upon the housetops has no deep fixed root, and for this reason is easily parched up; so he who values worldly honour, after he has been for a short time conspicuous, and, so to speak, in flower, sinks at last into nothingness.

If then any one wish to be set above others, let him win it by the decree of heaven, and be crowned by those honours which God bestows. Let him surpass the many by having the testimony of glorious virtues; but the rule of virtue is a lowly mind that loves not boasting: yes! it is humility. And this the blessed Paul also counted worthy of all esteem: for he writes to such as are eagerly desirous of saintly pursuits, "Love humility." And' the disciple of Christ praises it, thus writing; "Let the poor brother glory in his exaltation: and the rich in his humiliation, because as the flower of the grass he passes away." For the moderate and bridled mind is exalted with God: for "God, it says, will not despise the contrite and abased heart."

But whosoever thinks great things of himself, and is supercilious, and elate in mind, and prides himself on an empty loftiness, is rejected and accursed. He follows a course the contrary of Christ's, Who said; "Learn of Me, for I am meek and lowly in heart." "For the Lord, it says, resists the proud, but gives grace to the humble." The wise Solomon also shows in many places the safety of the humble mind; at one time saying, "Exalt not yourself, that you fall not:" and at another time, he figuratively declares the same thing; "He that makes his house high, seeks an overthrow." Such a one is hated of God, and very justly, as having mistaken himself, and senselessly aimed above the limits of his nature. For upon what ground, I pray, does man upon earth think great things of himself? For certainly his mind is weak, and easily led into base pleasures: his body is tyrannized over by corruption and death: and the duration of his life is short and limited. Nor is this all, for naked were we born, and therefore riches, and wealth, and worldly honour come to us from without, and are not really ours: for they belong not to the properties of our nature. For what reason therefore is the mind of man puffed up? What is there to exalt it to superciliousness and boasting? Were any one but to regard his state with understanding eyes, he would then become like Abraham, who mistook not his nature, and called himself "dust and ashes." And like another also who says; "Quit man who is rottenness, and the son of man who is a worm." But he who is a worm and rottenness; this dust and ashes: this very nothingness becomes great and admirable and honourable before God, by knowing himself; for so he is crowned by God with honour and praise: for the Saviour of all and Lord gives grace to the humble: by Whom and with Whom to God the Father be praise and dominion, with the Holy Spirit, for ever and ever, Amen.

Sermon 103.

14:12-14. Then said He also to him that bade Him, When you make a dinner or a supper, call not your friends, nor your brethren, neither your kinsmen, nor your rich neighbours; lest they also bid you again, and a recompense be made you. But when you make a feast, call the poor, the maimed, the lame, and the blind. And you shall be blessed, because they cannot recompense you: for you shall be recompensed at the resurrection of the just.

REMARKABLE indeed is the beauty of the mind of man: and it shows itself in various ways, and is conspicuous in a diversity of manners. For just as those who are skilled in delineating forms in pictures cannot by one colour attain to perfect beauty in their painting, but rather

use various and many kinds of hues; so also the God of all, Who is the Giver and Teacher of spiritual beauty, adorns our souls with that manifold virtue which consists in all saintlike excellence of living, in order to complete in us His likeness. For in His rational creatures the best and most excellent beauty is the likeness of God, which is wrought in us by the exact vision of God, and by virtue perfected by active exertion. Consider therefore how our Lord Jesus Christ makes our souls beautiful by every spiritual adornment. For here He had commanded the Pharisees and lawyers, or rather, the Scribes, to think lowly of themselves, and to cultivate a mind free from the love of vainglory, bidding them not to seize upon the foremost seats. For He was dining with them, that being in their company He might benefit them even against their will. And after them He next addressed him who had invited them, and assembled them to the entertainment, saying, "When you make a dinner or a supper, call not your friends, nor your brethren, neither your kinsmen nor your rich neighbours: but rather the lame, and the blind, and the maimed."

Would He then produce in us a morose state of mind? Is it His will that we be unsociable, and unloving, so as not even to deem our friends and relatives worthy of that affection which especially is fitting and due to them? Are we to pay no regard to those who are near us in affection and love? Does He forbid the rights of hospitality? But how is it not absurd and ignorant to imagine that He contradicts His own laws? What then does He wish to teach? Something perhaps like what follows; Those who possess great store of wealth make much account, so to speak, of a constant display and ostentation. For oftentimes they bring men to banquet with them, and make entertainments at vast cost, with curiously prepared viands, and such as do not escape the blame of prodigality. And this it is their custom to do, in order to gain the praises and applause of their guests. And in receiving the praises of their flatterers, as the wages, so to speak, of their extravagance, they rejoice greatly, as though they had gained something of value. For it is the habit of flatterers to praise even those things which deserve blame.

For what good is there in such prodigal abundance beyond what necessity requires? For as Christ Himself somewhere said, "Few things are needful, or one," for the necessary appeasing of the wants of the body. That we may escape therefore the danger of losing the reward of our outlay, by expending our wealth in such pursuits as will bear good fruit, He has commanded us to invite the poor, and the maimed, and the blind, and those who are suffering under other bodily maladies; that by our liberality in so doing, we may attain to the hope that comes from above from God.

The lesson therefore which He teaches us is love unto the poor, which is a thing precious in the sight of God. Do you feel pleasure in being praised when you have any friends or relatives feasting with you? I tell you of something far better: angels shall praise your bounty, and the rational powers above, and holy men as well: and He too shall accept it Who transcends all, and Who loves mercy and is kind. Lend unto Him fearing nothing, and you shall receive with usury whatever you gave: "for he, it says, who has pity on the poor lends unto God." He acknowledged the loan, and promises repayment. "For when the Son of man, He says, shall come in the glory of His Father, with the holy angels, and shall sit upon the throne of His glory, He shall set the sheep upon His right hand, and the goats upon His left.

And He shall say to them on His right hand, Come you blessed of My Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundations of the world: for I was hungry and you gave Me meat: I was thirsty and you gave Me drink: I was naked and you covered Me: sick and you

visited Me: in prison, and you came unto Me. And to this He added, Verily I say unto you, that whatsoever you have done to one of these little ones, you have done unto Me." The outlay therefore is not unfruitful: rather shall compassion upon the poor make your wealth breathe forth a sweet savour. Purchase the grace that comes from God; buy for your friend the Lord of heaven and earth: for verily we oftentimes purchase men's friendship with large sums of gold, and if those of high rank are reconciled unto us, we feel great joy in offering them presents even beyond what we can afford, because of the honour which accrues to us from them. And yet these things are but transitory, and quickly fade away, and are like the phantasies of dreams.

But to be members of God's household, must we not count that as a thing worth the gaining; and esteem it as of the highest importance? For certainly after the resurrection from the dead we must stand in Christ's presence; and there a recompense shall of necessity be made to the compassionate and merciful: but a condemnation commensurate with their deeds shall be the lot of those who were harsh and without mutual love; for it is written, "that there is judgment without mercy for those who have showed no mercy." And if so, how is it not the proof and perfection of a sound mind, that before we descend to the pit of torment we should take forethought for our life? For come, and let us discuss this among ourselves. Suppose that for some cause or other which the law condemned they had dragged us before the judges, and so a sentence such as our offences deserved had been passed upon us after our conviction; should we not with pleasure offer up our wealth to escape from all torment and punishment? And how can there be any doubt of this? For oneself is better than possessions, and life than wealth. Now we are guilty of many sins, and must give an account to the Judge of whatsoever we have done; and why then do we not deliver ourselves from judgment and the everlasting fire while time permits? And the way in which to deliver ourselves is to live in virtue;---to comfort the brethren who are grieved with poverty, and open our hand wide to all who are in need, and to sympathize with the sick.

For tell me what is harder than poverty, that implacable beast of prey, that bane which no admonition can charm away, that worst of maladies, or rather more cruel than any malady? We therefore must give a helping hand to those who are suffering under it: we must open wide to them our heart, and not pass by their lamentation. For suppose a savage beast of prey had sprung upon some wayfarer, would not any one who witnessed the occurrence seize up any thing that came to hand, a stone for instance, or stick, and drive away the beast that was mercilessly rending and tearing the man fallen beneath its blow? Who is so hardhearted and full of hatred to mankind as to pass by one thus miserably perishing? And must not you own, that poverty, as I said, is more cruel than any beast of prey? Aid therefore those who are fallen under it: incline yours ear to the poor, and listen to him, as it is written, "For he, it says, who stops his ears that he may not hear the feeble, he also shall cry, and there shall be none to listen." Give that you may receive: hear that you may be heard: sow your little that you may reap much. And besides, the pleasure of the body is short and temporary, and ends in rottenness: but almsgiving and charity to the poor crown those who practise them with glory from God, and lead them to that incorruptible happiness which Christ bestows on those who love Him: by Whom and with Whom to God the Father be praise and dominion, with the Holy Spirit, for ever and ever, Amen.

Sermon 104.

14: 15-24. And when one of them that reclined at table with Him heard these things, he said unto Him, Blessed is he that shall eat bread in the kingdom of God. But He said unto him, A certain man made a great supper, and bade many. And sent his servant at supper time to say to them that were bidden, Come, for lo! all things are ready. And they at once began all of them to make excuse. The first said unto him, I have bought a field, and I must needs go to see it: I pray you permit me to be excused. And another said, I have bought five yoke of oxen, and I go to examine them: I pray you permit me to be excused. And another said, I have taken a wife, and therefore I cannot come. And when the servant returned, he told his lord these things. Then the master of the house was angry, and said to his servant, Go out quickly into the streets and marketplaces of the city, and bring in hither the poor, and the maimed, and the blind, and the lame. And the servant said, Lord, what you command is done, and yet there is room. And the lord said to his servant, Go out into the highways and hedges, and compel them to come in, that my house may be filled. For I say unto you, that none of those men that were bidden shall taste of my supper.

AGAIN, the purport of the lessons laid before us obliges me to say, that the fruit of good works is praiseworthy. For not unrewarded is the toil of the saints, as they strenuously labour to lead that life which is truly worthy of admiration both with God and men. For the wise Paul writes, "For God is not unrighteous to forget your labour and your love, which you have showed unto His Name." And again in another place he uses similar words, "For the lightness, he says, of our present affliction works for us abundantly and in a higher degree an eternal greatness of glory, when we look not at the things which are seen, but at those which are not seen; for the things which are seen are those of time, but the things which are not seen are for eternity." For the things of time are those of earth; and these we say are what are here called "the things which are seen:" but those which are to come, and which at present are not seen, but consist in those hopes which, are with God, are stored up for us in mansions that cannot be shaken.

And who they are for whom these things are prepared, and unto whom they will be given, the Saviour has here shown, portraying as in a picture by the parable set before us, the nature and efficacy of the dispensation. It is necessary however for me first to say what was the occasion which led to this discourse.

Our Lord then was feasting at a certain Pharisee's, in company with many others assembled there, the friends of him who had bidden them to the entertainment, and the sharers of his sentiments. There again the Saviour of all, to benefit those who were gathered there,----for He loves mercy rather, and not honour and vainglory;----perfected him that invited them, by not permitting him to make lavish expense, or aim at what was beyond his means, to gain the praise of men. For He said, "When you make a dinner or a supper, call not your friends, nor your brethren, nor further, any others who are rich and your neighbours: but rather the poor, and the maimed, and the blind. For those, He said, who so act shall be blessed at the resurrection of the just." Upon which one of those who were reclining with them at meat, on hearing words thus excellent, said, "Blessed is he that shall eat bread in the kingdom of God." Probably however this man was not as yet spiritual, but rather animal, nor fitted to understand correctly what was spoken by Christ: for he was not one of those who believed, nor had he as yet been baptized. For he supposed that the rewards of the saints, for their mutual labours of love, would be in things pertaining to the body. Because then they were too

dull in heart to comprehend a precise idea, Christ frames for them a parable which with sufficient appositeness sets forth the nature of the dispensation about to be instituted for their sakes: and says, "A certain man made a great supper, and bade many. And he sent his servant at supper time to say to them that were bidden, Come, for lo! all things are ready."

And here let us first of all inquire, what was the reason why it is rather to a supper than a dinner that the guests were invited; or rather, even before this, who is to be understood by the man who sent one to invite to the supper; and who also is the inviter, and who in fine they are who were invited, but despised the summons.

By the man therefore is to be understood God the Father. For similitudes are formed to represent the truth, and are by no means the truth themselves. He therefore, the Creator of the universe, and the Father of glory, made a great supper, that is, a festival for the whole world, in honour of Christ. In the last times then of the world, and, so to speak, at this our world's setting, the Son arose for us: at which time also He suffered death for our sakes, and gave us His flesh to eat, as being the bread from heaven, Which gives life to the world. Towards evening also, and by the light of torches, the lamb was sacrificed, according to the law of Moses. And therefore with good reason the invitation that is by Christ is called a supper.

And next, who is he that was sent, and who it also says was a slave? Perchance Christ Himself: for though God the Word is by nature God, and the very Son of God the Father, from Whom He was manifested, yet He emptied Himself, to take the form of a slave. As being therefore God of God He is Lord of all; but one may justly apply the appellation of a slave to the limits of His humanity. Yet though He had taken, as I said, the form of a slave, He was even so Lord as being God.

And when was He sent? At supper time, it says. For it was not at the commencement of this world that the only-begotten Word of the Father descended from heaven, and was in form like unto us; but rather when the Omnipotent Himself willed it, even in these latter times, as also we have already said.

And what was the nature of the invitation? "Come: for lo! all things are ready." For God the Father has prepared in Christ for the inhabitants of earth those gifts which are bestowed upon the world through Him, even the forgiveness of sins, the cleansing away of all defilement, the communion of the Holy Spirit, the glorious adoption as sons, and the kingdom of heaven. Unto these blessings Christ invited by the commandments of the gospel Israel before all others. For somewhere He has even said by the voice of the Psalmist; "But I have been set as a king by Him; that is, by God the Father; upon Zion His holy mount, to preach the commandment of the Lord." And again, "I was not sent but unto the lost sheep of the house of Israel."

And their determination then, was it for their own good? Did they regard with admiration the gentleness of Him Who bade them, and the office of Him Who ministered the call? Not so: for "they began, it says, all of them at once to make excuse:" that is, as with one purpose, without any delay, they made excuse. "For the first said, I have bought a field, and I must needs go to see it: I pray you, permit me to be excused. And another said, I have bought five yoke of oxen, and I go to examine them: I pray you, permit me to be excused. And another said, I have taken a wife, and therefore I cannot come." You perceive that by senselessly giving themselves up to

these earthly matters, they cannot see things spiritual; for being overcome by the love of the flesh, they are far from holiness, and are covetous and greedy after wealth. They seek those things which are below, but make no account, no not in the slightest degree, of those hopes which are stored up with God. Far better would it have been instead of earthly fields to gain the joys of paradise: and instead of transitory tillage, for this was the object of the yokes of oxen, to gather the fruits of righteousness. For it is written, "Sow for yourselves righteousness; gather as vintage the fruit of life." Was it not their duty rather, instead of the carnal procreation of children, to have chosen spiritual fruitfulness? For the one is subject unto death and corruption: the other is an eternal and abiding; affluence for the saints.

When then the householder heard their refusal, he was angry, it says; and commanded that from the streets and marketplaces of the city there should be gathered the poor, and the maimed, and the blind, and the lame. And who then are to be understood by those who for the sake, as I said, of lands, and tillage, and the carnal procreation of children, refused to come? Certainly it must be those, who stood at the head of the Jewish synagogue; men with wealthy purses, the slaves of covetousness, with their mind set on lucre, on which they lavished all their earnestness. For so to speak throughout the whole of inspired Scripture, one may see them blamed for this very thing.

Those then who were superior in station to the mass of the common people did not submit themselves to Christ, when, saying unto them, "Take My yoke upon you:" they rejected the invitation: they did not accept the faith; they remained away from the feast; and scorned the great supper by their hardened disobedience. For that the scribes and Pharisees did not believe in Christ, is manifest by what He says unto them, "You have taken away the key of knowledge: you enter not in yourselves: and those that are entering you have hindered." In their stead therefore those were called who were in the streets and market-places, who belonged, that is, to the Jewish common people, whose mind was sickly, and infirm, and dark, and halting: for such one may consider to be blind and lame. But they became strong and whole in Christ: they learnt to walk uprightly, and received the divine light into their mind. And that a multitude of the Jews not easy to number believed, one may learn from the Acts of the Apostles.

When then those, it says, who were in the streets had been called, he whose office it was to bid them to the supper said to the householder, "Still there is room. And the lord said to his servant. Go out into the highways and hedges, and compel them to come in, that my house may be filled. For I say unto you, that no one of those men that were bidden shall taste of my supper."

Here observe, I pray, the calling of the Gentiles after that the Israelites had entered by faith.. For in old time the Gentiles were boorish in mind, and uncultivated in understanding, and so to say, outside the city, as living in lawlessness, and more like cattle than men, and with little use of reason. And on this account he who invites to the supper is sent unto the highways, outside the city, and to the hedges in the fields: moreover he is commanded by him who seat him not merely to invite, and offer them exhortation only, but even to compel them. And yet in all men faith is a voluntary act, and by attaining unto it of their own free will, men are acceptable unto God, and largely endowed with His gifts. How then are men compelled? Yes, this also was said advisedly. For it was necessary, absolutely necessary for the Gentiles, as being fettered by an intolerable tyranny, and fallen under the yoke of the devil, and caught, so to speak, in the indissoluble meshes of their sins, and utterly ignorant of Him Who by nature

and verily is God, that their calling should be very urgent, resembling the use of force, that they might be able to look up unto God, and taste the sacred doctrines, and leave off their former error, and spring away as it were from the hand of Satan. For Christ also said, "No man can come unto Me except My Father Who sent Me drag him." But dragging implies that the calling is an act of power such as God only can exercise. And the blessed David is also found addressing God in similar terms respecting them, "With bridle and bit shall You restrain the jaws of those that draw not near unto You." You see how the God of all as with a bridle turns unto Himself those who fiercely have departed from Him: for He is good and loving unto mankind, and wills that all men should be saved, and come unto the knowledge of the truth.

