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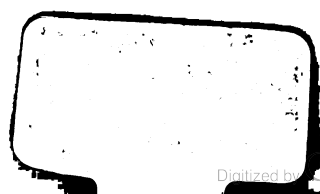
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# PAROCHIAL SERMONS.

BY THE  
REV. E. B. PUSEY, D.D.

VOL. II.

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“O KNIT OUR HEARTS UNTO THEE,  
THAT WE MAY FEAR THY NAME.”

---

OXFORD:  
JOHN HENRY PARKER, AND 377, STRAND, LONDON;  
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TO THE RIGHT REVEREND  
FATHER IN GOD,  
THOMAS VOWLER,  
Lord Bishop of S. Asaph,  
THIS VOLUME IS,  
(WITH HIS PERMISSION,)  
RESPECTFULLY INSCRIBED,  
IN GRATEFUL ACKNOWLEDGMENT  
OF BENEFITS DERIVED IN YOUTH  
FROM HIS EARNEST PRACTICAL TEACHING,  
AND RELIGIOUS INSTRUCTION,  
OF HIS FAITHFUL FRIENDSHIP  
AMIDST ADVANCING YEARS,  
AND OF HIS FATHERLY AND EPISCOPAL KINDNESS  
UNTIL NOW ;  
WITH THE EARNEST PRAYER  
THAT GOD WILL BLESS  
HIS PEACE-LOVING SPIRIT AND HIS ZEAL FOR SOULS,  
TO THE HEALING OF OUR WOUNDS  
AND THE SALVATION OF HIS PEOPLE.





## ADVERTISEMENT.

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THE appearance of this Volume was delayed by the loss of some Sermons, in a desk, taken from the Reading Station. If the Sermons on the texts Dan. iv. 27; and S. James v. 19, 20; or S. John xx. 21, beginning "Peace is a holy rest," should have fallen into any one's hands, the Author would be thankful to have them restored.



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## SERMON I.

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FAITH.

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GAL. V. 6.

*“ In Jesus Christ neither circumcision availeth any thing, nor uncircumcision, but faith, which worketh by love.”*

FAITH is the foundation of the whole spiritual building, whereby we are built on Christ Jesus. It is the root of the whole spiritual life of grace, the ground whereon the soul rests securely, the beginning of our spiritual existence. Faith goes even before love, in thought, but not in deed. It goes before love, in thought; for we love, because we believe, not believe, because we love. Faith gives us, in this our state, the knowledge of Him Whom we love. Faith is instead of eyes. By Faith we see Him Who to our eyes of sense is unseen. We behold both backwards and forwards, and round about us, and every way we behold the love of God. And, beholding and knowing His love, we ourselves, through

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His gift, love. Backward, we by Faith, behold God creating us, and we see our own fall ; we behold His Holiness, and Goodness, and Love, forming us to love Him everlastingly ; and when we had fallen, by Faith we behold Him, the Father, for us willing that God the Son should take our fallen nature, should be born, despised, tortured, crucified, die for us. By Faith we see God the Son willing, for our sakes, to become Man. We see our dear Lord and Redeemer on the Cross, as though we were, with St. Mary Magdalene, at its foot. Faith has no past nor to come. It sees past and to come in the light of God, and is sure of them ; yea, surer than of what it sees. More readily could it doubt that itself is, or that the things it sees are real. More readily could it think that all which it sees around is a dream ; all things of nature which are seen with the eyes of the body, a vain show ; seeming to be, as in a dream, yet not being, than it could doubt that God IS, or IS what HE hath said HE IS. For what we see around us we know to be, by our mere powers of nature. Faith is a Divine power. They are mere bodily powers, these eyes which shall soon decay, which tell us that the things around us are. Faith is the eye of the soul, which God has given us, to behold Himself. If we trust the eye of the body in things of earth, much more must we trust the eye of the soul in the things of God. If that which is highest in us, our soul, strengthened and enlightened by God, could deceive us, much more these bodily eyes. Had we the choice, (which is impossible) yet had we to believe either that this world is a mere show, just as a picture is a mere surface, without any real

substance, or that God IS not, it were far easier to believe that He had set us in the midst of a vast waking dream, than that He was not the Maker of all we see, that He Whom we love, IS not. To Faith, then, the Crucifixion of our Lord is not, (as some have coldly said,) a fact which took place 1800 years ago, nor is Heaven a distant object, removed far from us, in space and time, until the end of this weary world. The Death of our Lord is to Faith the Eternal Counsel of the Ever-blessed Trinity, the unceasing Source of all spiritual blessings. Each act of His Sufferings is a part of the determinate Counsel and foreknowledge of God ; each is a mystery of Love, whereon the soul shall dwell in love for ever. Faith beholds Him, because it is beheld by Him. It gazes on Him, because He has first caught and fixed its gaze. It sees, because He has given it eyes to see. Yet so it beholds Him, and He is more really present to the eyes of the soul, than all around her. To Faith which loves, things seen fade from sight, things heard fall dull upon the ear ; it will be unmoved by all outward things ; for it has an inward sight and an inward hearing, and an inward touch, whereby it beholds Him dying on the Cross for love of us, and hears Him pray for us ; " Father, forgive them, for they know not what they do," and looks on Him Whom, by our sins, we sinners pierced, and catches the look wherewith He looked on Magdalene and the thief, and clasps His Feet, and in the shadow of His Cross feels itself protected and healed. Yea, Faith can enter into that Cleft of the Rock opened for us, whence gushed " the Fountain opened for sin and for uncleanness,"

and there it finds refuge from accusing thoughts, and the Accuser's malice. The Cross is not far off, not over the seas, in the Holy Land, nor removed by length of time. Faith sees it close at hand, and clasps it and loves it, and is crucified on it with Him, dying to itself with its Lord, nailed to it, motionless to its own desires, dead to the world, and living to Him. Nor is Heaven far off to Faith. For where its Lord is, there is Heaven. Faith is with Him, present with Him in spirit, though absent in the body; a penitent amid those who, around the Throne, sing "Holy, Holy, Holy." Although as yet unfit to enter there, where nothing defiled can enter, there it lives and loves, in "the<sup>a</sup> city of the Living God, the Heavenly Jerusalem," with "an innumerable company of Angels, and the spirits of just men made perfect, and Jesus, the Mediator of the new covenant." There, with them, it worships Him; it beholds the glorious scars, radiant with Majesty and Love, which plead our cause with the Father, and "tastes<sup>b</sup> and sees that the Lord is good" unto all that seek Him.

Faith, in one sense, goes before love, because, unless we believed, we should have none to love. Faith is Divine knowledge. As in human love we cannot love unless we have seen, heard, or in some way known, so, without Faith, we cannot know aught of God, or know that there is a God Whom to love. Yet in act, Faith cannot be without love. "The<sup>c</sup> just,' says Scripture, 'shall live by his faith,' but by a faith which lives. A dead faith cannot give life."

<sup>a</sup> Heb. xii. 22, 23.

<sup>b</sup> Ps. xxxiv. 8.

<sup>c</sup> S. Bern. de offic. Episcop. c. iv. n. 15.

Faith without love is the devils' faith. For they "believe and tremble." They knew Jesus, that "He was the Holy One of God." They knew, and they owned, and they besought their Judge, "Art Thou come to torment us before the time?" "If Thou cast us out, suffer us to enter into the swine."

Hearing must come before faith, for "faith<sup>d</sup> cometh by hearing." But faith cannot for an instant be separated from love. Who is the Object of Faith? God the Father, Who created us, and gave His Son to die for us; God the Son, Who became one of us, and by dying, redeemed us; God the Holy Ghost, Who sanctifieth us, and "pours forth love," which He is, "abroad in our hearts." We were as stocks and stones without faith; but He died, even "of these stones to raise up children to Abraham." Are we stocks or stones now, that, having faith, we *can* believe without loving? Which of His acts of boundless love should we believe without loving? Were it not enough to bear us out of ourselves, for love, to transport us, to make us give up our lives for love, to carry us away out of ourselves and of all that we are, to think that for us, earth-worms and defiled, Jesus died? Does not the very Name of JESUS make the heart beat, and tremble, and thrill with love? Could a criminal really believe that he had received a full pardon from his injured King, or that the King's Son had suffered to obtain his pardon, and was come to tell it him and forgive him, and not love? Well might he doubt such love. But he could not believe it and not love. Faith and love would enter his soul together. So is it with chil-

<sup>d</sup> Rom. x. 17.

dren, who with simple faith believe, and place no hindrance to belief and love. Tell them of their Good Father in Heaven, and they together believe in and love Him. Tell them of Jesus' love, and they together believe in and love Him. Tell them of the Holy Ghost the Comforter, that He vouchsafes to dwell in them, and they listen with wondering awe and love ; they believe at once and love.

Love is in all true faith, as light and warmth are in the ray of the sun. Light and warmth are in the sun's ray, and the sun's ray brings with it light and warmth ; not, light and warmth, the sun's ray : yet, where the sun's ray is, there are light and warmth, nor can that ray be any where without giving light and warmth. Even so, faith it is which brings love, not love, faith ; yet faith cannot come into the heart, without bringing with it the glow of love, yea, and the light wherewith we see things Divine. So soon as faith is kindled in the heart, there is the glow of love ; and both come from the same Sun of Righteousness, pouring in faith and love together into the heart, and " there<sup>e</sup> is nothing hid from the heat thereof." In winter, fewer rays come upon any spot of this land from the sun ; whence there is then less brightness of light and less glow of heat than in summer ; and so the surface of the earth is chilled ; and though for a time the frost be melted by that fainter sun, this warmth, coming upon it only for a short time, soon passes away. Even so, there are degrees of faith and love. Yet they may be real faith and love, even when the power of both is lessened, in that the soul does not keep itself or

<sup>e</sup> Ps. xix. 6.

live in the full presence of God. Or, as through a closed window, more light comes than heat, so in some hearts, there may be more of knowledge than of love. And again, as on a cold misty day, when the sun is hidden from our eyes, we are so oppressed by the clamminess of the chill damp upon the surface of our bodies, and by the heavy gloom around, that we scarcely feel the presence of the light and heat ; and yet the light and heat are there, else we should be in utter darkness, and our bodies would die ; even so, many hearts, at many times, when some mist hides from them the Presence of their Lord, feel nothing but their own coldness and numbness, and all seems dark around them, and yet in their very inmost selves they believe and love, else their souls would be dead, and they would be " past' feeling," and they would not pine for more light and love. A dead body is in darkness, and seeth not the light of this world, and has an awful coldness to the touch ; yet itself feels not its own coldness, nor knows its own darkness. Even so, the dead soul, being without the life of God, feels not its own death, craves not to love more. For He Who is Love hath left it, and it hath no power wherewith to desire to love, unless or until the Voice of Christ raises it from the dead and awakens it, and it hears His Voice, and lives.

Or think on the great instances of faith in Holy Scripture. Think you not that Abraham loved, as well as believed, when God first spake to him, and called him to give up his country, and his kindred, and his father's house, and instead of all, God said, " I will bless thee," and he took God for his All, and

' Eph. iv. 19.



“went out, not knowing whither he went,” save that he was following God? Or did not Moses love, when, taught of God, he renounced “the wisdom of the Egyptians,” and “refused to be called the son of Pharaoh’s daughter, esteeming the reproach of Christ greater riches than the treasures of Egypt?” Or David, did he not love, when, in zeal for the honour of the Lord of Hosts, he went forth, a stripling, in His Name, to meet the champion of the Philistines? or did not love with faith revive, when the royal penitent said, “I have sinned against the Lord,” and much more, when the Lord had put away his sin, he, all life-long, said, “My sin is ever before me?” Why did he wish to be cleansed with the atoning hyssop, even the humiliation of our Lord in His Passion? Was it not for love of God? “Thou desirest truth in the inward parts.” So he longed to be what God would have him. What longed he for, but not to be “cast<sup>e</sup> out of God’s Holy Presence,” or lose His Holy Spirit, His Presence, from the soul? Or in St. Peter, when both faith and love had been chilled in the night of the Lord’s Passion, did they not revive by that gracious look wherewith He recalled him to Himself, and melted him into tears of penitence and love?

And of that other great penitent, St. Mary Magdalene, our Lord bears witness that in her there were together love and faith; and for both together, a loving faith, or a “faith working by love,” our Lord tells her, “thy sins are forgiven.” Truly, she had great faith, Who knew and believed the Physician of her soul, Whom the Pharisee who received Him, knew not, who knew that “the Son of Man had

<sup>e</sup> Ps. li. 3, 7, 6, 11.

power on earth to forgive sins," and could read her heart, and know what she was and what she longed to be, and what she came for, and would not disdain her and would accept her love, and that she might kiss His Feet, and that when she washed them with her tears, He would wash away her sins. Truly she had great faith, who, dead to all that the world thought of her, and seeing only her Redeemer, came uncalled, with such holy boldness, to Him Who had come to seek and to save that which was lost, yet had drawn her only with the cords of love, in her inmost heart. But our Lord speaks first of love, "Her sins are forgiven her, because she loved much," to shew us, that in all true repentance and faith there must be love; and then, having pronounced to her the forgiveness of her sins, to herself He says, "Thy faith hath saved thee." Faith saved her, because it brought her to Him, the Saviour. Yet had not her faith had love, she had not been forgiven, for He, the Truth, says, "Her sins are forgiven her, *because* she loved much. And think you not, that she must have loved much, when she poured out her tears with the ointment upon His Sacred Feet? She knew Him Whom the self-righteous Pharisee knew not. She knew, far better than he, "who or what manner of woman" she was who touched Him; she knew far better the depth of the loathsomeness of her own sin; for she loathed it in herself. But she knew what the Pharisee knew not, Who He was Whom she touched. She knew that Holiness came from His touch to her, and that her touch could not defile Him, Who "was Holy, Harmless, separate from sinners." Think ye not that those hot burning tears which dimmed her

eyes, and washed her Saviour's Feet, were tears of burning love? Could she but love, when she kissed the Feet of God, wearied in seeking her, the lost one, and He despised not her polluted and adulterous lips, but rather "virtue went out of Him," to cleanse them?

Or was there not love in the faith of the penitent thief, when he discerned his Saviour by his side, in that marred Form, which "had no beauty or comeliness," "His Visage was so marred more than any man, and His Form more than the sons of men," and he said, "Lord, remember me in Thy Kingdom." There was humility, as well deserving to be forgotten, and wondrous faith which owned in Him, "the rejected of men," his Lord and King and God. But there was love too. For love only craves to be remembered. The penitent cry is the very prayer of the holy Psalmist. "Remember<sup>h</sup> not the sins of my youth, nor my transgressions; according to Thy Mercy, remember Thou me, for Thy Goodness' sake, O Lord." There was mighty love, and hope, and trust, which could so wrap up all its longings in that one word, "remember me." "Deal with me as Thou wilt, so Thou remember me." And so that inward desire He answered, "To-day shalt thou be with Me in Paradise." What would love have, but to be with Him it loves? The robber desired not to be out of the thoughts of his Saviour. Jesus gave him more than he dared ask or think, not at some distant day, when He should come in His Kingdom, but "To-day." Jesus would not "remember" him only, as afar off; He would that the robber should

<sup>h</sup> Ps. xxv. 7.

be nigh Him. His Mother remained behind in sorrow, the Apostles in perplexity, the whole redeemed world in darkness. But to the robber Jesus saith, "thou shalt be with Me;" "*thou* with ME;" thou, the blood-stained, with Me Who shed My Blood for love of thee and of the whole world; thou, now defiled, with Me the All-Holy; thou, the prey and sport of all evil passions and of devils, with Me Who have bruised Satan; thou, who hast been like the beasts which perish, with ME the All-wise, All-mighty, All-good God. What a torrent of love does He pour into the penitent's heart. "Thou with ME." Yet the love which He had given him, called for the love which now He gives him. The cry of humble love, "Lord, remember *me*," "*me* too, all unmeet to be remembered, Lord for Thy love's sake, remember," called forth the words of Divine Love, "To-day shalt thou be with ME."

Or think you not that when God "opened<sup>1</sup> the heart of Lydia, to attend unto the things spoken by Paul," He poured into her heart which He had opened, love with faith? Or when Paul said to the affrighted jailor, "Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and thou shalt be saved and thy house," must not he who just before would have killed himself, have loved Him Who had brought His servant through stripes and sufferings, to teach him, how not he only, but his house might be saved from wrath, and have everlasting joy in God? Or when, amid the mocking Athenians, Dionysius and Damaris and others "clave<sup>k</sup> unto Paul and believed," was there not love with faith? Love is the glue whereby

<sup>1</sup> Acts xvi. 14, 31.

<sup>k</sup> Acts xvii. 30.

hearts cleave unto God, or to His messengers and ministers for His sake Who sends them. Or when Peter bade those, pricked in the heart, because "that same Jesus Whom they had crucified, was both Lord and Christ," "repent and be baptized every one of you in the Name of Jesus Christ for the remission of your sins, and ye shall receive the gift of the Holy Ghost, for the promise is unto you and to your children," think ye not that the three thousand, who "gladly received the Word," were full of love with faith, and that, believing, they loved?

Faith which loves not, is not faith; it is dead. And what is dead, hath ceased to be. The outward form too will soon decay and come to nothing, when life is gone. Where love is not, there is not the Holy Spirit, Who is Love, and Who "sheds abroad love in our hearts." And without the Holy Spirit, there cannot be faith, since faith is the gift of the Spirit. A dead body is a body without a soul; a dead soul is a soul without God. A "dead faith" is a "faith without love." A dead body is, for the time, until it wholly decays in outward form, like a living body or a body asleep; a dead faith has an outward likeness to a living faith. But as a dead body has no warmth nor power of motion, nor feeling, nor can use any of the powers it once had, nor has them any longer, it can neither taste, nor see, nor hear; so a dead faith is that which has no love, no power to do good works. It perceives not, hears not, tastes not, feels not, the things of God. Devils believe that God IS; they know against Whom they have rebelled and do rebel, Whom they hate. Devils

or bad men may "believe God," that is, believe what God saith. The devil, though of himself he cannot foreknow it, believes that "he<sup>1</sup> hath but a short time," and therefore hath the greater "wrath," and puts forth the more hate. Bad men have believed, "to-morrow we die," and so said, "let us eat and drink," making this their belief the more an occasion of sin. Neither devils nor bad men can "believe *in* God." For "to believe in God," says a holy man,<sup>m</sup> "is by believing to love, by believing to go into Him, by believing to cleave unto Him and be incorporated among His Members."

Judas believed that our Lord was the Christ, when He betrayed Him. He believed that Jesus was holy, and so repented when he saw Him condemned. But sin and the love of money had stolen away his love of God, and faith was dead. Pilate believed, so as to fear, and to regard our Lord as one, come from God, and innocent. He feared Cæsar more, and could not believe *in* Jesus. The High-Priests believed that Jesus did many miracles; they could not believe *in* Him, because "they loved the praise of men more than the praise of God." Cain believed that God would punish him as He said; but, being of that wicked one, he had neither repentance, nor love, nor faith. Jeroboam and Jehu believed what God told them of themselves, and did His Word as far as it was what they wished. Neither Jeroboam nor Jehu believed *in* God; for Jeroboam was he who caused Israel to sin, and Jehu, while he destroyed Baal out of Israel, departed not

<sup>1</sup> Rev. xii. 12.

<sup>m</sup> S. Laur. Justinian. de Fide, c. 3.

from Jeroboam's sin. For the worship of the calves favoured his worldly policy ; the worshippers of Baal were Ahab's friends, and so were against himself as well as against God.

As love is the life of faith, so with the increase of love, faith increaseth. Even from man towards man, faith and love grow together. The more we love, the more we understand and the more we trust one another. We trust, because we love, and by loving, know God. We *can* only know God, by loving Him. St. Paul says, "I know in Whom I have believed." Want of love is the cause of all want of faith. Did we fully love God, who could for a moment doubt of Him ? Who could repine at any loss, or pain, or want, or sickness, or bereavement, if he loved God with his whole soul and heart and strength ? For strong love can have no hard thoughts of God. All mistrust of God implies that He is not All-good or All-wise.

But love liveth by good works. Love cannot live torpid. Even in human love, love which never did deeds of love would grow chill and die. We love those most, to whom we do most good. Love is perhaps increased more by doing than by receiving good ; at least, by doing good out of the love of God. Acts of love do not prove only that we have a living faith ; they increase it. For to do good is to use the grace of God ; and on the faithful use of grace, more grace is given. "Faith worketh" (literally "inworketh,"<sup>n</sup> the word means, worketh in the very soul itself) "by love."

But it has been thought, "if faith, on which God

<sup>n</sup> ἐνεργουμένη.

holds us righteous, or justifying faith, have love in it, are we not accounted righteous for something in ourselves?" We are justified, or accounted righteous before God, neither for faith nor love, but for the Merits of our Lord Jesus Christ Alone. And faith and love alike, although in us, are not of us; both are alike the gift of God. So St. Paul says, "to you it hath been given [given, the word means, by grace,<sup>o</sup> and as grace] in behalf of Christ, not only to believe on Him, but also to suffer for His sake," and again, "By<sup>p</sup> grace ye are saved, through faith, and that [faith] not of yourselves; it [faith] is the gift of God;" even faith whereby we are accounted and made righteous before God, is not our own, lest we should think we had anything of our own; "it" [faith] also, "is the gift of God." But this gift, whether of faith or love, is so given, that it is with us to receive it. We come to God by faith and love. But "no man cometh unto Me" saith our Lord, "except the Father Which hath sent Me, draw Him." But by both He draws us through our will, not drags us without or against it. The pleasures of sense and of the world draw us one way. God the Father and Christ draw us the other. Neither, irresistibly. "If" says a father,<sup>q</sup> "pleasure draweth, how much more may we say that a man is drawn to Christ, who is delighted by truth, delighted by blessedness, delighted by righteousness, delighted by everlasting life, all which Christ is." "Believe,<sup>r</sup> and thou comest; love, and thou art drawn. Think not that it is a

<sup>o</sup> ἐχαρίσθη. Philip. i. 29.