The chiefs therefore of the Israelitish populace remained aloof from the supper, as being obdurate and proud and disobedient, and scorned so surpassing an invitation, because they had turned aside to earthly things, and fixed their mind upon the vain distractions of this world. But the vulgar multitude was called in, and after them immediately and without delay the Gentiles. For when our Lord Jesus Christ arose from the dead, He cried out unto the holy apostles saying, "All power is given unto Me in heaven and in earth: go make disciples of all nations, baptizing you them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit: and teaching you them to observe all those things that I have commanded you: and lo! I am with you every day even unto the end of the world."

Sermon 105.

14:25-35. And great multitudes went with Him: and He turned and said unto them; Whosoever cometh unto Me, and hates not his father and his mother, and his wife, and his children, and his brethren, and his sisters: yes, and his own self also, he cannot be My disciple. And whosoever does not bear his cross, and come after Me, cannot be My disciple. For which of you, that wishes to build a tower, sits not down first, and counts the cost, to see whether he have sufficient to finish it? Lest when he has laid the foundation, and is not able to finish it, all that behold it begin to mock him, saying, This man began to build, and was not able to finish. Or what king going to make war with another king, sits not down first and consider, whether he be able with ten thousand to meet him that comes against him with twenty thousand? And if he be not, while the other is yet afar off, he sends ambassadors, and asks conditions of peace. So therefore every one of you that forsakes not all his possessions, cannot be My disciple. Halt therefore is good: but if the salt have no savour, with what shall it be seasoned? It is useful neither for the land, nor yet for the dunghill: they cast it out. He that has ears to hear, let him hear.

THOSE who command warlike armies, and have won for themselves martial glory, whenever the time for battle has arrived, instruct the troops under their orders in what way, arraying themselves manfully against the phalanxes of the enemy, they will gain a triumphant victory. And the Saviour of all, imitating the skilfulness of those here mentioned, very clearly shows unto all who would follow Him, the pathway of spiritual manfulness: that advancing with unrestrainable impetuosity unto every triumph of piety, and exerting a stern and irresistible earnestness, they may win by a just decree the right of being with Him, and following Him.

This lesson then clearly teaches us, what sort of persons He would have us to be. "For whosoever comes unto Me, He says, and hates not his father and his mother, and his wife and his children, and his brethren, and his sisters, yes, and his own self also, cannot be My disciple." "What then, O Lord, some perchance may say, do You despise the laws of natural affection? Do You command us to hate one another, and to disregard the love that is due to fathers from their sons, to wives from their husbands, to brethren from their brethren? Shall we make those enemies who are members of the same household; and those, whom it is our duty rather to love, must we count as foes, in order that we may be with you, and be able to follow you?"

This is not what the Saviour means. Away with so vain a thought. For He Who commands even those who are violent enemies to be gentle, and forgiving to all who would do them wrong: for, "Love, He says, your enemies: and pray for them that spoil you:" how could He wish us to hate those who are born of the same family, and to disregard the honour due to parents, and think nothing of despising our brethren; yes! and our own children also, and even our own self? For He, Who has pronounced condemnation even upon those who disregard the law of mutual love, could not wish His friends to cherish a savage, and so to speak, a desperate state of minds. What however He does wish to teach in these commands is plain to those who can understand from what is said in another place expressly upon the same subject. "For he that loves, He says, father or mother more than Me, is not worthy of Me: and he that loves son or daughter more Me, is not worthy of Me." By adding then "more than Me," it is plain that He permits us to love, but not more than we do Him. For He demands for Himself our chief affection; and that very justly: for the love of God in those who are perfect in mind has something in it superior both to the honour due to parents, and to the natural affection felt for children.

"We must explain however what the occasion was which directed our Lord's words to this subject. The passage then read from the Gospel at our last meeting described the celebration of a great supper, unto which many were invited by him who gave the feast. But they were men indifferent to it: for "they made excuse, it says, with one accord, and said, one that he had bought a field, and must needs go to see it: and another, that he had bought five yoke of oxen: and a third again, that he had married a wife:" and by employing these feigned excuses, they vexed him who invited them. We are therefore given most clearly to understand, that when God calls us unto Him, to make us partakers of His bounty, we must disregard the lusts that are of the flesh, and minister to the flesh, and set no value whatsoever upon the things of this world, but exerting all our force must advance unto those things which will never have to be abandoned, and which fill us with all blessedness, as God bestows with bounteous hand upon us His gifts, and like one welcoming us to a costly banquet, admits us to the right of rejoicing with the rest of the saints in the hope of future blessings. For the things of earth, are but of little value and last only for a time, and belong to the flesh solely, which is the victim of corruption: but those things which are divine and spiritual constantly and without ceasing accompany those who have once been counted worthy of receiving them, and reach onwards to unending worlds. What value therefore will men of sense set upon earthly farms, or the love of carnal pleasure, or the respect due to kinsmen in the flesh, if it be laid down that for love's sake unto Christ, we must disregard all these things that have been named? For many instances have there been of men desirous of a blameless life, who even after touching, so to speak, the dust of the palaestra, and making trial of the combats therein, and all but attaining to the right of receiving the crown of the heavenly calling, have been drawn backward, as it were, either from regard to relatives, or from being too weak to bear a struggle of endurance,

or from being entangled in the snares of carnality, and foolishly preferring present pleasure to the blessings laid up in hope. Many too the fear of death has terrified, and when the season called them unto persecutions, that being proved they might receive the crown of incorruption, they have denied the faith, have avoided, that is, the duty of suffering patiently, and having shown themselves weak and cowardly, have fallen from their steadfastness. To work in us therefore a mind incapable of being broken, and make us careless of every worldly matter for our love of Him, He commands us to hate even our relatives according to the flesh, and our own self also, if, as I have just said, the season call us thereto.

And next He uses two examples, to encourage unto an invincible fortitude those who are His friends, and to establish in an unwavering zeal those whose desire it is to attain to honours by patience and endurance. "For if, says He, any one wish to build a tower, he reckons first if he have means sufficient to finish it, lest when he has laid the foundation, and is not able to finish it, men laugh at him." For those whose choice it is to lead a glorious and blameless life ought to store up beforehand in their mind a zeal sufficient thereunto, and to remember him who says, "My son, if you draw near to serve the Lord, prepare yourself for every temptation: make your heart straight, and endure." But those who have no such zeal, how will they be able to reach the mark that is set before them?

"Or what king, He says, wishing to make war with another king, does not consider with himself, whether with his ten thousand he can prevail over one who is more mighty than himself?" And what does this mean? "Our wrestle is not against blood and flesh, but against governments; against empires; against the worldholders of this darkness; against wicked spirits in the heavenly regions." We have too a crowd, as it were, of other enemies, the carnal mind, the law that rages in our members, passions of many kinds, the lust of pleasure, the lust of the flesh, the lust of wealth, and others: with these we must wrestle; this is our savage troop of enemies. How therefore shall we conquer? By believing that "in God we shall do valiantly, as Scripture says, and He shall bring to naught those that oppress us:" In this confidence one of the holy prophets said, "Behold the Lord helps me: who shall make me ashamed?" And the divine David also sings, "The Lord is my light, and my Saviour: whom shall I fear? The Lord is the helper of my life, at whom shall I tremble?" For He is our strength, and by Him we shall gain victory: for He has given unto us to tread upon serpents and scorpions, and upon all the power of the enemy. As therefore He says, "Salt is good: but if the salt be tasteless, with what can it be seasoned? It is cast out," He says. Let there be therefore, He proceeds, salt in you," that is, the divine words which bring salvation: but which if we despise, we become without savour, and foolish, and utterly useless. Such things must the congregation of the saints cast out, by the gift unto them of mercy and love from Christ, the Saviour of us all; by Whom and with Whom to God the Father be praise and dominion, with the Holy Spirit, for ever and ever, Amen.

Sermon 106.

15:1-10. Now all the publicans and sinners used to draw near unto Him to hear Him. And the Pharisees and Scribes murmured, saying, This man receives sinners, and eats with them. And He spoke this parable unto them, saying, What man of you having a hundred sheep, and having lost one of them, does not leave the ninety and nine in the wilderness, and go after that which is lost, until he find it. And when he has found it, he lays it on his shoulders, rejoicing. And when he has come home, he calls together his friends and his neighbours,

saying unto them, Rejoice with me: for I have found my sheep which was lost. I say unto you, that likewise there shall be joy in heaven over one sinner that repents, more than over ninety and nine just persons who need no repentance. Or what woman having ten drachms, if she lose one of them, does not light a lamp, and sweep the house, and search diligently till she find it. And when she has found it, she calls her friends and her neighbours together, saying, Rejoice with me: for I have found the drachm which I had lost. Likewise I say unto you, that there is joy before the angels of God over one sinner that repents.

YOU have no doubt attended here also to what has been read; you have wondered with me at the Saviour's words: have you also understood it thoroughly and spiritually, and fixed the searching eye of the mind upon its profounder interpretation? Has the sense of what has been said been caught by you? Or possibly has the word, after having rung in your hearing, flown away, and nothing settled there that would be to your profit. But as I imagine, in that you are believers, and love instruction, the Saviour illumines your understanding. For He it is "Who reveals the deep things of darkness, and puts the light of understanding in the hearts of those that love Him."

The two parables then that follow close upon one another depict to us an image of the divine gentleness, being both of similar meaning, and, so to say, at concord with one another. But the senseless Jew is openly reprov'd, for refusing in every way to understand the great and profound mystery of the Incarnation. From him it was completely hidden, that God the Father sent the Son from heaven, not "to judge the world," as He Himself declares, but that the world might be saved through Him. In what manner then was it fitting for the world to be saved, which had been caught in the meshes of sin, and proved guilty of the charge of wickedness, and that was subject to a cruel tyrant, even Satan? Was it by demanding of it punishment, for having fallen into transgression and sin? Or was it not rather by helping it, in that God is long-suffering, and ready, so to speak, to cover over in forgetfulness those things wherein man had transgressed, and to renew unto holiness of life those who know not how to live uprightly?

Tell me therefore, O Pharisee, why you murmur, because Christ disdain'd not to be with publicans and sinners, but purposely provided for them this means of salvation? To save men He yielded Himself to emptiness, and became in fashion like unto us, and clothed Himself in human poverty. And do you then blame the dispensation of the Only-begotten in the flesh? Do you find fault with His humbling Himself from above in heaven, Who transcends all? Nay, leave you not the very Incarnation without censure? And yet the holy prophets wondered at the beautiful skill of the mystery. For the prophet David in the Psalms declares, "Sing you with understanding: God has set a King over all the nations." And the prophet Habakkuk says, "That he heard His hearing, and was afraid: and that he considered also His doings, and was astonished." How therefore are you not ashamed of blaming those things which you ought to have admired? Would you have the Lord of all stern and inexorable, or good rather and kind to men? The family upon earth had gone astray: it had wandered from the hand of the chief shepherd: and therefore He Who feeds the flocks above in heaven, became like unto us, that He might make us also dwell in His folds:---that He might unite us to those who had never gone astray, and drive from us the beast of prey, and ward off like some impious band of robbers those impure demons, who had led astray all beneath the sky.

He sought therefore that which was lost: and, to show that the Jewish fault-finding on this account was vain, He says unto them, "What man of you having a hundred sheep, and having

lost one of them, does not leave the ninety and nine in the wilderness, and go to seek that which is lost. And if it chance to be found, he rejoices in it, He says, more than in those that went not astray." Understand from this, my beloved, the wide extent of the Saviour's kingdom, and the multitude past numbering of His subjects, and the skilful plan of the dispensation towards us. For the sheep, He says, are a hundred, so making the number of His subjects mount up to a multitude complete and altogether perfect. For constantly, so to speak, a hundred is a perfect number, being composed of ten times ten. And we have learnt also from the divinely-inspired Scripture, that a "thousand thousands minister to God, and ten thousand times ten thousand stand around His lofty throne." The sheep therefore are a hundred: and of them one has gone astray, even the family upon earth; which also the chief Shepherd of all sought, having left in the wilderness those ninety and nine. Was it therefore because He had no regard for the many, that mercy was shown to the one only? No! not because He had no regard for them; that were impossible: but because they are in security, guarded by His Almighty hand. It was right therefore that mercy should rather be shown to that which was lost, that evidently nothing might be wanting to that other multitude, but the one being restored thereto, the hundred might regain its beauty.

The search therefore after that which was lost was no act of contempt towards those who had not erred, but one of grace and mercy and love to mankind fit for the supreme and transcendent nature to bestow on His fallen creatures.

For come, and let us examine the matter by the help also of another example, in order that we may at all times defend the incomparable gentleness of Christ, the Saviour of us all. For let it be supposed that in one house there are many inmates, of whom it so chances that one falls ill. For whom then are those skilled in healing summoned? Is it not for him only who has fallen ill? But it is not through any disregard of the many, that those who have been called in to heal attend only to him who is sick, and give him the benefit of their skill, as the time and his need require. In like manner therefore it was worthy, right worthy of God, Who rules over all, to stretch out His saving hand to that which had gone astray. The wild beast had seized it: it had led the family upon earth astray from the pasture, and had hurried it into all misery. The chief Shepherd saved it: for He sought that which had wandered, and has established for us a fold, unassailable and impregnable against wild boasts and robbers, even the Church; in admiration of which we may say, in the words of the prophet, "Behold, we have a strong and secure city: He will place (for us) a wall and rampart."

And the sense of the parable which immediately follows is exactly similar, in which, He says, that 'a woman who had ten drachms lost one of them, and having lit a lamp and found it, rejoiced greatly therein, and made it a reason for special joy.' By the former parable therefore, in which the wandering sheep signified the family upon earth, we learnt, that we are the property of God over all, in that He it is Who brought into existence those things which previously had no existence. For "He made us, and not we ourselves," as it is written. And "He is our God, and we are the people of His pasture, and the sheep of His hand." And by this second parable, in which that which was lost is compared to a drachma, and that again as one out of ten, that is of a perfect number, and of a sum complete in the reckoning;---for the number ten also is perfect, being the close of the series from the unit upwards;---it is clearly shown, that we are in the royal likeness and image, even that of God over all. For the drachma is, I suppose, the denarius, on which is stamped the royal likeness, That we then who had fallen, and, so to speak, been lost, have been found by Christ, and transformed by holiness and righteousness into His image, how can any one doubt, when the blessed Paul has thus

written, "But we all, with open face beholding as in a mirror the glory of the Lord, are changed into the same image, from glory to glory, as of the Lord the Spirit." And he sends to the Galatians also in these words, "My children, of whom I am again in labour, until Christ is formed in you."

A search then was made for that which had fallen, for which purpose the woman lighted a lamp. For we were found, as I said, by the wisdom of God the Father, Which is the Son, when the divine and intellectual light shone upon us, and the sun arose, and "the day star ascended, and the day dawned," according to the Scripture. For God also has somewhere said by one of the holy prophets of Christ the Saviour of us all, "My righteousness quickly approaches, and My mercy to be revealed, and My salvation shall burn as a lamp." And He says of Himself, at one time, "I am the light of the world:" and again at another, "I am come a light into this world: he that follows Me shall not walk in darkness, but shall possess the light of life." By the light therefore that which was lost is saved, and there was joy thereby to the powers above. For they rejoice even in one sinner that repents, as He has taught us Who knows all things. If they then keep festival over one who is saved, in unison altogether with the divine purpose, and laud with never-ceasing praises the Saviour's gentleness, with how great joy must they be filled, when all beneath the heaven is saved, and called by faith in Christ to the acknowledgment of the truth, having put off the pollutions of sin, and loosed its neck from the bonds of death, and escaped from blame, even the blame of its wandering and fall! For all these things we gain in Christ: by Whom, and with Whom, to God the Father be praise and dominion with, the Holy Spirit, for ever and ever, Amen.

Sermon 107.

15:11-32. And He said, A certain man had two sons: and the younger of them said to his father, Father, give me the portion of your goods that comes to me. And he divided unto them his substance. And not many days after, the younger son gathered every thing together, and journeyed into a far country, and there scattered his goods by riotous living. And when he had spent all, there arose a mighty famine in that land, and he began to be in want. And he went and joined himself to a citizen of that country, who sent him into his fields to feed swine. And he desired to fill his belly with the husks which the swine were eating: and no man gave unto him. And when he came to himself he said, How many hired servants of my father have bread in abundance, and I perish here with hunger. I will arise and go to my father, and will say unto him, Father, I have sinned against heaven, and before you, and am no more 'worthy to be called your son: make me as one of your hired servants. And he arose and went to his father. And while He was yet a great way off, his father saw him, and his bowels yearned, and he ran and fell on his neck, and kissed him. And his son said unto him, My father, I have sinned against heaven and before you, and am no more worthy to be called your son. But his father said to his servants, Bring forth quickly the chief robe, and clothe him: and put a ring on his hand, and shoes on his feet. And bring the fatted calf, and kill it, and we will eat, and be merry: for this my son was dead, and is alive: and was lost, and is found. And they began to be merry.---Now his elder son was in the field, and as he came and drew near to the house, he heard the sound of music and rejoicing. And he called one of the servants, and asked him what these things meant. And he said unto him, Your brother is come, and your father has killed the fatted calf, because he has

received him sound. And he was angry, and would not go in: therefore came his father out, and besought him. But he answered and said to his father, Lo! all these years do I serve you, and never have transgressed your commandment, and you never gave me a kid, that I might make merry with my friends. But when this your son, who has, eaten up your wealth with harlots, is come, you have killed for him the fatted calf. And he said unto him, My son, you are ever with me: and all that is mine is yours. But it was fitting to make merry and be glad: for this your brother was dead, and is alive: and was lost, and is found.

I HEAR one of the holy prophets trying to win unto repentance those who are far from God, and saying, "Return, O Israel, to the Lord your God: for you have become weak in your iniquity. Take with you words, and return to the Lord our God." What sort of words then did he, under the influence of the Spirit, command them to take with them? Or were they not such as become those who wish to repent; such namely, as would appease God, Who is gentle, and loves mercy. For He even said by one of the holy prophets, "Return you returning children, and I will heal your breaches." And yet again by the voice of Ezekiel, "Return you altogether from your wickednesses, O house of Israel. Cast away from you all your iniquities which you have committed, that they be not to you for a punishment of iniquity. For I have no pleasure in the death of the sinner, as that he should turn from his evil way and live." And the same truth Christ here also teaches us, by this most beautifully composed parable, which I will now to the best of my ability endeavour to discuss, briefly gathering up its broad statements, and explaining and defending the ideas which it contains.

It is the opinion then of some, that by the two sons are signified the holy angels, and we the dwellers upon earth: and that the elder one, who lived soberly, represents the company of the holy angels, while the younger and profligate son is the human race. And there are some among us who give it a different explanation, arguing that by the elder and well conducted son is signified Israel after the flesh: while by the other, whose choice it was to live in the lust of pleasures, and who removed far from his father, is depicted the company of the Gentiles. With these explanations I do not agree: but I would have him who loves instruction, search after that which is true and unobjectionable. What then I say is as follows, "giving occasions to the wise, and to the just offering knowledge," as Scripture commands: for they will examine for a fitting meaning the explanations proposed to them. If then we refer the upright son to the person of the holy angels, we do not find him speaking such words as become them, nor sharing their feelings towards repentant sinners, who turn from an impure life to that conduct which is worthy of admiration. For the Saviour of all and Lord says, that "there is joy in heaven before the holy angels over one sinner that repents." But the son, who is described to us in the present parable as being acceptable unto his father, and leading a blameless life, is represented as being angry, and as even having proceeded so far in his unloving sentiments as to find fault with his father for his natural affection for him who was saved. "For he would not, it says, go into the house," being vexed at the reception of the penitent almost before he had come to his senses, and because there had even been slain the calf in his honour, and his father had made for him a feast. But this, as I said, is at variance with the feelings of the holy angels: for they rejoice and praise God when they see the inhabitants of the earth being saved. For so when the Son submitted to be born in the flesh of a woman at Bethlehem, they carried the joyful news to the shepherds, saying, "Fear you not: for behold I bring you glad tidings of great joy that shall be to all the people, that there is born to you today in the city of David a Saviour Who is Christ the Lord." And crowning with lauds and praises Him Who was born, they said, "Glory to God in the highest, and upon earth peace, and among men good-will."

But if any one say, that Israel according to the flesh is meant by the virtuous and sober son, we are again prevented from assenting to this opinion by the fact, that in no way whatsoever is it fitting to say of Israel that he chose a blameless life. For throughout the whole of the inspired Scripture, so to say, we may see them accused of being rebels and disobedient. For they were told by the voice of Jeremiah, "What fault have your fathers found in Me, that they have wandered far from Me, and have gone after vanities, and become vain?" And in similar terms God somewhere spoke by the voice of Isaiah, "This people draws near unto Me; with their lips they honour Me, but their heart is very far from Me: but in vain do they fear Me, teaching as doctrines the commandments of men." And how then can any one apply to those who are thus blamed the words used in the parable of the virtuous and sober son? For he said, "Lo! all these years do I serve you, and never have I transgressed your commandment." But they would not have been blamed for their mode of life, had it not been that transgressing the divine commandments, they betook themselves to a careless and polluted mode of life.

And yet again,----for I think it right to mention this also,----some would refer to the person of our Saviour that fattened calf which the father killed when his son was called unto conversion. But how then could the virtuous son, who is described as wise and prudent, and constant in his duty, and whom some even refer to the person of the holy angels, treat it as a reason for anger and vexation that the calf was slain? For one can find no proof of the powers above being grieved when Christ endured death in the flesh, and, so to speak, was slain in our behalf. Rather they rejoiced, as I said, in seeing the world saved by His holy blood. And what reason too had the virtuous son for saying "you never gave me a kid." For what blessing is wanting to the holy angels, inasmuch as the Lord of all has bestowed upon them with bounteous hand a plentiful supply of spiritual gifts? Or of what sacrifice stood they in need as regards their own state? For there was no necessity for the Emmanuel to suffer also in their behalf. But if any one imagine, as I have already said before, that the carnal Israel is meant by the virtuous and sober son, how can he say with truth "you never gave me a kid?" For whether we call it calf or kid, Christ is to be understood as the sacrifice offered for sin. But He was sacrificed, not for the Gentiles only, but that He might also redeem Israel, who by reason of his frequent transgression of the law had brought upon himself great blame. And the wise Paul bears witness to this, saying, "For this reason Jesus also, that He might sanctify the people by His blood, suffered outside the gate."

What then is the object of the parable? Let us examine the occasion which led to it; for so we shall learn the truth. The blessed Luke therefore had himself said a little before of Christ the Saviour of us all, "And all the publicans and sinners drew near unto Him to hear Him. And the Pharisees and Scribes murmured saying, This man receives sinners and eats " with them." As therefore the Pharisees and Scribes made this outcry at His gentleness and love to man, and wickedly and impiously blamed Him for receiving and teaching men whose lives were impure, Christ very necessarily set before them the present parable, to show them clearly this very thing, that the God of all requires even him who is thoroughly steadfast, and firm, and who knows how to live holily, and has attained to the highest praise for sobriety of conduct, to be earnest in following His will, so that when any are called unto repentance, even if they be men highly blameable, he must rejoice rather, and not give way to an unloving vexation on their account.

For we also sometimes experience something of this sort. For some there are who live a perfectly honourable and consistent life, practising every kind of virtuous action, and abstaining from every thing disapproved by the law of God, and crowning themselves with

perfect praises in the sight of God and of men: while another is perhaps weak and trodden down, and humbled unto every kind of wickedness, guilty of base deeds, loving impurity, given to covetousness, and stained with all evil. And yet such a one often in old age turns unto God, and asks the forgiveness of his former offences: he prays for mercy, and putting away from him his readiness to fall into sin, sets his affection on virtuous deeds. Or even perhaps when about to close his mortal life, he is admitted to divine baptism, and puts away his offences, God being merciful unto him. And perhaps sometimes persons are indignant at this, and even say, 'This man, who has been guilty of such and such actions, and has spoken such and such words, has not paid unto the judge the retribution of his conduct, but has been counted worthy of a grace thus noble and admirable: he has been inscribed among the sons of God, and honoured with the glory of the saints.' Such complaints men sometimes give utterance too from an empty narrowness of mind, not conforming to the purpose of the universal Father. For He greatly rejoices when He sees those who were lost obtaining salvation, and raises them up again to that which they were in the beginning, giving them the dress of freedom, and adorning them with the chief robe, and putting a ring upon their hand, even the orderly behaviour which is pleasing to God and suitable to the free.

It is our duty, therefore, to conform ourselves to that which God wills: for He heals those who are sick; He raises those who are fallen; He gives a helping hand to those who have stumbled; He brings back him who has wandered; He forms anew unto a praiseworthy and blameless life those who were wallowing in the mire of sin; He seeks those who were lost; He raises as from the dead those who had suffered the spiritual death. Let us also rejoice: let us, in company with the holy angels, praise Him as being good, and loving unto men; as gentle, and not remembering evil. For if such is our state of mind, Christ will receive us, by Whom and with Whom, to God the Father be praise and dominion with the Holy Spirit, for ever and ever, Amen.

Sermon 108.

16:1-9. And He said unto His disciples, There was a certain rich man, who had a steward, and they accused him of scattering his goods. And he called him, and said unto him, What is this that I hear of you? Give up the account of your stewardship: for you can be no longer steward. And the steward said within himself What shall I do, for my lord takes away from me the stewardship? I cannot dig: and to beg I am ashamed. I am resolved what to do, that when I am removed from the stewardship, they may receive me into their houses. So he called each one of his lord's debtors, and said unto the first; How much do you owe unto my lord? And he said, A hundred baths of oil. And he said unto him, Take your writing, and sit down, and write fifty quickly. And afterwards he spoke to the second, And how much do you owe? And he said, A hundred cors ²of wheat. And he said unto him, Take your writing, and write eighty. And the lord praised the unjust steward, because he had done wisely: for the children of this world are wise in their generation more than the children of light. And I say unto you, Make for yourselves friends of the unrighteous mammon: that when it has failed, they may receive you into eternal tabernacles.

OUR Lord Jesus Christ, revealing His glory to the Jewish multitudes, or rather to all those who have believed on Him, said; "I am the light of the world:" and again, "I am come a light

into this world." For He fills the mind of those who fear Him with a divine and intellectual light, that they may not wander from the right way by walking in gloom and darkness; but may rather know how to advance uprightly in every good work, and in whatsoever aids a man in leading a saintly life. He would have us therefore to be good, and ready to communicate, loving one another, and merciful, and adorned with the honours of charity. Most wisely therefore did He prepare for us the present parable: which we being anxious to explain to the best of our ability, of necessity speak as follows to those who love instruction.

The parables then indirectly and figuratively explain to us much that is for our edification, provided only we consider their meaning in a brief and summary manner. For we are not to search into all the parts of the parable in a subtle and prying way, lest the argument by its immoderate length weary with superfluous matter even those most fond of hearing, and tire men with a crowd of words. For if, for instance, any one were to undertake to explain, who is to be regarded by us as the man who had a steward, who was accused unto him; or who possibly it is that accused him; and who too those are who owed the debts, and subtracted a portion from them; and for what reason one is said to have owed oil, and the other wheat; he will render his discourse at once obscure and redundant. All the parts of the parable therefore are not necessarily and in every respect useful for the explanation of the things signified, but, so to speak, have been taken to form an image of some important matter, which figuratively sets forth some lesson for the profit of the hearers.

The sense therefore of the present parable is something like the following: "The God of all wills that all men should be saved, and come to the knowledge of the truth." For this reason "He also gave the law for a help," according to the expression of the prophet. And the law in such passages we say means, not of course that which was ministered by Moses, but rather the whole inspired Scripture, by means of which we learn the path which leads straight unto every good and saving thing. The Lord of all therefore requires us to be thoroughly constant in our exertions after virtue, and to fix our desires upon the better and holy life, setting ourselves free from the distractions of the world, and from all love of riches, and of the pleasure which wealth brings, that we may serve Him continually, and with undivided affections. For He also says by the harp of the Psalmist; "Be constant, and know that I am God." And further, by His own mouth, the Saviour of all says to those who possess worldly riches, "Sell your possessions, and give alms: make for you purses that grow not old: a treasure for ever, unfailing in heaven." Now the commandment is indeed for our salvation, but the mind of man is very weak, fixed constantly, so to speak, upon things which are of earth chiefly, and unwilling to withdraw itself from the delight of riches. It loves vain boasting; is soothed much by the praises of flatterers; longs for beautiful equipments, and counts nothing better than temporal honour. And knowing this, the Saviour has Himself somewhere said of them, "How hardly shall they that have riches enter into the kingdom of God!" And further, "that it is easier for a camel to go through the eye of a needle, than a rich man into the kingdom of God." For as long as a man lives in wealth and pleasure, he is careless about piety to God. For wealth renders men contemptuous, and sows in the minds of those that possess it the seeds of all voluptuousness.

Is there then no way of salvation for the rich, and no means of making them partakers of the hope of the saints? Have they fallen completely from God's grace? Is hell and the fire necessarily prepared for them, such as is the fitting lot of the devil and his angels? Not so: for lo! the Saviour has shown them a means of salvation in the present parable. They have been entrusted with worldly wealth by the merciful permission of Almighty God: according

nevertheless to His intention they have been appointed stewards for the poor. But they discharge not their stewardship rightly, in that they scatter, so to speak, what has been given them of the Lord: for they waste it solely on their pleasures, and purchase temporal honours, not remembering God, Who says, "You shall open wide your mercy unto your brother, even to him that has need of you." Nor moreover Christ Himself, the Saviour of us all, Who says, "Be you merciful, even as your Father Who is in heaven is merciful." But they, as I said, make no account whatsoever of showing mercy to their brethren, but study only their own pride. And this it is which accuses them before the Lord of all. And of course upon the approach of death they must cease from their stewardship, withdrawing them as it does from human affairs. For the net of death no man can escape from. What therefore would Christ have them to do? It is, that while they are yet in this world, if they are unwilling to divide all their wealth among the poor, that at least they should gain friends by a part of it; and numerous witnesses to their charitableness, even those who have received well at their hands: that when their earthly wealth fails them, they may gain a place in their tabernacles. For it is impossible for love to the poor ever to remain unrewarded. Whether therefore a man give away all his wealth, or but a part, he will certainly benefit his soul.

It is an act therefore that becomes the saints, and is worthy of perfect praises, and that wins the crowns above, to set no store by earthly wealth, but distributing it among those that are in need, to gather rather that which is in heaven, and obtain purses that grow not old, and possess a treasure that fails not: and next in order comes the employment of a sort of artifice, so as to obtain those for friends who are especially near unto God, by giving them some portion of their wealth, and comforting the many who are afflicted with poverty, that so they may share what is theirs. And something of this sort the very wise Paul also advises, saying unto those who love wealth: "Let your abundance be for their want, that their abundance also may be for your want."

It is our duty therefore, if we are right-minded; if we fix the eye of the mind on what will be hereafter; if we remember the sacred Scripture, which says plainly, "that we shall all be manifested before the judgment seat of Christ, that each one may receive retribution for the things done by means of the body, according to that he has done, whether good or bad;" if we fear the cruel and unappeasable flame; to remember God, Who requires us to show mercy upon the brethren, to suffer with those that are sick, to open our hand wide to those that are in need, and to honour the saints, of whom Christ says, "He that receives you receives Me: and he that receives Me, receives Him That sent Me." For that mercy towards the brethren is not without profit and benefit, the Saviour Himself teaches us, saying; "Whosoever shall give only a cup of cold [water] to drink in the name of a disciple, shall not lose his reward." For the Saviour of all is bounteous in giving: by Whom and with Whom to God the Father be praise and dominion, with the Holy Spirit, for ever and ever, Amen.

Sermon 109.

16:10-13. He that is faithful in little, is faithful also in much; and he that is unjust in little, is unjust also in much. If therefore you have not been faithful in the unrighteous mammon, who will give you the true? And if you have not been faithful in that which is another's, who will give you, that which is your own? No servant can serve two lords: for either he will hate the one, and love the other: or he will honour the one, and despise the other. You cannot serve God and mammon.

THE most distinguished and experienced teachers, when they wish to fix any important doctrine deep in the minds of their disciples, omit no kind of reasoning able to throw light upon the chief object of their thoughts; at one time weaving arguments together, at another employing apposite examples, and so gathering from every quarter whatever is serviceable for their use. And this we find Christ also, Who is the Giver unto us of all wisdom, doing in many places. For oftentimes He repeats the very same arguments upon the subject, whatever it may be, that the mind of those who hear may be led on to an exact understanding of His words. For look again, I pray, at the purport of the lessons set before us: for so you will find our words to be true. "He that is faithful in little," He says, "is faithful also in much: and he that is unjust in little, is unjust also in much."

Before, however, I proceed further, I think it would be useful to consider, what was the occasion of a discourse such as this, and from what root it sprung: for so the sense of what is said will become very evident. Christ then was teaching the rich to feel especial delight in showing kindness to the poor, and in opening their hand to whoever are in need, so laying up treasures in heaven, and taking forethought for the riches that are in store. For He said, "Make for yourselves friends of the unrighteous mammon: that when it has failed, they may receive you into eternal tabernacles." But as being God by nature, He well knew the slothfulness of the human mind in every earnest and good work. It escaped not His knowledge, that men, in their greediness after wealth, giving up their mind to the love of lucre, and being tyrannized over by this passion, become hard-hearted and unsympathizing with affliction, and show no kindness whatsoever to the poor, even though they have heaped up much wealth in their stores. That those therefore who are thus minded, have no share in God's spiritual gifts, He shows by most evident examples, and says, "He that is faithful in little, is faithful also in much: and he that is unjust in little, is unjust also in much." O Lord, explain unto us the meaning: open You the eye of our heart. Listen therefore while He explains clearly and exactly what He said. "If therefore you have not been faithful in the unrighteous mammon, who will give you the true? The little therefore is the unrighteous mammon: that is, worldly wealth, gathered often by extortion and covetousness. But those who know how to live virtuously, and thirst after the hope that is in store, and withdraw their mind from earthly things, and think rather of those things that are above, utterly disregard earthly wealth; for it offers nothing but pleasures, and voluptuousness, and base carnal lusts, and splendour that profits not, but is transitory and vain. And so one of the holy apostles teaches us, saying, "That all that is in the world is the lust of the flesh, and the lust of the eyes, and the pride of the world." But such things as these are absolutely nothing to those who lead a sober and virtuous life: for they are trifling, and temporary, and full of impurity, and provocative of the fire and judgment, and scarcely reaching to the end of the life of the body, even if they do not, when any danger suddenly befalls those that possess them, unexpectedly depart away. Christ's disciple therefore rebukes the rich, saying, "Come now, you rich men, weep, and lament over the miseries that are coming upon you. Your wealth is decayed, your garments are moth-eaten. Your gold and your silver are rusted, and the rust of them shall be your testimony." How then are the gold and silver rusted? By being stored up in excessive abundance; and this very thing is the witness against them before the divine judgment seat, of their being unmerciful. For having gathered into their treasuries a great and unnecessary abundance, they made no account of those who were in need, although it was in their power, had they so wished, to do good easily to many; but they were not "faithful in the little."