<sup>p</sup> Eph. ii. 8.

<sup>q</sup> S. Aug. in Evang. Joh. c. 6. Tr. 26. n. 4.

<sup>r</sup> Id. Serm. ad Pop. Serm. 131. n. 2. see p. 586. Oxf. Tr.



rough and painful violence; it is sweet, pleasant; the very sweetness draws thee." The drawing of grace changes nature, and strengthens nature, reforms nature, subdues nature, but only if we be willing to be changed, reformed, subdued, strengthened. We are drawn with the cords of a man, not dragged as brutes. "The drawing of grace raises upwards towards Heaven the will, inclined towards the flesh; allures it, when resisting; strengthens it, when weak; gladdens it, if saddened; gives it, when fearful, a good courage towards good."

It was man's sin that, "When He came unto His own, His own received Him not," but "to as many as received Him, to them gave He power to become the sons of God, even to them that believe in His Name." "He gave them power" which by nature they had not and could not have; here is the grace and gift of God; but, "to as many as received Him," here is the will of man, although enabled and receiving power to receive Him, from God. He does not say here, "He made them Sons of God," (although when we receive Him, He doth so make us, for none can make us the sons of God, save God Himself by the Holy Spirit of adoption) but here He goes further back and says "He gave us power." "He wishes," says a father, "at the same time to shew thee that not even grace cometh upon us any how, but on those who wish for it, and take pains about it." He doth not give to us, unwilling or careless, but if we ourselves will it and consent and long for it.

How then may we know if we have this faith? How may it grow and be strengthened in us?—How

\* S. Chrys. Hom. x. n. 2. in S. Joh. i. 12. p. 84. Oxf. Tr.

do we know that our bodies live? "As," says a holy man,<sup>t</sup> "we discern the life of this body by its motion, so also the life of faith by good works. The life of the body is the soul, whereby it is moved and feels; the life of faith is love; because by it, it worketh, as thou redest in the Apostle, 'Faith which worketh by love.' Whence also when charity waxeth cold, faith dies; as the body, when the soul departeth. If then thou see a man, earnest in good works, and gladly fervent in conversation, doubt not that faith lives in him. Thou hast undoubted proofs of its life."

Wouldest thou again that thy faith should grow and be strengthened in thee? "If thou art not drawn," says a father,<sup>u</sup> "pray that thou mayest be drawn." If thou canst not pray fervently, pray for the spirit of prayer and supplication, and "the Spirit Himself shall help thine infirmities and make intercession for thee, according to the Will of God." Heed not, if thou seem not at first to be heard. Remember the Syrophenician woman, and take courage. He Who seemed to neglect her, inwardly drew her to persevere, and then crowned her perseverance by the words of blessing, "O woman, great is thy faith, be it unto thee even as thou wilt."

Act faithfully, according to thy degree of light, and what God giveth thee to see; and thou shalt see more clearly. Harken to the low whispers of His Voice within thee, and thou shalt hear more distinctly. Above all, do not stifle any motions of conscience; for this were to deaden faith.

<sup>t</sup> S. Bern. in Temp. Res. Serm. 2. n. 1. p. 906.

<sup>u</sup> S. Aug. in S. Joh. 1. c. n. 2.

If thou art in doubt how to act, set the Day of Judgment before thee, and act now as thou wouldest then wish that thou hadst acted. It sorely injures faith, to act, suspecting that thou art acting amiss. For it is the part of Faith, to act without seeing, in all which it dimly hopes to be according to the Will of God.

Wean thyself from pleasures of sense, if thou wouldest have strong faith. Moses despised the pleasures of a king's court, and so became "a man of God," "faithful in all his house," through faith; the children of Israel lusted after "the leeks and onions and flesh-pots of Egypt," rebelled against God and lost the promised land.

Be not taken up with an earthly future, if thou wouldest look beyond the veil, and "behold Him Who is Invisible."

Be not anxious about little things, if thou wouldest learn to trust God with thine all. Act upon faith in little things; commit thy daily cares and anxieties to Him; and He will strengthen thy faith for any greater trials. Rather, give thy whole self into God's Hands, and so trust Him to take care of thee in all lesser things, as being His, for His Own Sake, Whose thou art.

Meditate daily on the things of Eternity; and by the grace of God, do something daily, which thou wouldest wish to have done, when that day cometh. Eternity fades quickly from sight, amid the mists and clouds of this world. Heaven is above our heads, yet we see it not with eyes fixed on the earth.

Especially, in any temptation of Satan, call quickly to mind Whose thou art, in Whom thou hast be-

lieved. "Whom resist," says St. Peter, "steadfast in the faith." "Taking," says St. Paul, "the shield of faith, whereby ye shall be able to quench all the fiery darts of the devil."

*Above* all things, *in* all things, "look unto JESUS, the Author and Finisher of thy faith." Do things through His grace, for Him, looking to Him as thy everlasting Great Reward. Let nothing keep thee back from Him. If thou failest, look to Him to uphold thee; if thou stumblest, hold swift His Hand to keep thee; if thou fallest, lie not hopelessly there, but look to Him to raise thee; if by His grace thou doest well, look to Him in thanksgiving, that He has helped thee, and pray that thou mayest do better. Mourn to Him, for love of Him, that thou ever offendedst Him; mourn to Him all thy offences, one by one, against Him; but pray Him that for love of Him thou mayest no more offend Him.

Do deeds of love for Him, to Him, following His steps. "The severing of love," says a holy man,<sup>x</sup> "is the death of faith. Believest thou in Christ? Do the works of Christ, that thy faith may live. Let love give life to thy faith, works prove it. Let not earthly deeds bow down, whom faith of heavenly things raises up. Thou who sayest thou abidest in Christ, oughtest so to walk as He walked. If thou seekest thine own glory, enviest the prosperous, speakest ill of the absent, renderest evil to him who injureth thee, this did not Christ.

Thou confessest that thou lovest God, but in deeds thou deniest Him. Thou hast given thy tongue to Christ, thy soul to the devil. Thou canst

<sup>x</sup> S. Bern. Serm. 24. in Cant. n. 8.

not lift up the head, bowed down by the yoke of the devil. Thou canst not raise thyself, when thine iniquities go over thy head, a heavy burden, too heavy for thee. Even a right faith, if it work not by love, maketh not men upright. Nor can works, although right, make the heart upright, without faith. For 'without faith it is impossible to please God.' Whoso pleaseth not God, God cannot please him. For whom God pleaseth, he cannot displease God. If then neither faith without works, nor works without faith, suffice to make the heart upright, let us, who believe in Christ, labour to make our ways and our deeds upright. Let us lift up our hearts with our hands unto God, that we may be formed wholly upright, proving by right deeds the rightness of our faith, loving and loved by the Bridegroom of the Church, Jesus Christ our Lord, God Blessed for evermore. Amen."

## SERMON II.

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### HOPE.

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PSALM xxxi. 16.

*“ My hope hath been in Thee, O Lord : I have said,  
Thou art my God.”*

SATAN ensnares mankind, alike through false hopes or through hopelessness. He heeds not whereby he ensnares them, so they fall into his hands. He will allure or will affright them ; he shews himself as an angel of light, or in his own hatefulness ; deceives them through shew of virtue, or hardens them openly to defy God. Very often he first allures them through false hopes, and then affrights them by false despair ; blaspheming first God’s Holiness and then His Mercy. He leads them to follow him blindfold to the edge of a precipice, as though they could not fall ; and then he persuades them that it is too late, and that they must fall. He persuades them, that they can stop short when they will, and that so they may go

nearer and nearer ; then he turns the brain dizzy, and although, by one strong effort, through the yet lingering grace of God, the hapless being might recover and shake him off, he persuades him that he must fall. Up to their fall, Satan lures men by false thoughts and hopes of the mercy of God ; as though God were not so severe and would not so punish this sin ; when fallen, he would keep them by false despair, as though there were no hope.

Against these wiles of our deadly foe, God gives us for our shield, the gift and grace of Divine hope. It much behoves us then, to know what true hope is, that we be not lured to our ruin by false hopes, or held back in our Christian course by false hopelessness. For what should one say of the seeming hopes of most of mankind ? What would *ye* say, brethren, of the hopes of the seaman,\* whose open boat was tossed in a heavy sea, rolling heavily now this way, now that, at times half filled by the waves breaking over it, and guided by an unsteady hand ? If ye would think his hopes good, then think theirs also good, who take no heed beforehand to the assaults of their besetting sins, give way to their passions, and without looking to the ways whereby they burst upon them, or to the Cross of Christ, are mastered by them. Or what would ye think of him, who, without chart, or steerage, or knowledge of the coast, was floating along in a dangerous sea, amid hidden rocks and whirlpools, going he knew not whither ? Ye would say that if he were saved at last, it must be through some secret mercy of God, not that he himself has any ground of hope. Such are the hopes

\* Preached in Hayling Island.

of those, who go on, day by day, as chance may carry them, without any strong, steadfast, earnest purpose to find out the narrow way, which, amid the thousand ways that lead to death, alone leads to life. Or what would ye say of him, on whose vessel the water was slowly but steadily gaining, and he, at no pains to clear it out, though still far from shore and his home? What but that, unless aroused to greater watchfulness, he too must founder and perish? Such are their hopes, who with unexamined, unsifted consciences, let petty sins creep into their lives day by day, are careless about them, because they are little, and empty them not out by daily penitence and daily prayer for forgiveness. Or what of him who, having escaped a dangerous sea, thanks God for his deliverance, and then, as if all danger were past, relaxes his watchfulness, and lets himself be, little by little, drifted back again into the same perils from which he hardly escaped? If this were presumption, what is theirs who having been roused from their death-sleep by some strong call of Christ, leave off, little by little, what they had found good for their souls, pray less frequently, are less strict with themselves, less heedful of occasions of sin, and thinking that all is well with them, are blindly sure, that all must be well with them to the end.

There are many ways to death; one only, a narrow way, to life. There are many false, deceiving, meteor hopes; one only, sure and steadfast; many, which end on this earth, one only "which entereth into that within the veil," even the Heaven of heavens, binding the soul, amid all the tossings of this troublesome world, to the Throne of God. One only



hope reaches already, yea and places us already there, "whither the Forerunner is," (not, as it were, for Himself, so Scripture speaks, but) "for us, entered," that where He is gone, there we might enter in, might tread the way which He has trod before, follow after, where He is the Forerunner and holdeth wide open the Everlasting Doors, which lifted up their heads to receive Him, a High Priest for ever after the order of Melchizedeck, ever living to intercede for us.