But in what way men may become faithful, the Saviour Himself next taught us: and I will explain how. A certain Pharisee besought Him to eat bread with him on the sabbath day, and

Christ consented: and having gone there, He sat down to meat: and there were many others also feasting with them. And none of them by any means resembled men who possessed nothing, but, on the contrary, they were all persons of distinction, and great haughtiness, and lovers of the foremost seats, and thirsting after vainglory, being clothed as it were in the pride of wealth. What then said Christ to His inviter? "When you make a dinner or a supper, call not your friends, nor your brethren, neither your kinsmen, nor your rich neighbours, lest they also invite you again, and a re-compense be made you. But when you make a feast, call the poor, the maimed, the lame, and the blind. And you shall be blessed, because they cannot recompense you; for you shall be recompensed at the resurrection of the just." This then I think is a man's being faithful in little, that he have pity upon those who are in need, and distribute assistance from his means to such as are in extreme distress. But we, despising a way thus glorious and sure of reward, choose one dishonourable and without reward, by treating with contempt those who are in utter poverty, and refusing even sometimes to admit their words into our ears; while, on the other hand, we luxuriously provide a costly table, either for friends who live in pomp, or for those whose habit it is to praise and flatter, making our bounty an occasion for indulging our love of praise. But this was not God's purpose in permitting us to possess wealth. If therefore we are unfaithful in the little, by not conforming ourselves to the will of God, and bestow the best portion of ourselves upon our pleasures and our boasts, how can we receive from Him that which is true? And what is this? The abundant bestowal of those divine gifts which adorn man's soul, and form in it a godlike beauty. This is the spiritual wealth, not that fattens the flesh, which is held by death, but rather that saves the soul, and makes it worthy of emulation, and honourable before God, and that wins for it true praises.

It is our duty therefore to be faithful unto God, pure in heart, merciful and kind, just and holy: for these things imprint in us the outlines of the divine likeness, and perfect us as heirs of eternal life. And this then is that which is true.

And that this is the purport and view of the Saviour's words, any one may readily learn from what follows. For He said, "If you have not been faithful in that which is another's, who will give you that which is your own?" And again, we say that which is another's is the wealth we possess. For we were not born with riches, but, on the contrary, naked; and can truly affirm in the words of Scripture, "that we neither brought anything into the world, nor can carry anything out. For the patient Job also has said something of this kind: "Naked was I born from my mother's womb; naked also shall I go onwards." It is therefore no man's own by right of nature that he is rich, and lives in abundant wealth: but it is a thing added on from without, and is a chance matter; and if it cease and perish, it in no respect whatsoever harms the definitions of human nature. For it is not by virtue of our being rich that we are reasonable beings, and skilful in every good work: but it is the property of our nature to be capable of these things. That therefore, as I said, is another's which is not contained in the definitions of our nature, but, on the contrary, is manifestly added to us from without. But it is our own, and the property of human nature to be fitted for every good work: for as the blessed Paul writes, "We have been created unto good works, which God has before prepared, that we should walk in them."

When therefore any are unfaithful in that which is another's, in those things namely, which are added unto them from without, how shall they receive that which is their own? How, that is, shall they be made partakers of the good things which God gives, which adorn the soul of

man, and imprint upon it a divine beauty, spiritually formed in it by righteousness and holiness, and those upright deeds which are done in the fear of God.

Let such of us then as possess earthly wealth open our hearts to those who are in need; let us show ourselves faithful and obedient to the laws of God, and followers of our Lord's will in those things which are from without, and not our own, that we may receive that which is our own, even that holy and admirable beauty which God forms in the souls of men, fashioning them like unto Himself, according to what we originally were.

And that it is a thing impossible for one and the same person to divide himself between contraries, and still be able to live blamelessly, He shows by saying, "No man can serve two lords: for either he will hate the one, and love the other, or he will honour the one, and despise the other." And this indeed is a plain and evident example, and very suitable for the elucidation of the subject before us. For that which follows is, so to speak, the conclusion of the whole argument: "for you cannot serve God and mammon." For if, He says, a man be a slave of two masters, of diverse and contrary wills, and whose minds are irreconcilable with one another, how can he please them both? For being divided in endeavouring to do that which each one approves, he is in opposition to the will of both: and so the same person must inevitably appear bad and good. If therefore, He says, he determine to be true to the one, he will hate the other, and set him of course at nought. It is not therefore possible to serve God and mammon. For the unrighteous mammon, by which wealth is signified, is a thing given up to voluptuousness, and liable to every reproach, engendering boasting, and the love of pleasure, making men stiff-necked, the friends of the wicked, and contemptuous: yes, what base vice does it not produce in them that possess it?

But the goodwill of God renders men gentle, and quiet, and lowly in their thoughts; long-suffering, and merciful, and of exemplary patience, not loving lucre, nor desirous of wealth, content with food only and raiment, and especially fleeing from "the love of money, which is the root of all evils:" joyfully undertaking toils for piety's sake; fleeing from the love of pleasure, and earnestly shunning all feeling of wearisomeness in good works, while constantly they value, as that which wins them reward, the endeavour to live uprightly, and the practice of all soberness. This is that which is our own, and the true. This God will bestow on those who love poverty, and know how to distribute to those who are in need that which is another's, and comes from without, even their wealth, which also has the name of mammon.

May it then be far from the mind of each of us to be its slaves, that so we may freely and without hindrance bow the neck of our mind to Christ the Saviour of us all; by Whom and with Whom to God the Father be praise and dominion, with the Holy Spirit, for ever and ever, Amen.

Sermon 110.

16:14-17. And the Pharisees, who were lovers of money, heard all these things, and they derided Him. And He said unto them, You are they who justify yourselves before men, but God knows your hearts: for that which is high among men, is an abomination before God. The law and the prophets until John: thenceforth the kingdom of God is preached, and every one takes it by force. And it is easier for heaven and earth to pass away, than for one point of the law to fall.

THE love of money, my brethren, is a most wicked passion, and not easy to abandon. For when Satan has planted this malady in a man's soul, he next proceeds to blind him, nor does he permit him to listen to the words of exhortation, lest there be found for us a way of healing, able to save from misery those who are ensnared thereby. And observe again, I pray, how true my words upon this subject are from the instance even of the Pharisees. For they were lovers of riches, and enamoured of gain, and regarded a bare sufficiency with contempt. For even, so to speak, throughout the whole of the divinely inspired Scripture, one may see them blamed on this very account. For it is said by the voice of Isaiah to the mother of the Jews, I mean, Jerusalem, "Your princes are rebellious, the partners of thieves: loving bribes, pursuing after reward: they judge not the fatherless, neither do they regard the widow's suit." And the prophet Habbakuk also said, "How long, O Lord, shall I cry unto you, and You wilt not hear? and shout unto You, being oppressed, and You will not deliver? Judgment is before me, and the judge has taken a bribe: therefore is the law of none avail, and judgment comes not forth unto completion: for the wicked prevails over the righteous, therefore does judgment come forth perverted." For as being lovers, as I said, of lucre, they repeatedly gave judgment on the matters before them, not according to what was agreeable to the laws of God, but, on the contrary, iniquitously, and in opposition to God's will.

Moreover, the Saviour Himself rebuked them, thus saying, "Woe unto you, Scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites: who tithe anise, and mint, and cummin; and have omitted the weightier matters of the law, judgment, mercy and faith." For as the law had set apart for them the right of receiving tithes of every one, they extended the exactness of the search after them down to the most insignificant vegetables, while they made but slight account of the weightier matters of the law, that is, of those commandments which were of necessary obligation and for men's good.

"Because therefore the Pharisees, it says, were lovers of money, they derided Jesus," for directing them by His salutary doctrines to a praiseworthy course of conduct, and rendering them desirous of saintly glories. For it was their duty, He tells them, to sell their possessions, and make distribution to the poor; so would they possess in heaven a treasure that could not be plundered, and purses that could not be harmed, and wealth that would not have to be abandoned. And why then did they deride Him? For certainly the doctrine was salutary, a pathway of hope in things to come, and a door leading unto the life incorruptible: for they were being taught by Him the manners of true prosperity, and learning how they must seize the crown of the heavenly calling; how too they might become partakers with the saints, and children of the city that is above, the Jerusalem which is in heaven, and which is truly free, and the mother of the free. For as the blessed Paul writes, "Jerusalem, which is our mother and is above, is free." And why then did they mock Him?

Let us see the cause of their wickedness. The passion of avarice had possession of their heart, and their mind being tyrannized over by it was in subjection even against its will; humbled under the power of wickedness, and bound as it were by inevitable bonds. For so the writer of Proverbs somewhere says, "that every man is bound by the cords of his sins." For as the more virulent diseases of the body do not admit of the remedies of medicine, and flee away as it were from healing; and if any one apply that which is naturally adapted to do good, are irritated the more, and grow angry, however gently treated by the art: so also those passions to which the souls of men are liable, are sometimes obdurate, and refuse to listen to admonition, and will not hear a single word that summons them to depart from evil, and directs them into a better course. And as horses that are hard-mouthed and unmanageable,

and excessively spirited will not obey the reins; so also the mind of man when under the influence of passion, and thoroughly inclined to turn aside unto evil, is disobedient and intractable, and rejects with hatred the being healed.

When therefore the Saviour of all had expended upon them many words, but saw that they would not change from their crafty purposes and passions, but preferred rather to abide in their innate folly, He betakes Himself at length to sterner reproofs, the very occasion calling them thereto. He shows therefore that they are hypocrites, and liars in wait among the altars, and eager after the glory due to righteous and good men, without being such in reality: not being in earnest in meriting the approval of God, but hunting on the contrary eagerly after the honours which come from men. He said therefore, "You are they which justify yourselves before men; but God knows your hearts: for that which is high among men, is an abomination before God." This He is found also in another place saying unto them; "How can you believe, who receive honour one of another, and seek not the honour that comes from the one God." For the God of all crowns with praises unto righteousness those who are truly good: but those who love not virtue, but are hypocrites, steal perchance by their own votes solely the reputation of being honourable. But no one, O worthy sirs, some perchance may say, crowns himself; and the man is justly ridiculed, who devises praises for himself: for it is written, "Let your neighbour praise you, and not your own mouth: a stranger, and not your own lips." But though hypocrites may be able possibly to remain undetected, and seize the honours which men bestow, "yet God, He says, knows your hearts." The Judge cannot be deceived; He sees the depth of our mind; He knows who is the true combatant, and who steals by fraud the honour which another truly deserves: and while He honours him who is truly just, He "scatters the bones of the men-pleasers," according to the Psalmist's expression. For the desire of pleasing men is constantly, so to speak, the nurse, and head, and root of that accursed pride which is hated alike by God and men. For he who is the victim of this passion lusts after honour and praise: and this is hateful unto God: for He hates the proud, but accepts and shows mercy to him who loves not glory, and is lowly in mind.

And when Christ had crushed them with these reproofs He added thereto yet something more; even that which they were about to suffer by reason of their disobedience and wickedness; "For the law, He says, and the prophets were until John: thenceforth the kingdom of God is preached, and every one takes it by force. And it is easier for heaven and earth to pass away, than for one point of the law to fall." Again does He conceal in obscurity that which would give them pain, and veils, so to speak, the prediction of those things that were about to happen to all who would not obey Him. For Moses, He says, and with him the company of the holy prophets, before announced the import of My mystery to the inhabitants of earth: both the law declaring by shadows and types that to save the world I should even endure the death of the flesh, and abolish corruption by rising from the dead; and the prophets also speaking words of the same import as the writings of Moses. It is nothing strange therefore, He says, or that was not known before, that you spurn My words, and despise everything that would avail for your good. For the word of prophecy concerning Me, and you, extends until the holy Baptist John: but "from the days of John, the kingdom of heaven is preached, and every one takes it by force." And by the kingdom of heaven He here means justification by faith, the washing away of sin by holy baptism, sanctification by the Spirit, worshipping in the Spirit, the service that is superior to shadows and types, the honour of the adoption of sons, and the hope of the glory about to be given to the saints.

The kingdom of heaven therefore, He says, is preached, for the Baptist has stood forth in the midst saying, "Prepare you the way of the Lord:" and has shown, that lo! He is already near, and as it were within the doors, even the true Lamb of God, Who bears the sin of the world. Whosoever therefore is a hearer and lover of the sacred message takes it by force: by which is meant, that he uses all his earnestness and all his strength in his desire to enter within the hope. For, as He says in another place, "The kingdom of heaven is taken by violence and the violent seize upon it."

"And it is easier, He says, for heaven and earth to pass away, before the day that God commands this to be, than for one point of the law to fall." Now sometimes by the word *law* He signifies collectively the whole divinely inspired Scripture, the writings, that is, of Moses and the prophets. What then did it foretell, which must also necessarily reach its accomplishment? It foretold, that by reason of their excessive unbelief and immorality, Israel would fall from being of God's family, even though he be the eldest son: and that Jerusalem would be thrust away from His indulgence and His love. For so He spoke concerning it by the voice of Jeremiah, "Behold! I will hedge up her way with stakes, and block up her ways, and she shall not find her path." For the way of those who fear God is straight, nor is there any steep part therein, but all is level and well beaten. But the path of the mother of the Jews is hedged up with stakes, in that the way of piety has been rendered impassable for them.

And that they were darkened in mind, and did not accept the light of the glory of Christ,----for they knew Him not;----He before proclaimed saying unto the multitude of the Jews; "I have likened your mother unto the night. My people is like unto one that has no knowledge. Because you have rejected knowledge, therefore will I reject you from being My priest. And you have forgotten the law of your God, and I will forget your children." You hear that the multitude of the disobedient are very justly compared unto darkness and the night: for the intellectual day star, and the Sun of righteousness arises and shines in the mind and heart of those who believe: but the mind of those who treat with contumely a grace so splendid and worthy of our possessing, is blackened in darkness, and intellectual gloom. And thus much then concerning those things which the company of the holy prophets before announced respecting Israel.

But unto those who have acknowledged the revelation of the glory of Christ the Saviour of all, God the Father promised by one of the holy prophets, thus saying; "And I will strengthen them in the Lord their God, and in the name of their God they shall be established." And in accordance with this the Psalmist also says in the Spirit unto our Lord Jesus Christ: "They shall walk, O Lord, in the light of Your countenance: and in Your Name shall they rejoice all the day. For you are the glory of their strength, and in Your righteousness shall our horn be exalted." For we glory in Christ, and as being justified by Him are exalted, having cast off the abasement of sin, and living in the excellence of every virtue, we have been enriched also with the exact and unadulterated knowledge of the doctrines of truth. For this God promised us where He says by the voice of Isaiah, "And I will lead the blind by a way that they know not: and in paths which they have not known I will make them walk. I will make their darkness to be light, and all their steep places to be smooth." For we, who were once blind, have been enlightened, and travel in an unwonted pathway of righteousness; while those who boasted of the law as their schoolmaster, have become darkened. For as Christ Himself said; "Darkness has blinded their eyes: and blindness in part has happened unto Israel, that seeing they might not see, and hearing they might not hear." For they sinned against the holy prophets; and even ventured to lift their hands against Him Who was calling them to salvation and life. Even

though therefore, He says, you be disobedient, and though you foolishly deride My words, which would guide you in the attainment of that which is useful and becoming, yet this conduct, He says, was not unforeknown, but already had been declared by the law and the prophets. And it is a thing impossible for the words of God to fail of their accomplishment: for He declared that which He knew must altogether and necessarily happen.

Unbelief therefore brings upon men destruction, as also does the stretching out of the haughty neck of the mind from excessive pride against Christ the Saviour of us all; by Whom and with Whom to God the Father be praise and dominion, with the Holy Spirit, for ever and ever, Amen.

Sermon 111.

16:19-31. *But there was a certain rich, man, and he was clothed in purple and fine linen, feasting sumptuously every day. And a certain poor man whose name was Lazarus had been laid at his gate, full of sores; and desiring to satisfy himself with the crumbs which fell from the rich man's table: moreover the dogs came and licked his sores. And it came to pass that the poor man died, and the angels carried him to Abraham's bosom. And the rich man also died, and was buried. And in Hades, having lifted up his eyes, being in torment, he saw Abraham afar off, and Lazarus in his bosom. And he cried out and said, Father Abraham, have mercy on me, and send Lazarus, that he may dip the tip of his finger in water, and cool my tongue: for behold! I am tormented in this flame. But Abraham said, Son, remember that you received your good things in your life time; and Lazarus in like manner his evil things: but now he is comforted here, and you are tormented. And besides all this, between us and you a great gulf is placed, so that those who would pass from hence to you cannot; nor can those pass who would come from thence unto us. And he said, I pray you, father, to send him to my father's house: I have five brethren; that he may testify unto them, lest they also come unto this place of torment. But Abraham said unto him, They have Moses and the prophets: let them hear them. But he said, Nay, father Abraham: but if one go unto them from the dead they will repent. But he said unto him, If they hear not Moses and the prophets, they would not be persuaded even though one rose from the dead.*

WHEN Solomon was offering up prayers in behalf of his kingdom, he somewhere said unto God, "Give me wisdom, even that which abides by Your throne." And God praised him for earnestly desiring such blessings as these; for there is nothing better for men than sacred gifts: of which one worthy of our acceptance, and that perfects in blessedness those who have been counted worthy of it, is the wisdom which God bestows. For it is the sight of the mind and heart, and the knowledge of every good and profitable thing.

And it is our duty also to be enamoured of such gifts as these: that being counted worthy thereof we may rightly and without error approach the Saviour's words. For this is useful for us unto spiritual improvement, and leads unto a praiseworthy and blameless life. Come therefore, that being made partakers of the wisdom which is from above, we may examine the meaning of the parable now set before us.

It is necessary however, I think, in the first place to mention, what was the occasion which led to His speaking of these things; or what Christ intended to illustrate in so excellently sketching and describing the parable set before us. The Saviour therefore was perfecting us in the art of well-doing, and commanding us to walk uprightly in every good work, and to be in earnest in adorning ourselves with the glories which arise from virtuous conduct. For He would have us be lovers one of another, and ready to communicate: prompt to give, and merciful, and careful of showing love to the poor, and manfully persisting in the diligent discharge of this duty. And He especially admonished the rich in this world to be careful in so doing, and to guide them into the way which altogether becomes the saints, He said, "Sell your possessions, and give alms: make you purses that grow not old; a treasure that does not fail for ever in heaven." Now the commandment indeed is beautiful, and good, and salutary: but it did not escape His knowledge, that it is impossible for the majority to practise it. For the mind of man has ever been, so to speak, infirm in the discharge of those duties which are arduous and difficult: and to abandon wealth and possessions and the enjoyment which they give, is not a thing very acceptable to any, inasmuch as the mind is early clothed and entangled, as it were, in indissoluble cords, which bind it to the desire of pleasure.