This Hope is not a Gift only of God to cheer us on. It is also a virtue, one of the chief virtues, whose end is not man, but God Himself. If we be Christians indeed, we not only may, we *ought* to have this virtue of hope. Our Christian character is wanting without it. It does not merely make the difference of serving God with gladness of heart or with heaviness, as slaves or as sons; we do not merely with it part with a great stay in trouble, a great spur to noble devoted exertion; we lose a grace, and thereby our other graces and our whole tone of mind are impaired.

What is true hope then? how can we distinguish it from those false hopes? and if we seem to have it not, can we attain it for ourselves, and how?

Hope, as a Christian grace, it has been said, is, "a<sup>b</sup> certain expectation of future blessedness, coming from the grace of God, amid well-doing," or "a desire of heavenly good with a trustfulness of attaining it." But then, as well as its sister graces, faith and charity, with which it is intertwined by an indissoluble bond, it is capable of increase, degrees; so that the

<sup>b</sup> S. Laur. Justinian. de Spe c. i. fin.

first trembling hope of the returning prodigal may be as different from the assured hope of Paul the aged, when he had "fought the good fight," had "finished his course," and "the crown of Righteousness, laid up for" him, stood just before him, as may be their mansions in Heaven, or the glory of one star above another.

Some hope there must be, as well as love, where there is any faith. Without love, faith would have nothing to dwell upon; without hope, faith would have no object *for us*. We might believe that Jesus died for all, and we might be amazed at His Love and Goodness, and the wondrous work of man's redemption, "God made Man;" but it has been a very miracle of grace, when love and faith have lived, while hope seemed dead. There have been those who, out of deep love which God gave them, loved Him because they could not but love, though they had but that joy of loving Him here for their reward, without hope for the life to come<sup>c</sup>; but it was one of His most wonderful works of grace, one of the deepest trials of His most faithful ones. But, mostly, hope, faith, and love are born together in the heart, together grow, together are perfected; together alas! wane or die. All may be in an infant state; all, weakly or sickly; all, strong and glowing. About all, the soul itself may be deceived. There is a faith which is of the head only, and a love which is but of the imagination and excitement, and self-wrought, and there is a hope which is but presumption. It is a separate, yet not uncommon sickness of the soul, that hope is weakly, when yet love is strong; as in timid, mis-

<sup>c</sup> See the Life of Brother Lawrence. Hatchard.

giving, scrupulous consciences, and these are objects of deep and tender sympathy. It is a very anxious sickness, when hope is buoyant, puffed up by vain conceits, without due proportioned strength of faith and love.

In a healthy state of the soul, then, faith, hope, and love will be born, live, thrive together. When the first good tidings of salvation come to one out of Christ, there must be hope for himself that he *may* so be saved, and love for Him Who died to save him, and faith in Him, that He, as S. Paul says, "loved me and gave Himself for me." And so to one, again dead in trespasses and sins, the hope that, on repentance, he *can* be saved, shoots like an electric shock through the benumbed heart, and faith and love revive together, and the dried-up soul gushes forth anew in tears of penitential love, and cries to Jesus, "*my Redeemer and my God.*"

Hope, then, in a manner, goes before faith, and prepares the way for it. It opens the heart, fixes the thoughts, prepares the will. In natural things, too, the heart cannot believe, while it hopes not. Jacob's heart was chilled with the hopeless thought of years, that his son was dead; hope, belief, love, gushed forth together, "It is enough; Joseph my son is yet alive; I will go and see him before I die." Ye yourselves have felt, at times, how some ray of hope kindled new faith and love; or some fervour of prayer which God gave you, wakened a thrill of stronger hope; or some deed of self-denying love, wrought through the grace of Christ, warmed the heart to hope that God had not forsaken it.

And thus, in their continual flight by which they

bear the soul heavenwards, these three Divine Graces, are seen, as it were, at times this one, at times that, before the other; yet where one advances, the others follow; for, even if not seen, they hardly can but be together. All have their being from the same source, the love of God towards us; all are fixed on Him; all return to Him. They are a threefold way of grasping or "apprehending" (as Scripture speaketh,) Him by Whom we have been apprehended; three modes of holding Him Who is Infinite, of containing Him Who containeth all things. For what is faith, but "the very substance of things hoped for," making them present to the soul? and hope maketh Him in Whom we believe, our own: and love is the very Presence of God Who is Love, in the soul. Faith saith, "Christ loved me and gave Himself for me;" and "hope maketh not ashamed," and saith "I<sup>d</sup> know in Whom I have believed, and am persuaded that He is able to keep that which I have committed unto Him against that Day;" and love saith "We love Him, because He first loved us;" "I am my Beloved's and my Beloved is mine."

Each grace then will soar higher, as the others rise also. All have their degrees. For after the Apostles had believed in our Lord, it is told us again and again, "His disciples believed on Him;" and just before His Passion they say to Him, "by<sup>e</sup> this we believe that Thou camest forth from God," as though, in each higher stage of belief, it was a new belief, a belief such as they never had before. "Faith is the substance of things hoped for." Without faith then, things hoped for would have no substance, no

<sup>d</sup> 2 Tim. i. 12.

<sup>e</sup> S. John xvi. 30.

reality. We could not hope for what we believe not. And hope again, is the support of faith and love; as S. Paul again says, "having<sup>f</sup> heard your faith in Christ Jesus, and your love towards all saints, for the hope's sake which is laid up for you in Heaven." They believed in Christ absent, they shewed love to all who were His, for the hope of His Presence, the hope laid up for them in Heaven, where He is. And S. Paul calls himself "an Apostle according to the faith of God's elect." This was the substance of his office; but its end is, he goes on to say, "in the hope of eternal life."

S. Paul saith of faith and love together "your<sup>g</sup> faith groweth exceedingly, and the charity of every one of you all toward each other aboundeth;" and S. Jude prays, "Mercy<sup>h</sup> unto you, and peace and love be multiplied;" and S. Paul, "This<sup>i</sup> I pray, that your love may abound more and more;" and S. John speaks of "love perfected;" and of hope, S. Paul prayeth,<sup>k</sup> "The God of hope fill you with all joy and peace in believing, that ye may abound (overflow<sup>l</sup>) in hope, by the power of the Holy Ghost." He prays that in and through their life of faith, the continual energy of believing, God would give them joy and peace; that joy and peace should enter into their belief, and be blended with it, and be a part of it, so that their belief should be joyous and peaceful; and not only so, but that God would fill them with it, "the God of hope fill you," and so that faith and joy and peace, with which they were filled, should overflow and over-

<sup>f</sup> Col. i. 4, 5.

<sup>h</sup> Jude 3.

<sup>k</sup> Rom. xv. 13.

<sup>g</sup> 2 Thess. i. 3.

<sup>i</sup> Philip. i. 9.

<sup>l</sup> Περὶσσεύειν.

stream the soul, and the soul have enough, and as it were more than enough, so that it cannot contain itself for joy and hope, but its joy and peace and hope should overflow to others also, and this "through the power of the Holy Ghost," healing all wounds, strengthening all weakness, kindling all chilliness, bedewing all dryness, until all which should hinder hope should cease, and hope be lifted above itself, "through the power of the Holy Ghost."

And again S. Paul speaks of all these three graces as living together, and putting forth their life, each according to its own proper fruit. "Remembering,<sup>m</sup>" he says, "your work of faith, and labour of love, and patience of hope in our Lord Jesus Christ;" faith working by love, and love, not inactive, but toiling in deeds of love; and hope enduring all troubles and all things contrary; and all these "of the Lord Jesus Christ" by His Merits purchased, by His Spirit given, to Himself returning. So then faith, given by Him, worketh in us towards Him; and love, shed abroad in the heart by Him, toileth for Him and for His members; and hope abideth all things, resting in Him Who is the Rock, unshaken like Himself in Whom it is.

For hope, as well as every other grace, is the Gift of God the Holy Ghost; and so again it too groweth with the increased indwelling of the Comforter. It is a fruit of the new birth, given us by the Holy Ghost, in which we are born by Him, of Him. "Blessed," saith S. Peter, "be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, Who according to His abundant mercy hath begotten us again," given us a

<sup>m</sup> 1 Thess. i. 3.

new, immortal birth and life, “unto a living hope through the Resurrection of Jesus Christ;” as though this “living hope” were a very object of our new birth through the Resurrection of Christ. And S. Paul, “Now” our Lord Jesus Christ Himself, and God, even our Father, Which hath given us everlasting consolation and good hope *through grace.*” The comforts which God giveth are not like this world’s comforts, fleeting, but for ever. His hopes are not, like this world’s, evil and decaying, but “good,” and they are through His Grace, Which is given us by the Holy Spirit. And, as a grace of God, hope grows through every other grace. Each grace of God, well used, draws down fresh grace from Him Who hath said, “To him that hath shall be given, and he shall have abundantly.”

Hope, again, grows through deeds of love, done through the grace of Christ. “God,°” S. Paul saith, “is not unrighteous, that He should forget your work and labour of love, which ye have shewed for His Name’s sake, who have ministered to the saints, and yet do minister. And we desire that every one of you should shew the same diligence to the full assurance of hope unto the end.” Hope they already had. But “the full assurance of hope” as yet lay beyond them. S. Paul had hopes for them; “we are persuaded,” he says, “better things of you;” they had hopes for themselves; but “the fulness of hope” as yet they had not. This was an end which they were to reach unto, “to the full assurance of hope;” and to this, he says, they would attain by persevering diligence in what they had begun, self-

° 2 Thess. ii. 16.

° Heb. vi. 11.

denying deeds and labour of love. So should hope become fuller and fuller, as the measure of their love increased, until they should reach to its very fulness; and as they shewed forth the same diligence, so their hope also should in its fulness abide "unto the end."

Again, like every other Christian grace, hope is ripened through trials and afflictions. "Having been justified by faith," S. Paul says, "we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ, by Whom we have access by faith into this grace wherein we stand, and rejoice in hope of the glory of God." Such, S. Paul tells us, are the fruits of faith; a state of grace, steadfastness in it, ("wherein we stand") peace with God, wherein we fear no wrath nor condemnation, but with free, calm, joyous heart and soul, as His children, "rejoice in hope of the glory of God;" that is, that He will give us of that glory which He imparteth to all to whom He imparteth Himself, His own Glory, the Glory which shone forth in the Only-Begotten Son, to Whose Glory we shall be likened. And, rejoicing or glorying<sup>p</sup> in this hope of the glory of God, we rejoice (however painful they may in themselves be) in all things which lead thereto. And not only so, but we glory or rejoice<sup>q</sup> (it is the same word as before) in tribulations also; "knowing that tribulation worketh patience, and patience experience, and experience hope;" that is, troubles and trials of all sorts, but especially those borne for the sake and cause of Christ, in the Hand and through the Grace of God, work that endurance which, without

<sup>p</sup> *Καυχώμεθα.* Rom. v. 2.

<sup>q</sup> *Καυχώμεθα.* Ver. 3.



that Grace, they would shatter.<sup>r</sup> The hammer of afflictions but knits closer together what it does not break. For, by endurance, men become more acceptable to God through Christ, and are tried; and through trial, hope is stronger. For if we hope more of anything which has gone through any trial, (even in things made, we trust most in those which have been proved) how much more, when the trust is not in man, nor in any natural power, but in God, that He Whose love has carried His own through any trial, will the more love and carry them to the end. And so S. Paul sums up, "and hope maketh not ashamed, because the love of God is shed abroad in our hearts by the Holy Ghost Which is given to us." Human hopes, and all hope in man out of God, do "make ashamed;" for they must fail us; but hope which is of God faileth not; for it is the fruit of love; and love is poured out, he says, into the Christian's soul "by the Holy Ghost which is given us." Shall hope then fail? But love, by which it cometh, is poured out in the Christian's heart, a full stream from the Fountain of love? Shall love then dry up? But it is "poured out" by God the Holy Ghost. Will then the Holy Ghost leave us? But He "is given unto us," and will not then part with us, unless we (God forbid!) part with Him.

Our question, then, is already answered; how may we distinguish true hope from false? True hope is the gift of God, blended with faith and love, strength-

<sup>r</sup> "Woe to the adversities of the world, once and again, and the third time, from the longing for prosperity, and because adversity itself is a hard thing, and lest it shatter endurance." S. Aug. Conf. Ox. Ed. B. x. p. 204.

ened by deeds wrought in Christ, by acts of love, and by patience in trouble.

They are not true, but deadly hopes, accursed of God,\* when men, pleading the mercy of God, continue in carelessness and sin, or delay repentance, as though man might offend God, because He is long-suffering. Of such, Scripture saith, "Not knowing that the Goodness of God calleth thee to repentance, dost thou treasure up to thyself wrath against the Day of wrath, and revelation of the righteous judgment of God?" It is to profane the very attribute wherein our hope is, to make the mercy of God the occasion of sin.

They are not true, but deceitful hopes, whereby men trust that without effort, because they are as other men are, without any real or deep repentance, they shall be saved. For our Judge saith, "Unless ye repent, ye shall all likewise perish."

They are not true but presumptuous hopes, whereby a man thinks he may be saved, although he avoid not diligently all which are occasions of sin to him, or because he, without real repentance, has only left off any sin because it has rather left off him.

They are baseless hopes, which a man hath, who has not sifted his own conscience before God, nor hath not, reviewing his whole life, repented him of the evil.

They are blind hopes, if a man hope to be saved, and yet will not bear the pain of looking into his

\* "It is an infidel confidence, capable only of a curse, when we sin in hope. Although that is not even to be called confidence, but rather an insensibility, and pernicious despondency." S. Bern. Serm. in Annunc. p. 3.

own heart, and "hateth the light, and cometh not unto the light," suspecting that "his deeds are evil."

They are vain hopes, when "a man putteth his trust in himself," and his own strength, and passeth through trials without calling upon God.

It is a perilous and ruinous hope when a man trusteth in his own merits.<sup>1</sup> They are broken, failing hopes, which will pierce a man, as they break under him, if he trusteth in man, and taketh man for his defence, and in his heart departeth from the Lord.

They are false, sickening, miserable hopes, when man seeks for any happiness out of God, or with a heart divided between God and the world, hopeth to have the world for his portion in this life, and God for his Portion in the next.

Where, then, is true hope? Let us ask the Psalmist, when, beholding the end of all things, he saith of all earthly things, "Man walketh in a vain show." "And now, Lord, what is my hope? Truly my hope is even in Thee." His are true hopes, who, amid whatever infirmity, yet knows that he has forsaken sin, and would sooner than the whole world that he had never done it, would not, for the whole world, again do it, because it offended God. His are true hopes, who, amid whatever failure, has set his heart steadfastly to conquer any besetting sin, by the Grace of God, and seeks to be watchful and prays for grace to do it. His are true hopes, who, as our Article<sup>2</sup> says, "feels in himself the workings of the Spirit of Christ, mortifying the works of the flesh, and drawing up his mind to high and heavenly things." His are true hopes, who, knowing his own

<sup>1</sup> S. Bern. Serm. 1. in Ps. qui habitat.

<sup>2</sup> Art. 17.

frailty, watchful of his own weakness, wholly mistrusting himself, wholly trusting God, useth diligently grace given, "keepeth himself" that "the wicked one touch him not;" "having the hope that he shall see God, purifieth himself as He is pure;" is "zealous to maintain good works," yet trusteth not in his works, but in Him Who forgiveth all our sin, and "crowneth" in us, not for our own merits, but "in mercy and loving-kindness," the works which His grace has given.

"Thou Lord art my Hope." "Whatever," says a holy man,<sup>x</sup> "is to be done, whatever avoided, whatever to be borne, whatever to be wished for, 'Thou, Lord, art my hope.' This is to me the cause of all my promises, this the whole ground of all I look for. Let another put forward his merit, boast that he 'bears the burden and heat of the day,' say that he 'fasts twice in the week,' or, lastly, boast that he is 'not as other men are,' but for me, 'it is good to hold fast to God,' to place my hope in God. Let others hope in what they will; one, in learning; another, in cleverness of this world; another, in noble birth; another in dignity; another, in any vanity he wills; all these 'I have counted as loss' and dung for Thy sake; for 'Thou, Lord, art my hope.' Hope who will, in uncertain riches; I will not hope for the necessaries of life save from Thee, trusting in Thy word, at which I have cast away all; 'Seek ye first the Kingdom of God and His Righteousness, and all these things shall be added unto you.' For 'the poor committeth himself unto Thee, for Thou art the help of the friendless.' If rewards

<sup>x</sup> Id. Ib. Serm. 9. n. 5. 6.

are promised me, through Thee will I hope to obtain them ; ‘ if wars arise against me,’ if the world slayeth, if the evil one stormeth, if the very ‘ flesh lusteth against the spirit,’ ‘ in Thee will I hope.’”

“ Brethren, to be thus minded is to live by faith. Nor can any other truly say, ‘ Thou, Lord, art my Hope,’ unless he be inwardly persuaded by the Spirit to cast all his cares on the Lord, knowing that ‘ He careth for us.’ Why, if we be thus minded, why delay we wholly to cast aside miserable, vain, useless, seducing hopes, and with the whole devotion of our mind, with the whole fervour of our spirit, to cleave to this one so solid, so perfect, so blessed hope ? If anything is impossible, if anything is difficult to God, seek something else in which to hope. But with a word He can do all things. If He have decreed to save us, we shall be delivered : if He be pleased to give us life, life is in His Will ; if to give us everlasting rewards, He can do what He willeth. Or doubtest thou not that He can, but hast misgivings of His Will ? ‘ Greater love hath no man than this, that a Man lay down His Life for His friends.’ Or how should that Majesty fail him who hopeth in Him, Who so earnestly biddeth that we hope in Him ? Truly, He doth not leave those that hope in Him. ‘ He shall deliver them from the ungodly and shall save them.’ On what ground ? ‘ Because they have put their trust in Him.’ Oh sweet, but effectual, unanswerable ground. This is ‘ Righteousness ; yet not of the law, but of faith.’”

Would ye then grow in hope ? First then, cast out all vain hopes ; hope for nothing, hope in nothing out of God.

Then, hope is on high within the veil, "where Christ sitteth on the Right Hand of God." Grovel not in things below, among earthly cares, pleasures, anxieties, toils, if thou wouldest have a good strong hope on high. Thou canst not soar to Heaven and stoop to earth. Lift up thy cares with thy heart to God, if thou wouldest hope in Him.

Then see what in thee is most displeasing to God. This it is which holdeth thy hope down. Strike firmly, repeatedly, in the might of God, until it give way. Thy hope will soar at once with thy thanks to God Who delivereth thee.

And then cast *all* thy care on God. See that all thy cares be such as thou canst cast on God, and then hold none back. Never brood over thyself; never stop short in thyself; but cast thy whole self, even this very care which distresseth thee, upon God. He hath said, "Cast *all* thy care." He has excepted none; neither do thou.

Hope is a grace and gift of God. Try not to make it for thyself, nor look in thyself for grounds of hope; but pray God to pour it with faith and love into thy soul.

Our hopes are where our hearts are. Meditate often then on the love of God, the Passion of thy Lord, the Price He paid for thee, His Intercession for thee, His Providence over thee, His Gifts ever renewed to thee, His Word pledged unto thee, and plead to the Father, that He "despise not the work of His own Hands, destroy not His own Image though branded by sin;" to the Son, that He "despise not the price of His own Blood, named after His own Name," to whom He giveth His Body and Blood; to

the Holy Ghost, that He despise not us into whom He breathed life, whom He has hallowed;<sup>7</sup> and He, God the Father, God the Son, and God the Holy Ghost, in Whom alone is thy hope, will have pity upon thee, and give thee strong, sure, sustaining, well grounded hope in Him, grounded on Him Whose "mercies" alone are "sure."

"My hope hath been in Thee, O Lord; I have said, Thou art my God." "My hope is in Thee." Sweet is it that our hope should rest in Him Who is never shaken; should abide in Him Who never changeth; should bind us to Him Who can hold us fast to Himself, Who Alone is the full contentment of the soul; should, as it were, enter into Him; since "*in* Him is our being", Who is Love. Sweeter yet is it, that this our hope is no fruit of our own thought. We do not come at it by our understandings; we do not gather it for ourselves even from His Word alone. It is, with Faith and Love, His Gift, poured out within us, drawing us upward to Himself. Yet Holy Scripture has yet one sweeter word still. Not only is our hope *in* Him, but He Himself is our Hope.<sup>2</sup> "Thou art my Hope," saith

<sup>7</sup> Bishop Andrewes.