As being therefore good and loving unto men, He has provided for them a special kind of help, lest eternal and never-ending poverty should follow upon wealth here, and everlasting torment succeed to the pleasures of the present time. "For make for yourselves friends, He says, of the unrighteous mammon: that when it has failed, they may receive you into eternal tabernacles." And this then is the advice of One providing them with something which they can do. For if, He says, you cannot be persuaded to give up this pleasure-loving wealth, and to sell your possessions, and make distribution to those who are in need, at least be diligent in the practice of inferior virtues." "Make for yourselves friends with the unrighteous mammon:" that is, do not consider your riches as belonging to yourselves alone; open wide your hand to those who are in need: assist those in poverty and pain: comfort those who have fallen into extreme distress: condole with those who are in sorrow, or oppressed with bodily maladies, and the want of necessaries: and comfort also the saints who embrace a voluntary poverty that they may serve God without distraction. Nor shall your so doing be unrewarded. For when your earthly wealth abandons you, as you reach the end of your life, then shall they make you partakers of their hope, and of the consolation given them by God. For He being good and kind to man, will lovingly and bountifully refresh those who have laboured in this world: and more especially such as have wisely and humbly and soberly borne the heavy burden of poverty. And somewhat similar advice the wise Paul also gives to those who live in wealth and abundance respecting those in misery: "Your abundance shall be to supply their falling short: in order that also their abundance may supply your falling short." But this is the advice of one who enjoins that simply which Christ spoke; "Make to yourselves friends of the unrighteous mammon:" so that the commandment is well worthy of our admiration.

And that our refusal so to act will cause our ruin, and bring us down to the inextinguishable flame, and to an unavailing remorse, He plainly shows by weaving for us the present parable. "For there was a certain rich man, He says, and he was clothed in purple and fine linen, feasting sumptuously every day. And a certain poor man whose name was Lazarus had been cast down at his gate, full of sores."

Here observe, I pray, and mark accurately the Saviour's words. For while it was easy to have said, "That there was such and such a rich man whoever it might be," He does not say so, but simply calls him a rich man: while He mentions the poor man by name. What conclusion

therefore must we draw? That the rich man as being uncompassionate was nameless in God's presence: for He has somewhere said by the voice of the Psalmist, concerning those who do not fear Him, "I will not make mention of their names with My lips:" while, as I said, the poor man is mentioned by name by the tongue of God.

But let us look at the pride of the rich man puffed up for things of no real importance; "he was clothed, it says, in purple and fine linen," that is, his study was to deck himself in beautiful attire, so that his raiment was of great price, and he lived in never-ceasing banquetings; for such is the meaning of his feasting every day: besides which it adds that he feasted sumptuously, that is, prodigally. All the luxury therefore of that rich man consisted in things of this sort: in clothing clean, delicate, and embroidered with linen, and dyed with purple, so as to gratify the eyes of beholders. And what is the result? Differing but little from the figures in statuary and painting, the rich man is indeed admired by those who are destitute of sense, but his heart is full of pride and haughtiness: he has high thoughts of himself and is boastful, and while there is nothing of excellence in his mind, he makes variously coloured hues a reason for his empty pride. His delight is in expensive banquets; in music and revellings; he has numerous cooks, who labour to provoke gluttony by carefully prepared meats: his cupbearers are beautifully attired; he has singing men and singing women, and the voices of flatterers. Such were the things in which the rich man lived; for the disciple of Christ certifies us. saying, "that all that is in the world is the lust of the flesh, and the lust of the eyes, and the pride of the world."

Meanwhile Lazarus, bound fast by sickness and poverty, was cast down, He says, at his gate. For the rich man dwelt in lofty halls, and spacious mansions nobly built: whereas the poor man was not so much laid as cast down, thrown there in neglect, and not deemed worthy of any account. Cut off from compassion and care, he would have liked, to satisfy his hunger, have gathered the worthless morsels that fell from the rich man's table. He was tormented moreover by a severe and incurable malady; "Yes, even the dogs, it says, licked his sores," and that, as it seems, not to injure him, but rather, so to speak, as sympathizing with him, and tending him: for with their tongues they allay their own sufferings, removing with them that which pains them, and gently soothing the sore.

But the rich man was more cruel than the beasts; for he felt neither sympathy for him nor compassion; but was full of all mercilessness. And what the result was, the outline of the parable teaches us in what follows: but it is too long to tell it now. For lest my discourse should prove more than sufficient for my hearers, and a fatigue beyond due measure to him who speaks, stopping now from a due regard for the good both of myself and you, I will speak to you again upon these things at our next meeting, if Christ our common Saviour grant me the ability so to do: by Whom and with Whom, to God the Father be praise and dominion, with the Holy Spirit, for ever and ever, Amen.

Sermon 112.

The same subject continued.

THE blessed prophet Isaiah has somewhere introduced those who by faith in Christ have been won unto life, as calling out eagerly, so to speak, unto one another, and saying; "Come, let us go up unto the mountain of the Lord, and unto the house of the God of Jacob, and they shall teach us His way, and we will walk in it." Now by the mountain here we affirm to be meant not

any earthly mountain; for to imagine this would be foolish: but rather the church which Christ has rescued for Himself. For it is high and conspicuous to people everywhere, and, so to say, exalted, because there is nothing in it which brings men down to earth. For those who dwell within it care nothing for the things of earth, but rather desire those things that are above: and, as the Psalmist says, "They are exalted far above the earth;" as being altogether brave and courageous, and practising uninterrupted endeavours after all things whatsoever which please God.

And such we believe you to be; and your earnest desire after instruction is a plain proof thereof. For you have come of course to seek the fulfilment of the promise given unto you: but neither have we forgotten what we promised, but pay our debt, adding on to what has been already said that which is still wanting to the parable of Lazarus and the rich man.

"For it came to pass, He says, that Lazarus died, and was carried by angels to Abraham's bosom: and the rich man also died, and was buried." Observe carefully the Saviour's words. For of the poor man, He says, that he was carried by angels to Abraham's bosom: but of the rich man there is nothing of the sort, but only that he died and was buried. For those who have hope towards God find in their departure from the world a deliverance from anguish and pain. And something like this Solomon also has taught us, saying, "In the sight of men they seemed to die, and their departure was considered an injury and their going from among us a breaking to pieces: but they are at peace, and their hope is full of immortality." For there is given unto them a measure of consolation commensurate with their labours: or even perhaps one which surpasses and exceeds their toils: for Christ has somewhere said, that "good measure, pressed down, and heaped up, and running over shall they give into your bosom." For like as ships that sail upon the sea stand the shock of savage waves, and struggle with the violence of mighty winds, but afterwards arriving at tranquil havens fit for their rest, cease there from tossing; so in like manner I think that the souls of men, when they emerge from the turbulence of earthly things, enter the mansions that are above, as into a haven of salvation.

"Lazarus then, He says, was carried by the holy angels unto Abraham's bosom: but the rich man died and was buried." For to that rich man who had shewn himself harsh and unmerciful the separation from the body was death. For he was going from pleasure to torment: from glory to shame: from light to darkness. Such were the things that the rich man must suffer, who had been voluptuous, and close-handed, and unready for mercy. And to torment him the more now that he dwells in Hades, he beheld, it says, Lazarus in the bosom of Abraham: and made supplication that he might be sent to drop a little water upon his tongue: for he was tormented, it says, as in a fierce flame. And what reply does the patriarch Abraham make? "Son, you received your good things in your life: and Lazarus his evil things." You were enamoured, He says, of these temporal things; you were clad in fine linen and purple; you were boastful and haughty; all your time was spent in luxury; you offered up your wealth to your appetite and to flatterers; but you never once called to mind the sick and sorrowful: you had no compassion on Lazarus when you saw him thrown down at your portals. You beheld the man suffering incurable misery, and a prey to intolerable griefs: for two maladies at once possessed him, each worse than the other, the cruel pain of his ulcers, and the want of the necessaries of life. The very beasts soothed Lazarus, because he was in pain; "the dogs licked his sores," but you were more hard-hearted than the beasts. "You have received therefore, He says, your good things in your life, and Lazarus his evil: and now here he is comforted, and you are tormented;" and, as the sacred Scripture says, "they shall have judgment without

mercy who have wrought no mercy." You would have been a partner with Lazarus, and a portion of his consolation would have been given you by God, if you had admitted him to be a partner of your wealth. But this you did not do, and therefore you alone are tormented: for such is the fitting punishment of the unmerciful, and of those whose mind feels no sympathy for the sick.

Let us therefore make for ourselves friends of the unrighteous mammon: let us listen to Moses and the prophets calling us unto mutual love and brotherly affection: let us not wait for any of those now in Hades to return hither to tell us the torments there: the sacred Scripture is necessarily true: we have heard, that "Christ shall sit upon the throne of His glory to judge the world in righteousness, and that He shall set the sheep indeed on His right hand, but the goats on His left. And to those on His right hand He shall say, Come, you blessed of My Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from before the foundations of the world: for I was hungry, and you gave Me to eat; and thirsty also, and you gave Me to drink: I was naked, and you clothed Me; in prison, and you came unto Me." But upon those upon the left hand He shall lay a heavy condemnation, saying, "Go to the eternal fire prepared for the devil and his angels." And the charge against them is, that they have done the very opposite of that for which the saints were praised. "For I was hungry, and you gave Me not to eat; and thirsty, and you gave Me not to drink: for inasmuch as you did it not, He says, to one of these little ones, you did it not to Me."

But to this perhaps some one will object, that there are many kinds of well living; for virtue is diversified, so to speak, and manifold: why therefore, having omitted those other kinds, does He make mention only of love to the poor? To this we reply, that the act is better than any other kind of well doing: for it works in our souls a certain divine likeness which moulds us, so to speak, after God's image. For Christ also has said, "Be you merciful, as your Father also in heaven is merciful," He who is quick to show mercy, and compassionate and kind, is ranked with the true worshippers; for it is written, that "a pure and unpolluted sacrifice to God the Father is this, to visit orphans and widows in their poverty, and that a man keep himself unspotted from the world." And the wise Paul also has somewhere written, "But alms and communication forget not: for with such sacrifices God is content." For He loves not the incense of the legal worship, but requires rather the pleasantness of the sweet spiritual savour. But the sweet spiritual savour unto God is to show pity unto men, and to maintain love towards them. This also Paul advises us, saying, "Owe no man anything, but that you love one another:" and the daughter of love is pity for poverty.

Come therefore, you rich, cease from transitory pleasure: be earnest after the hope that is set before you: clothe yourselves with mercy and kindness: hold out the hand to them that are in need: comfort those who are in necessity: count as your own the sorrows of those who are in extreme distress.

[the remainder is lost]

Sermons 113 - 126 (fragments)

17:1. *It is impossible but that offences come.*

WHAT are the offences which Christ mentions as being in every way certain to happen? Offences then are of two kinds: for some are against the glory of the Supreme Being, and

assail That Substance Which transcends all, as far at least as regards the purpose of the contrivers of them: while other offences happen from time to time against ourselves, and proceed no further than to the injury of some of the brethren, who are our partners in the faith. For whatever heresies have been invented, and every argument which opposes itself to the truth, resist really the glory of the supreme Godhead, by drawing away those who are caught therein from the uprightness and exactness of the sacred doctrines. And such were the offences concerning which the Saviour Himself again somewhere said, "Woe to the world because of offences! for it must needs be that offences come: but woe to that man by whom the offence comes." For offences of this kind, caused I mean by unholy heretics, are not levelled against some single individual, but are aimed rather against the world, that is, against the inhabitants of the whole earth. And the inventors of such offences the blessed Paul rebukes, saying, "But in thus sinning against the brethren, and wounding their weak conscience, you sin against Christ." And that such offences might not prevail over the faithful, God somewhere spoke unto those who are the ambassadors of the upright word of truth, and skilful in teaching it, saying, "Go through My gates, and make a pathway for My people, and cast away the stones out of the way." And the Saviour has attached a bitter penalty against those who lay such stumbling-blocks in men's road.

Perhaps, however, these are not the offences here referred to, but those rather, which very frequently from human infirmity happen between friends and brethren: and the accompanying discourse which immediately follows these opening remarks, and which speaks of our pardoning the brethren in ease they ever sin against us, leads us to the idea that these were the offences meant. And what then are these offences? Mean and annoying actions, I suppose; fits of anger, whether on good grounds or without justification; insults; slanders very frequently; and other stumbling-blocks akin and similar to these. Such, He says, must needs come. Is this then because God, Who governs all, obliges men to their commission? Away with the thought: for from Him comes nothing that is evil, yes! rather He is the fountain of all virtue. Why then must they happen? Plainly because of our infirmity: "for in many things we all of us stumble," as it is written. Nevertheless there will be woe, He says, to the man who lays the stumblingblocks in the way: for He does not leave indifference in these things without rebuke, but restrains it rather by fear of punishment. Nevertheless He commands us to bear with patience those who occasion them.

17:4. *If seven times in the day he sin against you.*

For if, He says, he who sins against you repent and acknowledge his fault, you shall forgive him: and that not once only, but very many times. For we must not show ourselves deficient in mutual love, and neglect forbearance, because any one is weak, and again and again offends; but must rather imitate those whose business it is to heal our bodily maladies, and who do not tend a sick man once only or twice, but just as often as he chances to fall ill. For let us remember that we also are liable to infirmities, and overpowered by our passions: and such being the case, we pray that those whose duty it is to rebuke us, and who possess the authority to punish us, may show themselves kind to us and forgiving. It is our duty therefore, having a common feeling for our mutual infirmities, "to bear one another's burdens; for so we shall fulfil the law of Christ." And observe also, that in the Gospel according to Matthew, Peter makes the inquiry, "How oft shall my brother sin against me, and I forgive Him?" And thereupon the Lord tells the Apostles, 'that though he sin seven times in the day; that is, frequently, and shall as often acknowledge his fault, you shall forgive him.'

17:5. *The Apostles said to the Lord, Increase our faith.*

That which necessarily gives joy to the soul of the saints is not the possession of transitory and earthly goods; for they are corruptible, and easily lost; but of such rather as render those that receive them reverend and blessed, even the spiritual graces which are God's gift. And of these one of special value is faith, by which I mean the having been brought unto a belief in Christ, the Saviour of us all: which also Paul recognised as being the chief of all our blessings; for he said, that "without faith it was impossible ever to have pleased (God): for by it the elders obtained their testimony." Observe therefore the holy apostles emulating the conduct of the saints of old time. For what do they ask of Christ? "Increase our faith," They do not ask faith simply, lest you should imagine them to be without faith; but they rather ask of Christ an addition to their faith, and to be strengthened therein. For faith partly depends upon ourselves, and partly is the gift of the divine grace: for the commencement of it depends upon ourselves, and to maintain confidence and faith in God with all our power; but the confirmation and strength necessary for this comes from the divine grace: for which reason, because all things are possible with God, the Lord says, that "all things are possible to him that believes." For the power which comes unto us through faith is of God. And knowing this, the blessed Paul also says in the first Epistle to the Corinthians: "For to one is given through the Spirit the word of wisdom: and to another the word of knowledge according to the same Spirit: and to another faith in the same Spirit." You see that he has placed faith also in the catalogue of spiritual graces. And this the disciples requested they might receive of the Saviour, contributing also that which was of themselves: and He granted it unto them after the fulfilment of the dispensation, by the descent upon them of the Holy Spirit: for before the resurrection their faith was so feeble, that they were liable even to the charge of littleness of faith.

For the Saviour of all was sailing once, for instance, with the holy apostles upon the lake or sea of Tiberias, and purposely permitted Himself to fall asleep: and when a violent storm agitated the surge, and raised a mighty wave against the vessel, they were greatly troubled, so that they even roused the Lord from sleep, saying, "Master, save us, we perish." And He, it says, arose, and rebuked the waves, and changed the savageness of the tempest into a calm. But He greatly blamed the holy apostles, saying, "Where is your faith?" For they ought not to have been troubled in any respect whatsoever, when the Sovereign of the universe was present with them, at Whom all His works tremble and shake. And if we must add a further and similar example, I will mention one. He commanded the holy apostles to go on board the vessel, and precede Him unto the opposite side of the lake: and they of course did so. And when they had rowed, it says, about thirty furlongs, they see Jesus walking on the sea, and were greatly terrified, imagining that they saw a spectre. But when He called out unto them, saying, "It is I: be not afraid;" Peter said, "If it is You, bid me come unto You on the water: and He said, Come," And having leaped down from the ship, he began to walk unto Him. But when, it says, he saw the wind and the wave, he was terrified: and beginning to sink, he cried out, "Lord, help me:" and He saved him in his danger, but again rebuked him, saying, "O you of little faith, wherefore did you doubt?" And that at the season of the passion, when the band of soldiers, and wicked officers, came to seize Jesus, they all forsook Him and fled, and Peter also denied Him, being terrified at a maidservant, is well known.

You have seen the disciples while still possessed of but little faith: now wonder at them when they had obtained an increase of their faith from Christ, the Saviour of us all. He commanded them "not to depart from Jerusalem, but to wait for the Father's promise," until they should

be clothed with power from on high. But when the power from on high had descended upon them in the shape of fiery tongues, even the grace which is through the Holy Spirit, then indeed they became bold and manly and fervent in the Spirit, so as even to despise death, and to count as nothing the dangers with which they were threatened from unbelievers; yes, and then too they became able to work miracles.

But that to be confirmed in the faith is a great and special grace, the Lord shows by saying, "If you have faith as a grain of mustard seed, hot, that is, and fervent, you might have said to the sycamine tree, Be you uprooted in the sea, and it would have obeyed you." For he who confides in Christ trusts not to his own strength, but rather assigns to Him the power of performing all things. From Him then confessedly comes the accomplishment of all good things in men's souls: but they nevertheless must prepare themselves to receive this great grace. For if the power of faith remove that which is fixed and rooted in the ground, one may say absolutely that there is nothing so immovable as that faith cannot shake it, if its removal be required. The earth accordingly was shaken when the apostles were praying, as the Acts of the Apostles record: and so, on the other hand, faith stays those things which are in motion, as the rapid course of a running river, and the ceaseless way of the lights which move in heaven. This, however, we must carefully notice, that God does not excite an empty astonishment or vain wondering, but that such things are far from the divine Substance, Which is free from pride and boasting, and altogether true, for the solo good and safety of mankind. And this I say, that no one may expect from sacred faith and the divine power useless changes, for instance, of the elements, or the removal of mountains and plants; nor give way to impiety, as though the word were not true, if these things come not so to pass: nor again count faith weak, if it cannot accomplish such things. Let the thing be but useful for some real benefit, and the power will not be wanting.

17:7. *But which of you having a servant ploughing or feeding cattle.*

In the verses which precede a long and important discourse has been addressed to us by the Lord, to show unto us the paths which lead unto honour, and to manifest the glories of the blameless life, that making progress therein, and advancing zealously unto whatsoever is admirable we may attain unto "the prize of our high calling." But since it is the nature of the mind of man ever to be carried away unto vaingloriousness, and to be afflicted most readily with a tendency thereto; and since a pretext for this fault is often given by the being distinguished before God for some of the noblest virtues; and since it is a sin grievous and hateful unto God:---for the serpent, the author of evil, leads men sometimes into such a state of mind, as for them to imagine perhaps that God even owes them the highest honours, when their life is glorious and distinguished: ---to draw us away from such passions, He sets before us the purport of the lessons which have just been read, teaching us thereby, under the form of an example, that the might of sovereign authority demands everywhere of its slaves subjection as a debt. For the lord, He says, will not acknowledge any gratitude to the slave, even if all that is due be done by him, according to what becomes the condition of a slave.

Here observe, I pray, that the disciples, yes, all who are subject to the sceptre of Christ the Saviour of us all, are encouraged unto industry, but that, not as though they rendered unto Him their service as a favour, but as discharging the debt of obedience incumbent upon slaves. And hereby the accursed malady of vainglory is done away. For if you do that which is your due, why do you pride yourself? Do you not see that if you don't discharge your debt, there is danger: and that if you do discharge it, no gratitude is owed you? Which truth that

admirable servant Paul having well learnt and understood, says, "If I preach the gospel, I have no cause of boasting; for a necessity is laid upon me: but woe unto me if I preach not the gospel." And again, "I am a debtor, he says, of the preaching of the doctrine, both to Greeks and barbarians, both to wise and foolish." If therefore you have done well, and have kept the divine commands, and have obeyed your Lord, ask not honour of God as your due, but rather draw near, supplicating for the gifts of His bounty. Bear in mind that also among us, masters acknowledge no gratitude when any of their slaves perform their appointed service, though often by their bounty they gain the goodwill of their faithful servants, and so beget in them a more ready alacrity. Similarly God demands of us the service of slaves, using the right of His sovereign authority: but as being good and bountiful. He promises also rewards to those who labour. And the greatness of His bounty far surpasses the labours of His subjects, as Paul shall prove unto you, writing, "The sufferings of the present season are not worthy to the glory about to be revealed upon us." Yes! though we are slaves, He calls us sons, and crowns us with the honour which becomes children. And observe that each one, having first attended to his own flesh, so must take charge of the good of others: for he "who cannot govern his own house well, how shall he take care of the church?"

17:12. *Ten lepers met him.*

Again the Saviour manifests unto us His glory, and by working godlike miracles, endeavours to win senseless Israel unto faith, obdurate though he was, and unbelieving. What argument then will avail him at the day of judgment for refusing to accept salvation through Christ? Especially when they themselves heard His words, and were eyewitnesses of His ineffable miracles? For which reason He said Himself of them, "If I had not come and spoken unto them, they had not had sin." And again, "If I had not done among them the works which no other man did, they had not had sin, but now they have both seen and hated both Me and My Father." The cleansing of the lepers, as I said just above, was a plain demonstration (of His miraculous power): for by the law of Moses they were shut out of the cities and villages, as being impure.

This then will suffice, I suppose, for introductory remarks. The lepers then having met the Saviour, earnestly besought Him to free them from their misery, and called Him Master, that is, Teacher.

No one pitied them when suffering this malady: but He Who had appeared on earth for this very reason, and had become man that He might show pity unto all, He was moved with compassion for them, and had mercy upon them.

17:14. *He said unto them, Go and show yourselves unto the priests.*

And why did He not rather say, "I will, be you cleansed;" as he did in the case of another leper: but commanded them rather to show themselves unto the priests? It was because the law gave directions to this effect to those who were delivered from leprosy: for it commanded them to show themselves to the priests, and to offer a sacrifice for their cleansing. He commanded them therefore to go, as being already healed, and, that they might, so to speak, bear witness to the priests, as the rulers of the Jews, and ever envious of His glory, that wonderfully, and beyond their hope, they had been delivered from their misfortune by Christ's willing that they should be healed. He did not heal them first, but sent them to the priests, because the priests knew the marks of leprosy, and of its being healed. He sent them to the priests, and with them

He sent also the healing. What however was the law of leprosy, and what the rules for its purification, and what the meaning of each of the particulars commanded by the law, we have more fully described at the commencement of our Saviour's miracles as recorded by Luke, and referring thither such as are anxious for learning, let us now proceed to what follows. The nine then, as being Jews, falling into a thankless forgetfulness, did not return to give glory to God: by which He shows that Israel was hard of heart, and utterly unthankful: but the stranger,---- for as being a Samaritan he was of foreign race, having been brought thither from Assyria: for the phrase is not without meaning, "in the middle of Samaria and Galilee:" ----returned with a loud voice to glorify God. It shows therefore that the Samaritans were grateful, but that the Jews, even when benefited, were ungrateful.

Sermon 117.

17:20-30. And having been asked by the Pharisees when the kingdom of God comes, He answered and said unto them, The kingdom of God comes not by watchings; neither shall they say, Lo! here, or Lo! there: for behold! the kingdom of God is within you. And He said unto the disciples, The days will come, when you shall desire to see one of the days of the Son of man, and shall not see it. And if they shall say unto you, Lo! here, or Lo! there, go you not, neither run thither. For as the lightning that lightens from under heaven gives light to that which is under heaven, so shall the Son of man be in His day. But first He must suffer many things, and be rejected by this generation. And as it was in the days of Noah, so shall it also be in the days of the Son of man. They were eating, and drinking, and were taking wives, and being made the wives of men, until the day that Noah entered into the ark; and the flood came, and destroyed them all. Likewise also as it was in the days of Lot: they were eating and drinking; they were buying and selling; they were planting, were building: but on the day that Lot went out of Sodom, there rained fire and brimstone from heaven, and destroyed them all. So shall it be in the day when the Son of man is revealed.

AGAIN is the Pharisee fighting against God, nor feels that he is kicking against the pricks: for while assuming the appearance of being anxious to learn, he makes a mock at divine mysteries so holy, that "the angels desire to look into them," according to the word of the blessed Peter. For this reason "blindness in part has happened unto Israel," and darkness has blinded their eyes. For that they were dark and blind, so as even often to make the mystery of Christ an occasion of ridicule, any one may learn from what has now been read to us. For they drew near asking Him, and saying, "When will the kingdom of God come?" Moderate your pride, O foolish Pharisee: desist from a mockery that exposes you to heavy and inevitable guilt. "For he, it says, that does not believe the Son, is condemned already, because he has not believed in the Name of the Son of God." For the divine Moses showed before by type and shadow that the Word is the world's way and door of salvation, in that though He is God, He appeared in human form, and endured the death of the flesh for the sake of the whole earth. And the declarations also of the holy prophets agree with what was said by Moses. For they foretold that He would come in due time in form like unto us. And this also came to pass: for He was manifested to those upon earth, having assumed the form of a slave; but even so He retained His natural lordship, and power, and glory such as befits God, as is proved by the splendour of the works He wrought. But you did not believe in Him: you did not accept

justification by His means, in that you were obdurate and proud. And after this you ask, "When the kingdom of God shall come?"

As I said therefore, he mocks at a mystery thus truly holy and worthy of admiration. For because the Saviour of all in His public discourses spoke from time to time of the kingdom of God, therefore these miserable men, in contempt of Him,----or perhaps even having it in their mind that being entrapped by their malice, He will have to endure the death upon the cross,---ask in mockery, "When the kingdom of God will come;" as much as to say, that before this kingdom which You talk about, the cross and death will seize You. What therefore does Christ reply? Again He displays His long-suffering and incomparable love unto man: for "being reviled, He does not revile back: suffering, He does not threaten." He does not therefore harshly chide them, nor yet because of their wickedness does He deign to give them an answer to their question, but says that only which is for the benefit of all men, that "the kingdom of God comes not by watchings: for behold! the kingdom of God is within you." For ask not, He says, about the times in which the season of the kingdom of heaven shall again arise and come: but rather be in earnest, that you may be found worthy of it, for "it is within you," that is, it depends upon your own wills, and is in your own power, whether or not you receive it. For every man who has attained to justification by means of faith in Christ, and is adorned by all virtue, is counted worthy of the kingdom of heaven.

Having therefore made this plain to all men, He now transfers His words to the holy disciples, to whom as His true companions He says, "The days will come when you shall desire to see one of the days of the Son of man, and shall not see it." Is the Lord then in so speaking working cowardice in His disciples? Does He enervate them beforehand, and make them without heart for the endurance of those persecutions and temptations which they would have to bear? This is not His meaning, but the contrary: for He would have them prepared for all that can grieve men, and ready to endure patiently, that so being approved, they may enter the kingdom of God. He forewarns them therefore that before His advent from heaven, at the consummation of the world, tribulation and persecution will precede Him, so that they will wish to see one of the days of the Son of man; that is, one such as those when they were still going about with Christ, and conversing with Him. And yet the Jews even then were guilty of no little violence against Him. They stoned Him with stones: they persecuted Him not once only, but oftentimes: they led Him to the brow of the hill, that they might throw Him down from the precipice: they vexed Him with reproaches and calumnies, and there was no form of wickedness which the Jews did not practise against Him. How then did He say that the disciples would desire to see one of His days? It was because, by comparison with the greater evils, the less are, so to speak, desirable.

But that He will descend from heaven in the latter times of the world, not obscurely nor secretly, but with godlike glory, and as "dwelling in the light which no man can approach unto," He declared, saying, that His coming shall be as the lightning. He was born indeed in the flesh of a woman, to fulfil the dispensation for our sakes, and for this reason He emptied Himself, and made Himself poor, and no longer showed Himself in the glory of the Godhead: for the season itself, and the necessity of the dispensation, summoned Him to this humiliation. But after the resurrection from the dead, having ascended to heaven, and sat down with God the Father, He shall descend again, not with His glory withdrawn, nor in the meanness of human nature, but in the majesty of the Father, with the companies of the angels guarding Him, and standing; before Him as God and Lord of all. He shall come therefore as the lightning, and not secretly.

Nor must we believe any one saying, "Lo! Christ is here, or lo! He is there. But first He must suffer many things, and be rejected by this generation," He cuts away another expectation from the heart of the disciples: for they supposed, that when He had gone round about Judaea, and afterwards been in Jerusalem, that He would immediately manifest the kingdom of God. They even drew near to Him and said, "Lord, will You at this time restore the kingdom to Israel?" Yes, even the mother of Zebedee's sons, expecting that this would be the case, drew near and said, "Lord, say that my two sons shall sit, the one on Your right hand, and the other on Your left, in Your kingdom." That they might know therefore that He was about first to undergo His saving passion, and to abolish death by the death of His flesh, and put away the sin of the world, and bring to nought the ruler of this world, and so to ascend unto the Father, and in due time to appear to "judge the world in righteousness," He says, that "He must first suffer many things."

And to show that He will appear unexpectedly, and with no man knowing it, and the end of the world come, He says, that the end shall be "as it was in the days of Noah and Lot. For they were eating, He says, and drinking; and were taking wives, and being made the wives of men: they were selling and buying, and building; but the coming of the waters destroyed the one, while the others were the prey and food of brimstone and fire." What therefore is signified by this? That He requires us to be always watchful, and ready to make our defence before the tribunal of God. For as Paul says, "We are all about to be revealed before the judgment-seat of Christ, that every man may receive a retribution for the things that are by the body, according to that he has done, whether good or bad." "Then shall He set the sheep on His right hand, and the goats on His left: and He shall say unto the sheep, Come, you blessed of My Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundations of the world." But upon the goats He will utter a terrible sentence; for He will send them to the flame that shall never be appeased.

If therefore, O Pharisee, you desire to be accounted worthy of the kingdom of God, become one of the sheep. Offer unto Christ the fruit of faith in Him, and the praise of holy conduct, even that which is by the Gospel. But if you continue to be a goat, that is, one unfruitful, and destitute both of faith and good works, why do you enquire when the kingdom of God will come? For it does not concern you. Fear rather because of the torment which is decreed against the unbelieving, and the unappeasable flame appointed for those who sin against Christ: by Whom and with Whom to God the Father be praise and dominion, with the Holy Spirit, for ever and ever, Amen.

Sermon 118.

17:31-37. In that day, he who is upon the housetop, and his goods in the house, let him not go down to carry them away: and he who is in the field, let him in like manner not return back. Remember Lot's wife. Whosoever shall seek to save his life shall lose it: and whosoever shall lose it, shall save it alive. I tell you, in that night there shall be two men in one bed: the one shall be taken, and the other left. Two women shall be grinding at a mill together; the one shall be taken, and the other left. And they answer and say unto Him, Where, Lord? And He said unto them, Where the body is, there will also the eagles be gathered.

THE sacred Scripture has some where said, "Prepare your works for your departure, and make yourself ready for the field." Now by our departure I imagine is meant our going from this world, and removal hence. For this time must of course overtake every one: for, as the Psalmist says, "What man is there that shall live and not see death, and that can save his soul from the hand of hell?" For the nature of man was condemned in Adam, and fell away unto corruption, because he foolishly transgressed the commandment given him. But those who are careless and contemptuous, lead a shameful and pleasure-loving life, not even perhaps admitting into their mind the thought of the world to come, and the hope prepared for the saints, nor feeling moreover any alarm at the torment that is appointed for those who love sin. But those who embrace a virtuous life rejoice in labours for probity's sake, bidding, so to speak, farewell to the desire after earthly things, and paying but slight attention to the vain turmoil of the world.

To a purpose thus excellent, and a proportionate earnestness the Saviour bids us hold fast, thus saying; "In that day he who is upon the housetop, and his goods in the house, let him not go down to carry them away: and he who is in the field, let him in like manner not return back." He was speaking of the last day, that is, of the end of this world; for as it was, He said, in the days of Noah and Lot: they were eating, and drinking, and were taking wives, and being made the wives of men, until the flood came; and upon Sodom fire descended, and destroyed them all: so shall it be in the day when the Son of man is revealed." Strengthening them therefore for the remembrance of the last day, and the final time, He commands them to disregard all earthly and temporal matters, and look only unto one end, the duty namely of every one saving his soul. "He therefore, He says, that is upon the housetop, let him not go down to the house to carry away his goods." And in these words He apparently means the man who is at ease, living in wealth and worldly glory: for always those that stand upon the housetops are conspicuous in the eyes of them who are round about the house. If therefore, He says, there be any one in this condition, let him at that time make no account of the goods stored up in his house. For vain henceforth are such things, and unavailing to his advantage. For, as it is written, "Treasures profit not the wicked: but righteousness delivers from death."

But even "if any one be, He says, in the field, in like manner let him not return back." That is, if any one be found devoted to industry, and occupied in labours, earnestly desirous of spiritual fruitfulness, and gathering the wages of virtuous toil, let him hold firmly to this diligence: "let him not return back:" for, as Christ Himself again has somewhere said, "No man that puts his hand to the plough, and turns back, is fit also for the kingdom of heaven." For it is our duty to maintain our religious exertions without wavering, and to persevere in them with undaunted wills, lest we suffer some such fate as befell the woman at Sodom, taking whom as an example, He says, "Remember Lot's wife," For when she had been rescued from Sodom, but would afterwards have returned, she became a pillar of salt, became, that is, foolish and stone-like.

On that day therefore, He says, and at that time, both those who are accustomed to live in luxury must entirely abstain from such pride, and readily labour, in order that they may save themselves: and in like manner those who are industrious, and honour useful exertion, must bravely hold to the mark that has been set before them. "For whosoever shall seek to save his life shall lose it: and whosoever shall lose it, shall save it alive."

But the way in which a man loses his life that he may save it, and how he who imagines that he is saving loses it, Paul clearly shows, where he says of the saints, "They that are Jesus Christ's

have crucified the flesh, with its affections and lusts." For those who have really become true [followers] of Christ our common Saviour, crucify their flesh, and put it to death, by being constantly engaged in labours and struggles unto piety, and by mortifying its natural desire. For it is written, "Mortify your members that are upon earth; fornication, uncleanness, passion, evil lust, and covetousness." But those who love a voluptuous course of life, imagine probably that they are gaining their soul by living in pleasure and effeminacy: whereas certainly they lose it. "For he that sows, it says, to the flesh, shall of the flesh reap corruption."

But on the other hand, whosoever loses his life shall of a certainty save it. This the blessed martyrs did, enduring conflicts even unto blood and life, and placing on their heads as their crown their true love unto Christ. But those who, from weakness of resolution and mind, denied the faith, and fled from the present death of the flesh, became their own murderers: for they will go down into hell to suffer the penalties of their wicked cowardice. For the Judge shall descend from heaven: and those who with all their heart have loved Him, and earnestly practised entire virtuousness of life, He will call, saying, "Come, you blessed of My Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundations of the world." But those who have led careless and dissolute lives, nor maintained the glory of faith in Him, on them will He pass a severe and overwhelming sentence, saying unto them, "Depart, you cursed, into everlasting fire."