<sup>2</sup> "What has been said, brethren, might seem to suffice for the explanation of this Psalm, if the Prophet had said (as it is in some other Psalms) 'in Thee have I hoped.' But what he saith, 'Thou, Lord, art my Hope,' meaneth perhaps something fuller and sublimer, that my Hope is not only *in* Him, but Himself. For more properly is that called our hope, which we hope for, than that wherein we hope. There are indeed perchance some, who desire to obtain from the Lord, certain things temporal or spiritual. But perfect love thirsteth only for the Highest, crying aloud with the whole vehemence of its longing, 'Whom have I in Heaven

the Psalmist. "God our Saviour and Lord Jesus Christ" saith S. Paul,<sup>a</sup> "our Hope." Yea, there is a deeper, nearer depth. "The Glory of the Mystery of the Gospel," says S. Paul, "is Christ in you, the Hope of Glory." Christ Himself is our Hope, as the only Author of it; Christ is our Hope, as the End of it; and Christ, Who is the Beginning and the End, is our hope also by the way; for he saith, "Christ<sup>b</sup> *in* you, the Hope of Glory." Each yearning of our hearts, each ray of hope which gleams upon us, each touch which thrills through us, each voice which whispers in our inmost hearts of the good things laid up in store for us, if we will love God, are the Light of Christ enlightening us, the Touch of Christ raising us to new life, the Voice of Christ, "Whoso cometh to Me, I will in no wise cast out;" it is "Christ in us, the Hope of Glory," drawing us up by His Spirit Who dwelleth in us, unto Himself, our Hope. For our Hope is not the glory of Heaven, not joy, not peace, not rest from labour, not fulness of our wishes, nor sweet contentment of the whole soul, not understanding of all mysteries and all knowledge, not only a torrent of delight; it is "Christ our God," "the Hope of Glory." Nothing which God *could* create is what we hope for; nothing which God could give us out of Himself, no created glory, or bliss, or beauty, or majesty, or riches. What we hope for is our Re-

but Thee, and there is none upon earth that I would desire in comparison of Thee. My flesh and my heart fainteth; but God is the strength of my heart, and my portion for ever.'" S. Bern. Ib. n. 8.

<sup>a</sup> 1 Tim. i. 1.

<sup>b</sup> Col. i. 27.



deeming God Himself, His Love, His Bliss, the Joy of our own Lord, Himself Who hath so loved us, to be our Joy and our Portion for ever.

Oh will ye not then say with me, brethren, once for all, "Farewell all vain hopes and desires out of God;" "Whom have I in Heaven but Thee, and there is none upon earth that I desire in comparison of Thee." "Thou Thyself art my Hope and my Portion in the land of the living." "In Thee I shall not be disappointed of my Hope."

## SERMON III.

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### LOVE.

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1 COR. xiii. 13.

*“ And now abideth faith, hope, charity, these three ;  
but the greatest of these is Charity.”*

“ CHARITY,<sup>a</sup>” as Holy Scripture speaks of it, “ is the love of God for Himself above all things, and of man for God and in God.” It shows itself in outward acts of love to man, or, where it may be, in labour for God. But these are only outward forms, wherein the inward life puts itself forth. These shall cease in the world to come, (for where there is no misery, there is no room for works of mercy, nor for labour, where all is everlasting rest), but “ Charity never faileth.” It is itself deep within, in the heart, ever there, even when not called to act, like hot glowing coals, which dart forth in a quick consuming flame,

<sup>a</sup> S. Laur. Justin. de charitate c. 1. He adds, “ Or Love is life uniting the beloved with the Beloved,” also “ Love is a virtue whereby we long to see and enjoy God.”

when fuel is laid upon them, but their deep, pure, white heat is within. Acts of love strengthen the inward fire of love; and love, which puts itself not forth in deeds of love, would go out, as fire without fuel; but they do not first light it. Love is the "fire," which our Blessed Lord "came to send upon the earth, and would that it should be kindled." He kindled it by His Own Death and Passion, "heaping coals of fire upon our heads," to melt us into love. He kindled it, by sending His Spirit into our hearts, "a Spirit of burning" to burn out what was defiled, enlighten what was dark, make what was cold to glow, melt what was stone, purging away our dross and changing the dull ore into the fine gold. "Love is of God," and "God is Love." In God, Love is Himself, His Very Substance, the very bond of unity of the Co-Equal Trinity.<sup>b</sup> For "God is Love." In Angels and man, Love is the Gift of God, given to man by Him Who is the Gift of God, "shed abroad in our hearts by the Holy Ghost Who is

<sup>b</sup> "For what in that Supreme and Blessed Trinity, maintaineth that supreme and ineffable unity, but love? Love then is a law, a law of the soul, which in a manner holdeth the Trinity in Unity and bindeth It together in the Bond of peace. But let no one think that I here speak of love as a quality or accident. Else (God forbid) I should say that there is in God something which is not God. But I speak of that Divine Substance. And this is nothing new or unwonted, since John saith, 'God is Love.' Rightly, then, is Love called both God and the Gift of God. So then Love giveth love; Substantial, the accidental. When Love means the Giver, it is the Name of Substance; when the gift, of a quality." S. Bern. Ep. xi. n. 4. See also S. Aug. Hom. 39. in S. Joann. n. 5. p. 537. Oxf. Tr. Hom. 14. n. 9. p. 224. Hom. 18. n. 4. p. 277. "How much more must the Father, Who is God, and the Son Who is God, be, in the Fountain of Love, One God."

given to us." "Love giveth love." God Who is Love, giveth His Spirit Who is Love, to pour abroad love into our hearts.

Love then is the source and end of all good. "It alone," says a father,<sup>c</sup> "distinguishes the children of God from the children of the devil." Without it, nothing avails; with it, thou hast all things. If it were possible that, without it, thou couldest "have all faith, so as to move mountains," the Apostle says, thou wert "nothing." Judas cast out devils, we must suppose; but he was himself a devil. He was nothing, for he had not the life of God; he was but a blot in God's Creation. Without love, all knowledge of Divine things is ignorance; all eloquence, though it were the speech of Angels, "a tinkling cymbal," hollow and empty, for it is not filled by God. Without love, all gifts of a whole substance to the poor, all zeal for the honour of God, yea, to suffer death, if it were possible, for the Name of Jesus, would profit nothing. With love, the cup of cold water, given for Jesus' sake, or the two mites, are rich acceptable gifts, and the mute longing of the soul pleads eloquently for the conversion of sinners; and unlearned and ignorant men speak with the Spirit of Christ; and the weak things of the world overcome the mighty, and children trample on Satan, the prince of this world; and "things which are not, bring to nought things which are," since they are filled and strengthened and ensouled and empowered by Him Who Alone IS and is Love.

"Love," says a holy man,<sup>d</sup> "is the beginning of all good, because it is from God, and moves to Him.

<sup>c</sup> S. Aug.

<sup>d</sup> S. Laur. Just. l. c. c. 2.

For Love worketh great things, where it is ; but if it worketh not, it is not Love. Love is the means of all good, for it is according to God, and fashioneth our deeds aright. For it hath ever the eyes towards God. It is the glue of souls, the union of faithful souls ; it is not cold through sloth, nor feigned in action, not fleeting, not rash, not headlong. Love is also the end of all goods ; for it is for the sake of God, and directeth our works, and bringeth them to the right end. It is the end of sins, because it destroyeth them ; the end of the commandments, because it perfecteth them ; it is the end of all our toils, the end of all ends to us, for our rest is in life everlasting, but God is the End in Whom we rest," and " God is Love."

Whence hath love its birth ? In the Infinite Love of God, in the Essence of God. Faith and Hope are *towards* God. They are graces put into the soul by God, whereby the soul should cling to Him, hold fast to Him, long for Him. But Faith and Hope can have no likeness in God. They are virtues of the soul towards God, bringing it near to Him, supporting it in cleaving to Him, opening it for His Love. They are the virtues of the creature, when absent from its Creator, companions of its pilgrim state. In Heaven, neither Angels, nor Saints, hope or believe, but see and know and feel and love. Faith and Hope are great graces ; but they, as well as works of love, will, in Eternity, cease to be. They are a ladder to reach to Heaven. When Heaven is reached, there is no more place for them. In Heaven they cannot be. Faith cannot be, where there is sight ; nor Hope, when He for Whom we hope, has

fully given Himself to us ; and we have Him, the End of our faith, and are immersed in the Ocean of Joy in Him we hope for ; and knowledge, such as we have here, vanisheth away, and there will come in its stead, another kind of knowledge, a knowledge not coming to us in words, nor formed by our thoughts, nor reflected to us, as through a glass darkly, not faint images of things Divine, but the Beatific Vision itself, the Very Essence of God. In God, we shall, (if we attain) see God ; in God, know God. Not only through the Manhood of Christ Jesus our Lord, although inseparably united with His Godhead and in God ; not through any thing created, even His Adorable Manhood, shall we know and see God. God Himself shall the Eyes of the soul behold, unveiled in His Glory and Majesty and Beauty, Father, Son, and Holy Ghost, as HE IS. But then, when the highest speech of God here, even prophecies, words spoken of God, through God putting them into the mind, shall cease, and instead thereof, shall be “the new song ;” then, when, for this dim knowledge of God, through our imperfect thoughts and words, spoken after the manner of men, we shall “know as we are known,” shall know the Very Self, the Essence of God, even as He knows our inmost selves ; yea, then when His Divine Nature, as HE IS, shall be open to our gaze, Himself, with all the treasures of His Wisdom and Goodness and Love, shall be ours to behold ; and when the bright torch of Faith, which guides us in this our darkness, shall be lost in the Ineffable Brightness of the Sight of God, and Hope shall be swallowed up in the unceasing, assured, satisfying Joy of Him we hope for,

beyond Whom, out of Whom, there is nothing to hope for, but a certain knowledge that our joy shall be as unchangeable as His Bliss, which shall be our joy; then, even then, "Charity never faileth." For Charity is the love wherewith, throughout Eternity, the blessed shall love God, and each other in God.

On this ground, then, is Charity greater than Faith and Hope, and any other grace, because it has its source in that which God IS. Charity is created love, coming forth from the Uncreated, "shed abroad in our hearts" by Him Who is Uncreated Love, "the Spirit Who is given us." Love is that which is most akin to that which God is. Love unites man to God. Love lifts men to Heaven, because it is of God, as it bowed God down to earth, to have pity on our miseries and sins. Love is the return and flowing back of the love of God. "We love Him because He first loved us." He loved us with an infinite love. He would have us return a whole undivided love, all for All; the whole love of man for the whole Infinite love of God. It reaches as far as the love of God. Prudence and wisdom are likenesses of the Eternal Providence; but they reach, when furthest, a very little way. Love, when well ordered, loves, in its measure, all which God Himself loves. It loves, in its height, God Himself for Himself, because He IS What He IS, even as (if we may reverently say it), God Almighty loves Himself, because He is Himself, Father, Son, and Holy Ghost, the One Object of All-Perfect love. It loves His holy creatures, Angels and Archangels, because they love Him, and His Love rests upon them. It loves the Church, because it is His Body, the multitude of His redeemed, whom He

“purchased with His Own Blood.” It loves those who love Christ, because Christ loveth them ; it loves those who love Him not, because He willeth them to be saved. It loves the weak tenderly, as Christ also compassionates them. It joys in penitents, as He saith, “ Rejoice with Me, for I have found the sheep which I had lost.” It exults in the triumphs of martyrs, in the love of devoted souls, in the fervour of the zealous, in the purity of innocence, in whom Christ “ seeth of the travail of His soul and is satisfied.” It “ weeps with those who weep,” as Christ wept at Lazarus’ grave. It was in St. Paul, “ weak with the weak,” as Christ took the weakness and infirmity of our flesh. It feels the goods and ills of others as its own, as Christ hungers in the hungry, is “ thirsty” and “ naked,” “ sick and in prison,” in His members. Who is there whom God loveth, whom they who love by His love, love not ? They love all whom God loveth, because God loves them, and they love Him in them, and them in the degree in which He is in them.

Hence then it is love which gives the value to all deeds of faith, or devotion, or toil, or love, or martyrdom ; because love is of God, and refers all to God. Noble self-denying deeds may be for man’s praise or in self-complacency ; chastity may be proud ; alms-giving, vain-glorious. Active service may be its own reward ; death itself may be undergone amid obstinacy. Love hath no end but God, seeketh nothing but Himself for Himself, “ seeketh not her own ;” for in God she hath all things and overfloweth ; hath, only to overflow to others ; receives but to diffuse and to give back. All virtues are but



forms of love, for she is the soul of all. "Temperance," says a father,<sup>e</sup> "is love, keeping itself pure and undefiled for God. Fortitude is love, readily enduring all things for the sake of God. Justice is love which serveth God alone, and so, hath command over all things subject to man. Prudence is love, distinguishing what helpeth it towards God, from what hindereth it;" or, "Love,<sup>f</sup> kindled with entire holiness towards God, when it coveteth nothing out of God, is called temperance; when it willingly parteth with all, is called fortitude." Love contains all virtues; it animates all; but itself is beyond all. For they are concerned with human things and human duties, with the soul itself, or its fellow men, with deeds which shall cease when our earthly needs and trials and infirmities cease; love bears them all up to God, looks out of all to Him, does all to Him, and in all sees Him, soars above all, and rests not until she finds her rest in the All-loving Bosom of God.

But since the love of God is so great, so blessed, so necessary a gift, how may we know that we have it, how grow in it? Blessed be God, there are many degrees of it, else might most well fear that they had not any of it. Yet this may be said at once. If thou art pained that thou hast not more love for God, and desirest to love, thou hast love. Love only craves more love. Love only so contemplates the Object of love, as to feel that all its love is too little for His Adorable Love. Love only feels the absence, or seeming absence of Him it loves. Love only knows that God is above all things to be loved.

<sup>e</sup> S. Aug. de Mor. Eccl. c. 15.

<sup>f</sup> Ib. c. 22.

The worldly, careless, covetous, hard-hearted, the lovers of pleasure, cannot love God, but neither do they desire to love Him. They love their own god, the god whom they have set up in their hearts to love, serve, worship; their pleasure, honour, gain, indulgence of the body, lust, praise of man. If thou knowest that God is to be loved above all things, wouldest, sooner than the whole world, have one pure drop of the love of God, wouldest, in order to have the love of God, part with anything which thou knewest to keep thee back from His love, thou lovest God.

Holy men have distinguished four stages of love. Not that all these stages are so distinct that, as when one crosses from one field to another, so soon as one is in this, one is not in that. These several kinds of love are often found mingled together; and one may have glimpses and flashes of a higher love of God, even while, for the most part, one has but the lower love of Him.

The first state of fallen man is, alas! to "love<sup>†</sup> himself for himself. For he is flesh, and can taste only the things of flesh." In this state, he rather fears God than loves Him. Yet man needs God. "He cannot suffice for himself," cannot uphold himself, "and so begins by faith to seek after and love God, because he needs Him. And so he is brought to a second stage of love, to love God for man's own sake." Such is the love of most who love God at all. It is indeed a strange unworthiness that He, the Good of all goods, the Centre of all being, "of Whom and by Whom and to Whom are all things,"

† S. Bern. Ep. xi. n. 8.

should be loved only for His creatures' sake ; that man, this earth-worm, should love God, only because God is needful to him. Much as a man might value the sun, because it warms him and ripens his corn, so man, at first, makes himself his centre, and loves God because he needs Him. Yet God so condescendeth to man's wretchedness, He so humbleth Himself, that He willeth even thus to be loved. Nay, He has therefore surrounded us with the blessings of nature, that all things around us may teach us to love God, because He made them "very good." And how great then must be His Goodness Who made them good, and His Beauty Who made them beautiful, and His Mercy Who in mercy made them all, and made all to serve man ! Yet in some such way, might a heathen love. "God left not Himself without witness," saith the Apostle, "in that He gave us rain from Heaven and fruitful seasons, filling our hearts with food and gladness."

It is a Christain form of this love of God for man's own sake, if a man loves Him, because He has redeemed him, because, without Him, he cannot be saved, and he hopes to be saved by Him. Such is the love of those who are taken up with the thoughts and cares of this world, with earthly hopes, an earthly future, and do not much rise out of them to the thought of God, or pray much for His love, or dwell upon His Goodness, or the boundless love of Jesus, in His Suffering for us, and His Long-suffering with us. The greater the Love of God, for which we love Him, the more unworthy is it to love Him only for ourselves. Strange is it for a Christian to love God, only as One Whom he has need of, when he

believes the Love of Christ which passeth beyond all knowledge, that love whereby He took our misery that He might give us of His own Joy in the Co-Equal Father and Holy Spirit.

Yet it is something, if even for His gifts of nature, any learn to love God. Nor can ye, by any act of your own will, love God in any other way than ye now do. Men may work upon their own minds, excite their feelings; but this is only self-deceit. As a man is, such is his love; and as his love is, such is he. But by no act of his mind, no contemplation of God, can he make his love, any more than himself, other than it is. As long as ye make yourselves your end, so long, if ye love God at all, ye must love God for yourselves. Ye must give your whole selves to God, or ye must think on God, as He is to you. God alone can lead men out of this state; and this He does, as they unlearn self, and, "because they need Him, worship Him, and are much with Him, thinking of Him, reading of Him, obeying Him." "So," says a holy man,<sup>h</sup> "by some sort of familiar intercourse, does God, slowly and by degrees, become known to the soul, and consequently sweet to it; and so, having 'tasted that the Lord is good,' he passes to the third degree, and loves God for His own sake, not any longer for man's own."

Yet even, in beginning to love God for His own sake, there is a snare, lest men should love God for sensible sweetnesses and the consolations which, when He sees good, He gives in prayer or the Holy Sacrament; and so He often withdraws these comforts, and leaves the soul in darkness, after shew-

<sup>h</sup> S. Bern. Ep. xi. n. 8.

ing her His light, and in dryness, after having bathed her in His sweetness, that He may prove the soul that she follows Him, not for the loaves and fishes, because she did eat and was filled, but for love of Himself Alone.

This is a pure chaste love, which loves God not for any gifts of His, not even for everlasting bliss as His gift. Pure love would not be contented with all the glories and brightness and beauty of Heaven itself: it stops short of nothing, could be satisfied with nothing, but with the Love of God Himself. For pure love is that which loveth whom it loveth, for his own sake. Pure wedded or childish love is that which loves, not for the sake of anything which husband or parent bestows, but for himself. As thou wouldest be loved, so must thou love God. This love fulfils the commandment, because<sup>1</sup> as Christ sought us not for Himself, nor for anything in us, but for ourselves, so it "seeks" not "its own," but "the things which are Jesus Christ's." It loves God, "because He is good;" and so it loves the Will of God, and the Ways of God, and the Mind of God, and becomes conformed to the Will of God, and wills, or wills not, not for its own pleasure, but for the Will of God.

And so the soul is formed towards that last stage of love, of which blessed are they who have for a moment some faint glimpse in this life, but which is life eternal, that man should love himself only for

<sup>1</sup> "Who so loveth, loveth no otherwise than he is loved: himself also, in return, seeking not his own things, but the things of Jesus Christ, as He sought ours, or rather us, not aught of His own." S. Bern. de dilig. Deo. c. 9.

the sake of God. In this, as holy men have spoken,<sup>†</sup> the soul, borne out of itself with Divine love, "forgetting itself," losing itself in a manner, as though it were not, not feeling itself, and emptied of itself, "goeth forth wholly into God, and cleaving to God, becometh one spirit with Him, so that it may say, 'my flesh and my heart faileth, but Thou art the God of my heart and God my Portion for ever.'" For since God is the Centre of all things, so the soul, when perfected, must will to be nothing but what God wills ; to be, only that His will may be fulfilled in it ; to be, only that He may live in it ; to be dissolved, as it were, and wholly transfused into the will of God. This is life eternal, that God should be All in all, that the creature should be nothing of itself, except the vessel of the life and love of God.

Of these stages of love, the love of God only for one's own sake, is plainly unsafe. Blessed is it, if any love God even thus, as a step towards that which is better. Blessed is any spark of the love of God ! For it is life ; and faint as it may be, it may be fanned and strengthened into a glowing flame, which shall burn out all that is earthly, and burn on to everlasting life. Yet so long as man loves God, only for man's own sake, there is much danger lest, if God gives him not what he wills, or gives him what he wills not, he should lose what love he seemed to have. Thus, frightful as it is, people have become embittered or impatient through misfortunes, or sicknesses, or bereavements, as though God had dealt hardly with them, and have thrown off the love of God. So the Jews, who seemed to love our Lord

<sup>†</sup> S. Bern. de dilig. Deo. c. 10.

when they followed Him and cried Hosanna, hoping that He would deliver them from the Romans, so soon as they found that His "Kingdom was not of this world," crucified Him. Sorrow and disappointment harden or soften, as man loves God for man's own sake, or for God's.

How then are we to know whether we have love ; how gain it ? The tests whereby we may know whether we have this love of God for Himself, are also the means of gaining it, or of increasing it, if, through them, He has given it. How is it with those whom you dearly love on earth ? Be this the proof of your love of God.

You gladly think of them, when absent. You joy, in their presence, even though they be silent to you. Love makes them seem to be present with you, even when in body they are absent. You are glad to turn from converse with others, to speak with them. One word or look of theirs is sweeter than all which is not they.

The soul which loves God for its own sake, thinks only of God when it needs Him. When things go smoothly, such a soul forgets Him ; she is taken up by her own pleasure, and scarcely or coldly thanks Him ; in trouble she recollects herself, and flies to Him. The soul which loves God for His own sake, gladly escapes from the business of the world to think of Him, recollects Him in little chinks and intervals of time, in which she is not occupied ; takes occasion of all things to think of Him ; is glad of hours of prayer that she may be with Him ; is glad to be alone with Him ; glad to come to Him here in this holy house or in His Sacraments ; to dwell with

Him and that He may dwell in her ; prays Him, " Abide with me, Lord ;" hushes herself that she may hear His Voice, gathers herself together, lest in the distractions of things of self, she should lose Him. She attends to the lowest whispers of His Voice, lest she lose any, which should show her his mind and will for her.