This He teaches us by saying, "In that night there shall be two men in one bed: one shall be taken, and one shall be left. Two women shall be grinding at a mill together, the one shall be taken, and the other left." Now by the two who are in one bed, He seems to hint at those who live in rest and plenty, and are equal to one another, as far as regards their being possessed of worldly affluence: for the bed is the symbol of rest. "But one of them, He says, shall be taken, and one shall be left." How, or in what manner? It is because not all those who are possessed of wealth and ease in this world are wicked and merciless. For what if a man be rich, but be gentle and merciful, and not destitute of the praise of compassion upon the poor; if he be ready to share his wealth with others, and affable of address; thoroughly liberal and sober-minded; upright in the faith, and of an urgent zeal for piety; if too, according to the Saviour's expression, he have made for himself friends by his use of the unrighteous mammon, this man is taken: but the other, who was not thus minded, shall be left.

"Two women, He says, shall be grinding at a mill; the one shall be taken, and the other left." And by these again He seems to mean such as live in poverty and labour: but even in these, He says, there is a certain vast difference. For some have borne the burden of poverty manfully, honouring a sober and virtuous course of life: while others have been of a different character, crafty for every wicked practice, and the contrivers of all baseness. There will be therefore even in their case a full and exact investigation of their manners, and he that is good will be taken, and he that is not so will be left.

As Christ however, our common Saviour, had used the expression "shall be taken," the disciples usefully and necessarily ask, "Whither, Lord? And He said unto them, Where the body is, there will also the eagles be gathered." And what does this mean? By the use of a common and very plain fact, He hints at a great and profound mystery. And what is this? That He shall descend from heaven "to judge the world in righteousness." But, as He Himself says, "He will send His angels, and they shall choose the righteous and the holy from among the sinners, and bring them near unto Him:" but those others they will leave on earth, as doomed to torment and condemned to the punishment which is by fire.

Something to this effect the very wise Paul also declares, where he writes, "For I say unto you, that we who are left alive shall not arrive before those who have slept. Suddenly, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trump. For it shall sound, and the dead in Christ shall rise incorruptible: and we who are left alive shall be caught up together with them in the clouds to meet the Lord in the air; and so shall we ever be with the Lord."

Just therefore, He says, as when a dead corpse is exposed, carnivorous birds assemble unto it; so when the Son of man shall appear, then certainly shall the eagles, even those who fly aloft, and rise superior to earthly and worldly things, hasten to Him.

And He calls the time of judgment night, because, as I imagine, of His advent being unknown and unexpected. For we remember also one of the holy prophets crying out to them who love sin, and saying, "Woe unto them that desire the day of the Lord! What will the day of the Lord be unto you? and it is darkness and not light; and thick darkness that has no brightness in it." And again, Christ Himself has somewhere said to the holy apostles: "I must work the works of Him That sent Me while it is day: the night comes, when no man can work." And one also of the holy apostles wrote, "The day of the Lord comes as a thief," that is, without being foreknown.

In order therefore that we may be taken by Christ, let us abandon all earthly anxieties, and devote ourselves to every kind of good work. For so will He accept us, and make us His own, and crown us with honours from on high: by Whom and with Whom to God the Father be praise and dominion, with the Holy Spirit, for ever and ever, Amen.

Sermon 119.

18:1-8. And He spoke a parable to them, to the intent that men ought always to pray, and must not grow weary; saying, There was in a certain city a judge, who feared not God, neither felt shame at man. And there was a widow in that city, and she came to him and said, Avenge me of my adversary. And he would not for a time: but afterwards he said within himself Though I fear not God, and have no reverence for man, yet because this widow wearies me, I will avenge her, lest finally she annoy me by her coming. And the Lord said, Hear what the unjust judge says. And shall not God avenge His elect, who cry unto Him day and night, and He is longsuffering towards them? I tell you that He will avenge them speedily. Nevertheless, when the Son of man comes, shall He find faith upon the earth?

THE fountain of every blessing is Christ; "Who of God was also made unto us wisdom:" for in Him we are made wise, and filled with spiritual gifts. Now any one who is right-minded will affirm that the knowledge of those things by means of which we may prosper in every method of saintly excellence of life, and advance in virtue, is God's gift, and one well worthy of our winning. And we find one who asked it of God, saying, "Show me Your ways, O Lord: and teach me Your paths." Now the paths which lead those onward to an uncorrupt life, who eagerly advance therein, are indeed numerous; but one, which especially benefits those who practise it, is prayer: and the Saviour was Himself careful to teach us by the parable now set before us, that we must make diligent use of it. "For He spoke, it says, a parable unto them, to the intent that men ought always to pray, and must not grow weary."

For it is, I affirm, the duty of those who set apart their lives for His service, not to be sluggish in their prayers, nor again to consider it as a hard and laborious duty: but rather to rejoice, because of the freedom of access granted them by God; for He would have us converse with Him as sons with a father. Is not this then a privilege worthy of being valued by us most highly? For suppose that some one of those possessed of great earthly power were easy of access to us, and were to permit us to converse with him with full license, should we not consider it as a reason for extraordinary rejoicing? What possible doubt can there be of this? When therefore God permits us each one to offer our addresses unto Him for whatever we wish, and has set before those who fear Him an honour so truly great and worthy of their gaining, let all slothfulness cease that would lead men to an injurious silence therein; and rather let us draw near with praises, and rejoicing that we have been commanded to converse with the Lord and God of all, having Christ as our Mediator, who with God the Father grants us the accomplishment of our supplications. For the blessed Paul somewhere writes, "Grace be unto you, and peace, from God our Father, and from our Lord Jesus Christ." And He somewhere Himself said to the holy apostles, "Hitherto you have asked nothing in My Name: ask, and it shall be given unto you." For He is our Mediator, our Propitiation, our Comforter, and the Bestower of every request, it is our duty therefore to "pray without ceasing," according to the words of the blessed Paul, as well knowing, and being thoroughly assured, that He Whom we supplicate is able to accomplish all things. "For let a man, it says, ask in faith, in nothing divided: for he who is divided is like a wave of the sea, troubled and blown about by the wind. For let not, it says, that man think that he will receive anything of the Lord." For he that is divided is really guilty of mockery: for if you do not believe that He will incline unto you, and gladden you, and fulfil your request, do not draw near to Him at all, lest you be found an accuser of the Almighty, in that you foolishly art divided. We must avoid therefore so base a malady.

But that God will incline His ear to those who offer Him their prayers, not carelessly nor negligently, but with earnestness and constancy, the present parable assures us. For if the constant coining of the oppressed widow prevailed upon the unjust judge, who feared not God, neither had any shame at men, so that even against his will he granted her redress, how shall not He Who loves mercy, and hates iniquity, and Who ever gives His helping hand to them that love Him, accept those who draw near to Him day and night, and avenge them as being His elect?

But come now, and let us examine who it is that offend against them: for the examination of this question will beget much that is of profit to all who are well taught. For very many, and those of various classes, offend against the saints. For the holy ministers and teachers, who rightly divide the word of truth, are assailed by all who are the truth's enemies; men ignorant of the sacred doctrines, and estranged from all uprightness, who walk in the crooked path, remote from the straight and royal road. Such are the impure and polluted gangs of heretics, whom one may justly call the gates of destruction, the snares of hell, the pitfalls of the devil, the slough of destruction. These bring persecutions and distresses upon such as walk uprightly in the faith; and just as men drunk with wine, and unable to stand, take hold often of those near them, that they may not fall to the earth alone, so also those, as being lame and halt, often bring to ruin with them those who are not steadfast. Against such men must all who are known of God make supplications, imitating the holy apostles, who, calling out against the wickedness of the Jews, said, "And now, Lord, behold their threatenings, and grant unto Your servants that with freedom of speech they may declare Your word."

But perchance some one will say, 'But lo! Christ somewhere said to the holy apostles, "Love your enemies: pray for them who use you despitefully:" how then can we cry out against them, without despising the divine command?' To this we answer, Shall we then pray that boldness and power may be given them by God, that they may more strenuously attack those who praise His doings, not permitting them to teach, and resisting the glory of Him to Whom we address the supplication? But how would not this be thorough folly? Whenever therefore offences are committed by any against us personally, let us immediately even count it our glory to be forgiving towards them, and full of mutual love; and imitating the holy fathers, even though they smite and scorn us, yes, even though they inflict violence upon us of every kind, let us free them from all blame, and be superior both to wrath and vexation. Such glorying becomes the saints, and is pleasing to God.

But when any sin against the glory of God, heaping up wars and distresses against those who are the ministers of the divine message, then indeed let us at once draw near unto God, beseeching His aid, and crying out against those who resist His glory: just as also the mighty Moses did; for he said, "Arise, O Lord, and let Your enemies be scattered, and let all those who hate Your Name flee away." And the prayer also uttered by the holy apostles shows, that it is not without advantage for the success of the divine message for the hand, so to speak, of the persecutors to be weakened. "For behold, they say, their threatenings," that is, prove their opposition to be in vain, and grant unto "Your servants, that with freedom of speech they may speak Your word."

But that men would make merchandize of the word of uprightness, and prevail on many to abandon a sound faith, involving them in the inventions of devilish error, and "belching forth, as Scripture says, things out of their own hearts, and not out of the mouth of the Lord," He foretold, saying, "When the Son of man comes, shall He find faith upon the earth?" It escaped not His knowledge: how could it, seeing that He is God Who knows all things? He tells us then, to use his own words, that "the love of many will grow cold," and that "in the latter times some shall depart from a correct and blameless faith, going after seducing spirits, and giving heed to the false words of men who are seared in mind." Against whom we draw near unto God as faithful servants, praying Him that their wickedness, and their attempts against His glory, may be brought to no effect.

And others also there are who wrong the servants of God, and whom we may without sin attack in prayer. And who again are these? They are the evil and opposing powers, and Satan the adversary of us all, who fiercely resists those who would live well; who casts into the pitfalls of wickedness whoever slumbers; who plants in us the seeds of every sin. For with his satellites he presses upon us furiously. And on this account the Psalmist called out against them, saying, "How long set you yourselves against man? and you slay all of you, as it were a leaning wall, and a bowing fence." For just as a wall that already leans on one side, and a fence that bows over as having been loosened, readily fall when any one pushes against them, so also the mind of man, by reason of its own great inclination of itself to the love of worldly pleasures, readily falls into them whenever any one draws and entices it thereto. And this is Satan's business: and therefore we say in our prayers to Him Who is able to save, and to drive away from us that wicked being, "Avenge me of my adversary." And this the Only-begotten Word of God has indeed done by having become Man: for He has ejected from his tyranny over us the ruler of this world, and has delivered and saved us, and put us under the yoke of His kingdom.

Excellent therefore is it to make request by constant prayer; for Christ will receive our supplications, and fulfil our petitions: by Whom and with Whom, to God the Father, be praise and dominion, with the Holy Spirit, for ever and ever, Amen.

Sermon 120.

18:9-14. And He spoke also this parable unto certain who trust in themselves that they are righteous, and despise others. Two men went up unto the temple to pray, the one a Pharisee, and the other a publican. And the Pharisee stood and prayed thus to himself: God, I thank You that I am not like the rest of mankind, extortioners, unjust, adulterers, or as this publican. I fast twice in the week: I pay tithes of all that I gain. But the publican, standing afar off, would not lift up even his eyes unto heaven, but smote upon his breast, saying, God, be merciful unto me the sinner. I tell you that this man went down to his house justified rather than the other. For every one that exalts himself shall be abased, and he that abases himself shall be exalted.

You who love instruction, and are eager to listen, receive once again the sacred words: delight yourselves in the honey of wisdom; for so it is written, "Good words are honeycombs, and their sweetness is the healing of the soul." For the labour of the bees is very sweet, and benefits in many ways the soul of man: but the divine and saving (honey) makes those in whom it dwells skilful in every good work, and teaches them the ways of (spiritual) improvement. Let us therefore, as I said, receive again in mind and heart the Saviour's words. For He teaches us in what manner we ought to make our requests unto Him, in order that the act may not prove unrewarded to them who practise it; and that no one may anger God, the bestower of gifts from on high, by means of those very things by which he imagines that he shall gain some benefit. For it is written. "There is a righteous man, who perishes in his righteousness."

For see, I pray, an instance of this clearly painted, so to speak, in the parable set before us. One who prayed is condemned because he did not offer his prayer wisely. "For two men, it says, went up unto the temple to pray, the one a Pharisee, and the other a publican." And here we must admire the wise arrangement of Christ our common Saviour, in all things whatsoever He does and says. For by the parable previously read to us, He called us to diligence, and to the duty of offering prayer constantly: for the Evangelist said, "And He spoke unto them also a parable, to the intent that men ought always to pray, and must not grow weary." Having then urged them to diligence in constant prayer, yet, as I said, lest by doing so sedulously but without discretion, we should enrage Him Whom we supplicate, He very excellently shows us in what way we ought to be diligent in prayer. "Two men then, He says, went up unto the temple to pray." Observe here, I pray, the impartiality and entire fairness of the unerring Nature: for He calls those who were praying men, since He looks not so much at wealth or power; but regarding their natural equality, He considers all those who dwell upon earth as men, and as in no respect different from one another.

And what then was the manner of their prayer? "The Pharisee, it says, prayed thus to himself. God, I thank You that I am not like the rest of mankind, extortioners, unjust, adulterers, or as this publican." Many at once are the faults of the Pharisee: for first of all he is boastful, and without sense; for he praises himself, although the sacred Scripture cries aloud, "Let a neighbour praise you, and not your own mouth: a stranger and not your own lips." But, O

excellent sir, one may well say to him, Behold, those who live in the practice of good and holy actions, as any one may see, are not very ready to listen to the words of flatterers: yes, and even if men extol them, they often are covered with shame, and drop their eyes to the ground, and beg silence of those that praise them. But this shameless Pharisee praises and extols himself because he is better than extortioners, and the unjust, and adulterers. But how did it escape your notice, that a man's being better than the bad does not necessarily and of course prove him to be worthy of admiration: but that to vie with those who habitually excel, is a noble and honourable thing, and admits a man into the number of those who are justly praised.

Our virtue therefore must not be contaminated with fault, but must be single-minded and blameless, and free from all that can bring reproach. For what profit is there in fasting twice in the week, if your so doing serve only as a pretext for ignorance and vanity, and make you supercilious and haughty, and selfish? You tithe your possessions, and make a boast thereof: but you in another way provoke God's anger, by condemning men generally on this account, and accusing others; and you are yourself puffed up, though not crowned by the divine decree for righteousness, but heap, on the contrary, praises upon yourself. "For I am not, he says, as the rest of mankind." Moderate yourself, O Pharisee: "put a door to your tongue, and a lock." You speak to God Who knows all things. Await the decree of the Judge. None of those skilled in the practice of wrestling ever crowns himself: nor does any man receive the crown of himself, but awaits the summons of the arbiter. Lower your pride: for arrogance is both accursed and hated by God. Although therefore you fast with puffed up mind, your so doing will not avail you: your labour will be unrewarded; for you have mingled dung with your perfume. Even according to the law of Moses a sacrifice that had a blemish was not capable of being offered to God: for it was said unto him, "Of sheep, and ox, that is offered for sacrifice, there must be no blemish therein." Since therefore your fasting is accompanied by pride, you must expect to hear God saying, "This is not the fast that I have chosen, says the Lord." You offer tithes: but you wrong in another way Him Who is honoured by you, in that you condemn men generally. This is an act foreign to the mind that fears God: for Christ even said, "Judge not, and you shall not be judged: condemn not, and you shall not be condemned." And one also of His disciples said, "There is one Lawgiver, and Judge: why then do you judge your neighbour?" No man because he is in health ridicules one who is sick for being laid up and bedridden: rather he is afraid, lest perchance he become himself the victim of similar sufferings. Nor does any man in battle, because another has fallen, praise himself for having escaped from misfortune. For the infirmity of others is not a fit subject for praise for those who are in health: nay, even if any one be found of more than usually vigorous health, even then scarcely does he gain glory thereby. Such then was the state of the self-loving Pharisee.

But what of the publican? He stood, it says, "afar off," not even venturing, so to speak, to raise up his eyes on high. You see him abstaining from all boldness of speech, as having no right thereto, and smitten by the reproaches of conscience: for he was afraid of being even seen by God, as one who had been careless of His laws, and had led an unchaste and dissolute life. You see also that by his external manner, he accuses his own depravity. For the foolish Pharisee stood there bold and broad, lifting up his eyes without scruple, bearing witness of himself, and boastful. But the other feels shame at his conduct: he is afraid of his Judge, he smites upon his breast, he confesses his offences, he shows his malady as to the Physician, he prays that he may have mercy. And what is the result? Let us hear what the Judge says, "This man, He says, went down to his house justified rather than the other."

Let us therefore "pray without ceasing," according to the expression of the blessed Paul: but let us be careful to do so aright. The love of self is displeasing to God, and He rejects empty haughtiness and a proud look, puffed up often on account of that which is by no means excellent. And even if a man be good and sober, let him not on this account suffer himself to fall away into shameful pride: but rather let him remember Christ, Who says to the holy apostles, "When you have done all those things, those namely which have been commanded you, say, We are unprofitable servants, we have done that which was our duty to do." For we owe unto God over all, as from the yoke of necessity, the service of slaves, and ready obedience in all things. Yes, though you lead an excellent and elect life, don't exact wages from the Lord; but rather ask of Him a gift. As being good, He will promise it you: as a loving Father, He will aid you. Restrain not yourself then from saying, "God be merciful to me the sinner." Remember Him Who says by the voice of Isaiah, "Declare you your sins first, that you may be justified:" remember too that He rebukes those who will not do so, and says, "Behold, I have a judgment against you, because you say 'I have not sinned'." Examine the words of the saints: for one says, "The righteous is the accuser of himself in the beginning of his words." And another again, "I said, I will confess against myself my transgression unto the Lord: and you forgave the iniquity of my heart."

What answer then will those make to this, who embrace the new tenets of Novatus, and say of themselves that they are pure? Whose prayer do they praise? That of the Pharisee, who acquitted himself, or that of the Publican, who accused himself? If they say that of the Pharisee, they resist the divine sentence; for he was condemned as being boastful: but if that of the Publican, why do they refuse to acknowledge their own impurity? Certainly God justifies those who know well their transgressions, and are willing to confess them: but these men will have the portion of the Pharisee.

We then say, that in many things we "all of us offend," and that no man is pure from uncleanness, even though his life upon earth be but one day. Let us ask then of God mercy; which if we do, Christ will justify us: by Whom and with Whom, to God the Father, be praise and dominion, with the Holy Spirit, for ever and ever, Amen.

Sermon 121.

18:15-17. *And they brought also unto Him infants, that He should touch them: but when the disciples saw them, they rebuked them. But Jesus called them and said, Suffer little children to come unto Me, and hinder them not; for of such is the kingdom of God. Verily I say unto you, that whosoever shall not receive the kingdom of God as a little child, shall not enter therein.*

EVERY manner of benefit does Christ weave for us, and opens wide the pathways of salvation. For His purpose is to save the dwellers upon earth, and produce in them a knowledge of the pursuits of piety, and make them skilful in all virtue, that they may be acceptable, being filled with spiritual fruitfulness. Let us see therefore what benefit He begets in us by what has just been read. For you have heard the holy Evangelist saying, "That they brought unto Him infants that He should touch them: and when the disciples prevented them, He took them and said, Suffer them to come unto Me, and hinder them not: for of such is the kingdom of God." It was their mothers who brought the babes, desiring His blessing, and begging for their infants the touch of His holy hand. But the blessed disciples rebuked them for so doing, not

because they envied the babes, but rather as paying to Him as their teacher a due respect, and preventing, so to speak, unnecessary fatigues, and as setting much value upon order.

And infants even to the present time are brought near and blessed by Christ by means of consecrated hands: and the pattern of the act continues even until this day, and descends unto us from the custom of Christ as its fountain. Only the bringing near of infants takes not place now in an unbecoming or disorderly manner, but with proper order, and sobriety and fear.

Since then Christ has said, "Suffer the little children to come unto Me, and hinder them not; for of such is the kingdom of God," come then, yes come, and let us carefully examine, what sort of persons those must be, who desire eternal life, and are enamoured of the kingdom of heaven. For some one forsooth may say, 'What is there in babes that is worthy of emulation? Is it their want of firmness and intelligence? And how then is it not incredible, to affirm or imagine anything of the kind?' Christ however does not wish us to be without understanding, but would have us perfectly know every thing that is useful and necessary for our salvation. For wisdom even promises that she will give "to them that are simple, craftiness, and to the young the beginning of sense and understanding." And she is found also in the book of Proverbs like one that raises her voice on high and says, "You, O men, do I beseech, and utter my voice unto the sons of men: understand, O you simple ones craftiness, and you fools, put a heart within you." It follows therefore, that the fool has no heart, and is deficient in craftiness; not in that which is blamable, how could that be? but in that which is praiseworthy. But how a man may at once be both simple and crafty, the Saviour Himself elsewhere explains to us, saying, "Be you crafty as serpents, and simple as doves." And similarly the blessed Paul also writes, "My brethren, be you not children in your minds: but in wickedness be you babes, and in your minds grown men."

It is necessary however to examine, what is the meaning of being babes in wickedness, and how a man becomes so, but in mind a grown man. A babe then, as knowing either very little, or nothing at all, is justly acquitted of the charge of depravity and wickedness: and so it is also our duty to endeavour to be like them in the very same way, by putting entirely away from us habits of wickedness, that we too may be regarded as men who do not even know the pathway which leads unto guile, but who, unconscious of malice and fraud, live in a simple and innocent manner, practising gentleness, and a priceless humility, and readily forbearing from wrath and spitefulness. For such we affirm are the qualities found in those who are still babes.

But while such is our character in simplicity and innocence, we must be perfect in mind; having our understanding firmly established in the clear knowledge of Him Who by nature and in truth is the Creator of the Universe, and God and Lord: acknowledging along with Him no other God whatsoever, new, and falsely so named: and avoiding as that which would bring upon us perdition, the being seduced into the abandonment of Him by the adoption of the customs of the heathen. Our mind then must be firmly fixed, so to speak, and safe, and unwavering in holding unto the living and true God: and we must further also flee far away from other pitfalls, and withdraw from the stumbling-blocks of the devil; for such those men are, who corrupt the orthodox doctrine respecting God, and falsify the truth, and lift up their horn on high, and speak wickedly against God. For they belch forth things out of their own heart, and lead astray the souls of the simple, warring against the glory of the Only-begotten Son of God, and saying that He is to be numbered among things created, whereas it was by Him that they all were brought into existence. And bringing down severe and inevitable condemnation upon their own heady, they fear not to say the very same things also against

the Holy Spirit. Whosoever then says of them that they are the gates of hell, errs not from the mark. And the wise Paul also protests unto us, that we must turn away our faces from such, men: "For if, he says, any one preach unto you other than that you have received, let him be accursed."

The chief perfection therefore of the mind is to be established in the faith, and for our understanding to be uncorrupted therein: and the second, which neighbours upon this chief perfection, and is akin to it, and its constant companion, is the clear knowledge of that way of conduct which pleases God, and is taught us in the Gospel, and is perfect and blameless. Those who travel thereon lead a life of simplicity and innocence, while nevertheless they know what opinions they ought to hold, and what acts are right for them to do. These enter in by the narrow gate, refusing neither those labours which piety unto God requires, nor such as are necessary for leading a glorious life. And so they duly advance into the broadness of the abundance which is in God, and rejoice in His gifts, and win for themselves the kingdom of heaven by Christ; by Whom and with Whom, to God the Father, be praise and dominion, with the Holy Spirit, for ever and ever, Amen.

Sermon 122.

18:18-27. And a certain ruler asked Him, saying, Good Teacher, what shall I do to inherit eternal life? And Jesus said unto him, Why do you call Me good? No-one is good, but one, God. You know the commandments: You shall not kill; you shall not commit adultery; you shall not steal; you shall not bear witness falsely; honour your father and your mother. And he said, All these have I kept from my youth. And when Jesus heard these things, He said unto him; You still lack one thing: sell all that you have, and distribute to the poor, and you shall have treasure in heaven: and come, follow Me. And when he heard this, he was very sorrowful: for he was very rich. And Jesus seeing it said, How hardly shall they that have gold enter into the kingdom of God! For it is easier for a camel to enter in through the eye of a needle, than for a rich man to enter the kingdom of God. And they that heard it said, And who can live? And He said, The things which are impossible with men, are possible with God.

THOSE who believe that the Word, Who shone forth from the very substance of God the Father, is by nature and truly God, draw near to Him as unto an omniscient God, Who, as the Psalmist says, "tries the hearts and reins;" and sees all that passes in us: "for all things are naked, and spread out before His eyes," according to the expression of the blessed Paul. But we do not find the Jewish multitudes thus disposed: for they with their princes and teachers were in error, and saw not with the eyes of their mind the glory of Christ. Rather they looked upon Him as one like unto us: as a mere man, I mean; and not as God rather, Who had become man. They approached Him therefore to make trial of Him, and lay for Him the nets of their craftiness.

And this you may learn by what has now been read. For a ruler, it says, asked Him, saying, "Good teacher, what shall I do to inherit eternal life?" And Jesus said unto him, "Why do you call Me good? None is good but one, God." Now he, who is here called a Ruler, and who fancied himself to be learned in the law, and supposed that he had been accurately taught therein, imagined that he could convict Christ of dishonouring the commandment spoken by the most wise Moses, and of introducing laws of His own. For it was the object of the Jews to

prove that Christ opposed and resisted the former commandments, to establish, as I said, new laws, of His own authority, in opposition to those previously existing, that their wicked conduct towards Him might have a specious pretext, he draws near therefore, and makes pretence of speaking kindly: for he calls Him Teacher, and styles Him Good, and professes himself desirous of being a disciple. For "what, he says, shall I do to inherit eternal life?" Observe therefore how he mixes up flattery with fraud and deceit, like one who mingles wormwood with honey: for he supposed that he could in this way deceive Him. Of such men one of the holy prophets said, "Their tongue is a piercing lance: the words of their mouth are deceitful. To his neighbour he speaks peacefully: but there is enmity in his soul." And again the wise Psalmist also thus speaks of them: "Their mouth is full of cursing and bitterness." And again, "Their words are smoother than oil: and yet are they spears."

He therefore flatters Jesus, and attempts to deceive Him, making pretence of being well-disposed to Him. And what does the Omniscient reply, "Who, as it is written, takes the wise in their craftiness?" "Why do you call Me good? None is good but one, God," You see how He proved at once that he was neither wise nor learned, though the ruler of a synagogue of the Jews. For if, He says, you did not believe that I am God, and the clothing of the flesh has led you astray, why did you apply to Me epithets suitable to the supreme nature alone, while still you supposed Me to be a mere man like unto yourself, and not superior to the limits of human nature? In the nature that transcends all, even in God only, is found the attribute of being by nature, and unchangeably good: but the angels, and we upon earth, are good by resembling Him, or rather by participation of Him. For as He is what He is, and this is His Name, and His everlasting memorial for all generations; but we exist and come into being by being made partakers of Him Who really exists: so He indeed is good, or the good absolutely, but angels and men are good, only by being made, as I said, partakers of the good God. Let therefore the being good be set apart as the special property of God over all alone, essentially attached to His nature, and His peculiar attribute. If, however, He says, I do not seem to you to be truly God, then you have ignorantly and foolishly applied to Me the properties and virtues of the divine nature, at the very time when you imagine me to be a mere man, one that is who never is invested with goodness, the property of the unchangeable nature, but only gains it by the assent of the divine will. And such then was the purport of what Christ spoke.

But those perchance will not assent to the correctness of this explanation, whose minds are perverted by sharing in the wickedness of Arius. For they make the Son inferior to the supremacy and glory of God the Father: or rather, they contend that He is not the Son; for they both eject Him from being by nature and truly God, and thrust Him away from having really been born, lest men should believe that He is also equal in substance to Him Who begat Him. For they assert, as though they had obtained a reason for their blasphemy from the passage now before us, 'Behold, He has clearly and expressly denied that He is good, and set it apart as something appropriate to God the Father only: but truly had He been equal to Him in substance, and sprung from Him by nature, how would not He also be good as being God?'

Let this then be our reply to our opponents. Since all correct and exact reasoning acknowledges a son to be consubstantial with the father, how is He not good, as being God? For He cannot but be God, if He be consubstantial with Him Who is by nature God. For surely they will not affirm, however extreme may be the audacity into which they have fallen, that from a good father a son has sprung who is not good. For to this we have the Saviour's own testimony, Who thus speaks; "A good tree cannot bring forth evil fruits." How from a good root has there shot forth an evil sprout? Or how from a sweet fountain can there How a bitter

river? Was there ever a time when there was no Father, seeing that He is the Father eternally? But He is the Father, because He has begotten, and this is the reason why He bears this name, and not as being one who borrows the title by resemblance to some other person. For from Him all paternity in heaven and earth is named. We conclude therefore that the fruit of the good God is the good Son.

And in another way: as most wise Paul, says, "He is the image of the invisible God:" and the image, because He displays in His own nature the beauty of Him Who fathered Him. How therefore can we see in the Son, Who is not good, the Father, Who is by nature and truly good? "He is the brightness and likeness of His person:" but if He be not good, as the senseless heretic asserts, but the Father is by nature good, it is a brightness different in nature, and that possesses not the splendour of Him Who bade it shine. And the likeness too is counterfeit, or rather is now no likeness at all: for it represents not Him Whose likeness it is, if, as all must allow, that which is not good is the contrary of that which is good.

And much more might one say in opposition to them upon this point: but that our discourse may not extend to an unreasonable length, and be burdensome to any, we will say no more at present, and hold in as with a bridle our earnestness in this matter; but at our next meeting we will continue our explanation of the meaning of this passage from the Gospel, should Christ once again assemble us here: by Whom and with Whom, to God the Father, be praise and dominion with the Holy Spirit, for ever and ever, Amen.

Sermon 123.

THE SAME SUBJECT CONTINUED.

I PERCEIVE you assembled here with great earnestness and zeal; and, as I suppose, you have come to exact a debt. I then, for my part, acknowledge that I promised at our last meeting to complete what was wanting to my discourse: and I have come to pay it as unto children, praying Christ, our common Saviour, to impart to my mind His divine light, and give utterance to my tongue, that I may benefit both you and myself. For Paul has somewhere written, "The husbandman who labours must first eat of the fruits."

Let me then bring back to your remembrance first of all what has already been considered, and then we will proceed to what remains.

The blessed Evangelist therefore said, "And a certain ruler asked Him, saying, Good Teacher, what shall I do to inherit eternal life? And He said unto him, Why do you call Me good? No-one is good, but one, God:" and so on with the rest of the lesson. Now we have already explained what is the meaning of this passage in the Gospel, and enough has been said to you upon that point: for we showed both that by nature and truly the Son is good as also He is Who begat Him; and that the answer, "Why do you call Me good? No-one is good, but one, God," was spoken relatively to the questioner. Let us therefore direct our inquiry to the Scriptures which follow.

What then says this chief of the synagogue of the Jews? "What shall I do to inherit eternal life?" He does not ask with a view to learn; for then his question would have been worthy of all praise: but his object was to prove, that Christ did not permit them to retain the Mosaic commandments, but led rather His disciples and followers unto new laws enacted by Himself.

For on this pretext they rebuked the people under their charge, saying of Christ, our common Saviour, "He has a devil, and is mad: why hear you Him?" For they said that He had a devil, and was mad, on the supposition that He had set up his own laws against those which had been given from above, from God. True rather would it be to affirm of them that they had a devil, and were utterly mad, for resisting the Lord of the law, Who had come not so much to destroy the commandment which had been given of old, and of which Moses was the minister, as to fulfil it, according to His own words: for He transformed the shadow into the truth.

The chief of the synagogue therefore expected to hear Christ say, Cease, O man, from the writings of Moses; abandon the shadow; they were but types, and nothing more; draw near therefore rather to My commandments, which you have in the Gospel: but He did not so answer, because He discerned by His godlike knowledge the object of him who tempted Him. As though then He had no other commandments, but those only given by Moses, He sends the man unto them, and says, "You know the commandments." And lest he should say, that He referred to His own commandments, He enumerates those contained in the law, and says; "You shall not kill: you shall not commit adultery: neither shall you bear false witness." And what reply does this cunning schemer in wickedness make, or rather this very ignorant and senseless person? For he thought that even though He Whom he asked was God, yet nevertheless he could easily cajole Him into answering whatever he chose. But as the sacred Scripture says, "The prey falls not to the lot of the crafty."

For though he had shot wide of his mark, and missed his prey, he yet ventures to bait for Him another snare: for he said, "All these have I kept from my youth." He might therefore well hear from us in answer, O foolish Pharisee, "you bear witness of yourself; your witness is not true." But omitting now this argument, let us see in what way Christ repelled His bitter and malignant foe. For while He might have said, "Blessed are the poor in spirit: for their's is the kingdom of heaven: blessed are the meek: blessed are the pure in heart:" He tells him nothing of this kind, but because he was fond of lucre and very rich, He proceeds at once to that which would grieve him, and says, "Sell all that you have, and give to the poor, and you shall have treasure in heaven; and come, follow Me," This was torture to the heart of that covetous man, who so prided himself upon his keeping of the law. It proved him at once both frail and weak, and altogether unfit for the reception of the new message of the gospel. And we too learn how true that is which Christ spoke; "No man puts new wine into old wine-skins; else the skins burst, and the wine is spilt: but new wine is put into new wine-skins." For the chief of the synagogue of the Jews proves to be but an old wine-skin, that cannot hold the new wine, but bursts and becomes useless. For he was saddened, although he had received a lesson that would have won for him eternal life.

But those who have received in them by faith Him Who makes all things new, even Christ, are not rent asunder by receiving from Him the new wine. For when they have but newly received from Him the word of the gospel message, which gladdens the heart of man, they become superior to wealth and the love of lucre: their mind is established in courage: they set no value on temporal things, but thirst rather after things eternal: they honour a voluntary poverty, and are earnest in love to the brethren. For, as it is written in the Acts of the holy Apostles, "As many as were possessors of lands or houses sold them, and brought the prices of the things that were sold, and laid them at the apostles' feet; and distribution was made unto every one according to his need,"

As the ruler therefore was too infirm of purpose, and could not be prevailed upon even to listen to the advice of selling his possessions, although it would have been good for him, and full of reward, our Lord lays bare the malady which has its lair in the rich, thus saying, "How hardly shall they that have riches enter into the kingdom of God! And I say unto you, that it is easier for a camel to enter in through the eye of a needle, than a rich man into the kingdom of God." Now by a camel He means not the animal of that name, but a thick cable rather: for it is the custom of those well versed in navigation to call the thicker cables "camels."

Observe however, that He does not altogether cut away the hope of the rich, but reserves for them a place and way of salvation. For He did not say that it is impossible for a rich man to enter in, but that he does so with difficulty.

When the blessed disciples heard these words, they objected, saying, "And who can live?" And their plea was for those who had wealth and possessions. For we know, they say, that no one will ever be persuaded to abandon his wealth and riches: "Who then can be saved?" But what does the Lord reply? "The things that are impossible with men, are possible with God." He has reserved therefore for those who possess wealth the possibility of being counted worthy, if they will, of the kingdom of God: for even though they refuse entirely to abandon what they have, yet it is possible for them in another way to attain unto honour. And the Saviour has Himself showed us how and in what way this can happen, saying, "Make to yourselves friends of the unrighteous mammon: that when it has failed, they may receive you into eternal tabernacles." For there is nothing to prevent the rich, if they will, from making the poor partakers and sharers of the abundance which they possess. What hinders him who has plentiful possessions from being affable of address, and ready to communicate to others, easily prevailed upon to give, and compassionate, and full of that generous pity which is well-pleasing to God. Not unrewarded, nor unprofitable shall we find carefulness in this respect; for "mercy boasts over judgment," as it is written.

By every argument therefore, and in every way does our common Saviour and Lord benefit us: by Whom and with Whom, to God the Father, be praise and dominion, with the Holy Spirit, for ever and ever. Amen.