Again, you are glad to hear of those you love ; you are glad when others speak good of them, even if you dare not speak yourself : you heed not who it is that speaketh of them, so that he tells you of their goodness ; you would take pains to understand any word of theirs which he told you.

" He who is of God," our Lord saith, " heareth the Words of God." Mary, who " loved much," " sat at the Feet of Jesus and heard His Words." It is in reading the Words of Jesus, that the heart burns within us ; it is in " musing" within us over the Word of God, that " the fire kindles." Love loveth to hear the humblest speak of Jesus' love,<sup>1</sup> to learn of any one how to love Jesus more. Love knoweth that it knows all too little of that " love" of Jesus " which passeth knowledge," and searches His Words, and longs to know their meaning more, and learns in all the ways it can, if so be, it may learn more of Jesus and His Love.

Again, deep human love loves anything which belongs to what it loves. Love will love a piece of dress, a plant, dumb animals, simply because they

<sup>1</sup> S. Laur. Justin. de caritate. c. ii. " He who truly loveth God, gladly hears His Words. He seeks from all indifferently what he sees to be lacking to himself ; considers not how much he knows, but of how much he is ignorant."



belong to the object of its love. How much more, if we love Jesus, must we love all for whom Jesus died! If we love God, must we not love man who was made in the Image of God, redeemed by His Blood, sanctified by His Spirit, made by His Own Hands, re-made by Him, and, though weak and wayward and rebellious against Himself, still the object of His Love? How much more, when He Whom we would love, gave them to us in charge! "A new commandment I give unto you, that ye love one another; as I have loved you, that ye also love one another. By this shall all men know that ye are My disciples, if ye have love one to another." He who loveth another for the sake of God, what loveth he in him but God? Yea, love to God must overflow in love to man. If we love God more than ourselves, we must deny self for love of our fellow-men whom He loves. Had not Apostles so loved God, we had been heathen still. This has been the love which has converted nations, spread the knowledge of God. This still seeks out sinners for repentance, teaches the ignorant, is patient with the wayward, bears with the contradictory, tends the young, recalls the wandering, has fellow-feeling with the worst of sinners, thinks nothing hopeless which Christ doth not cut down, unconquered by weariness, unbroken by disappointment, unmoved by ingratitude; for truly all this were we, when Christ, in long-suffering, sought and found us. And hath He not Himself said: "Shouldest thou not have had compassion upon thy fellow servant, even as I had pity on thee?"

But love for God cares also for the bodily wants

of those whom, with it, God has loved. This is the very test which the Apostle of love, the beloved disciple, gives us, whether our love be love of the lips or of the heart, in word and tongue, or in deed and truth. "Whoso hath this world's good and seeth his brother have need, and shutteth up his bowels of compassion from him, how dwelleth the love of God in him?"

Love gladly suffereth for one whom it loveth. It joys to suffer in proof of its love. Toil ceaseth to be toil; it is joy, when it is to show its love. Love sweetens all bitter things, softens all hard words, smooths all which is toilsome, makes fasting a feast; self-denial for Christ's poor, a joy; labour, rest; and rest out of God, weariness; waking early with Christ, refreshment. Bodily pain is hallowed to it by His Cross, and it receives each throb or pang from its loving Father's Hand, as distilling like the dew upon it from that precious Cup, which He for our sakes gave to His Well Beloved Son.

Love hath no other will than that of what it loves. The very heathen said that, "Friendship is to will and not to will the same things." How much more, when the Will of God is nothing out of Himself! The Will of God is not, as man's will may be, according to his own private wishes, or tastes. The Will of God is the Eternal Wisdom of God, ordering what will bring about the ends of His All-perfect Love. "If ye love Me," saith our Blessed Lord, "keep My Commandments." Through love we have grace to keep His Commandments; and through keeping His Commandments, He giveth increase of grace and love. For He giveth a fuller

measure of His Presence. “‘He that hath My Commandments, and keepeth them,’ hath,” saith a father,<sup>m</sup> “in memory, and keepeth in life; hath in words, and keepeth in works; hath by hearing, and keepeth by doing; hath by doing, and keepeth by persevering; ‘he it is who loveth ME, and he who loveth ME shall be loved of My Father, and I will love him and will manifest Myself to him.’” He Who giveth us the love to obey Him, doth on our free obedience give us yet more love. He loveth us, so as to give us greater gifts of grace, yea, so as to give us that greater gift of love; and in love He will discover Himself to the soul, in a way which words cannot utter, but which the soul tastes, and which gives it a knowledge of Himself which passeth knowledge, and lights up the soul with an unearthly brightness, and it knows that it loves, and loving, knows that it is beloved; (for “we love God because He first loved us”), and grows in care and zeal and watchful diligence to please God Who loves it.

Love is jealous for the honour of one it loves; it will not bear a slight; it is eager to set those right who speak amiss. Zeal for the honour of God which longs that none should dishonor Him, none blaspheme His Name; which feels tenderly any irreverence or slight to Him, is a good sign of love; if we are but first zealous with ourselves, that we ourselves do, or occasion Him no dishonour.

Love which is deeply fixed on one object, valueth not, for love of what it loves, any outward things which others prize. Nay, it loves more deeply in poverty of all things, than in abundance, in dis-

<sup>m</sup> S. Aug. Hom. on S. John. 75. n. 5. p. 807. Oxf. Tr.

honour than in praise, because then it is the more assured, that it loves for the sake of the object of its love alone. He who loveth God for Himself, loveth Him the more, as he is bared of all, and nothing is left him but his God. He feareth to keep things about him, which may take off his thoughts from God; sits loose to the things of the world, or uses them only that through the Mammon of unrighteousness given to His poor, he may the more gain the love of God; he feareth nothing but what may lessen the love of God, desireth nothing but what may gain him more love; valueth no praise of man, unless it cometh from the love of God, or issueth to His Glory. It counteth all things loss, so that it may win Christ.

To mention but one more token of love. Love does all things for his sake whom it loves; it counts nothing too little, nothing too great to do for love. Nothing so purifies the thoughts, heightens the acts, shuts out self, admits God, as, in all things, little or great, to look to JESUS. Look to Him, when ye can, as ye begin to act, or converse, or labour; and then desire to speak or to be silent, as He would have you; to say this word, or leave that unsaid; to do this, or leave that undone; to shape your words, as if He were present, and He *will* be present, not in Body, but in Spirit, not by your side, but in your soul, so that of you too, in your measure, it may be said: "It is not ye who speak, but the Spirit of your Father Which dwelleth in you," "He hath wrought all our works in us."

Faint not, any who would love Jesus, if ye find yourselves yet far short of what He Himself Who is

Love saith of the love of Him. Perfect love is Heaven. When ye are perfected in love, your work on earth is done. There is no short road to Heaven or to love. Do what in thee lies by the grace of God, and He will lead thee from strength to strength, and grace to grace, and love to love.

Be diligent by His Grace to do no wilful sin; for sin, wilfully done, kills the soul, and casts out of it the love of God.

Seek to love nothing out of God. God re-makes a broken heart and fills it with love. He cannot fill a divided heart.

Think often, as thou canst, of God. For how canst thou know or love God, if thou fillest thy mind with thoughts of all things under the sun and thy thoughts wander to the ends of the earth, and thou gatherest them not unto God? Nothing, (except wilful sin,) so keepeth men torpid and lukewarm and holdeth them back from any higher fervour of love, as the being scattered among things of sense, and being taken up with them away from God.

Bring all things, as thou mayest, nigh to God; let not them hurry thee away from Him.

Be not held back by any thought of unworthiness or by failures, from the child-like love of God. When we were dead in trespasses and sins, Christ died for us; when we were afar off, Christ recalled us; when lost, Christ sought us; how much more may we reverently love Him, and hope that we are loved by Him, when He has found us, and we, amid whatever frailties, would love Him by Whom we have been loved!

Be diligent, after thy power, to do deeds of love.

Think nothing too little, nothing too low, to do lovingly for the sake of God. Bear with infirmities, ungentle tempers, contradictions; visit, if thou mayest, the sick; relieve the poor; forego thyself and thine own ways for love; and He Whom in them thou lovest, to Whom in them thou ministerest, will own thy love, and will pour His own love into thee. "The love of God," says a holy man,<sup>a</sup> "produceth the love of our neighbour and kindleth it;" the love of our neighbour winneth the love of God.

Where, above all, shouldest thou seek for His love, but in the Feast of His Love? Without It, ye cannot have any true love. In It, JESUS willet to come to thee, to dwell in thee, to abide in thee. Canst thou be warm, if thou keep away from the sun or the fire? Canst thou have any fire of love, if thou keep away from JESUS? or canst thou think to find Him, if thou seek Him not where He is to be found? He has said: "Except ye eat the Flesh of the Son of Man and drink His Blood, ye have no life in you." How should ye have life, if ye have not Him Who is Life? How should ye have Him, if ye refuse to come to Him? Come to Him, longing for His Love; come to Him that He may come to you; pray Him to enter into your soul and pour His Love into you, and He will come, and, if you forsake Him not, will dwell in you everlastingly.

"Charity never faileth." How then is all lost, which tendeth not to love! O abyss of love, torrent of pleasure, life of them that believe, paradise of delights, comfort of our pilgrimage, reward of the blessed, root of all good, strength in all strife, rest in

<sup>a</sup> S. Laur. Justin. l. c. c. 14.

all weariness! Why will ye "labour for that which is not bread," and toil for that which satisfieth not; why seek-for pleasures which perish in the grasp, and when tasted, become bitterness; why heap up things ye must part with, or why love vanities, when ye have before you love which cannot weary, cannot sate, cannot change, cannot fail; for Love is the Essence, the Bliss, the Being, the Glory of God; and this may be yours for evermore. God in Whom are all things, Who is All-Goodness, willeth that ye love Him eternally, and be eternally filled with His Love, and enter into His Joy, the Joy of the Everlasting Father in His Co-Equal Son through the Spirit, of Both Proceeding, the Bond of Both, and that ye should rest in the Bosom of His Love, and His Love rest upon you and fill you for ever. Will ye not then cast out now, for these few years, what hinders in you the Love of God, that ye may have for ever His Love which passeth all understanding, and be one with God, being filled with the Love of God Who is Love?

## SERMON IV.

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### HUMILITY.

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FEAST OF ST. BARTHOLOMEW.

ST. LUKE xxii. 26, 27.

*“He that is greatest among you, let him be as the younger, and he that is chief as he that doth serve. I am among you as he that serveth.”*

HIDDEN indeed are the saints of God. After the pattern of our Blessed Lord Himself, God willed that little should be known of those who are nearest to Him. Of our Lord Himself, St. John says that “if the many things which He did should be written every one, I suppose that even the world itself could not contain the books which should be written.” Wherein, in part, he spoke after the manner of men, to express by strong words the number of our Lord’s acts of mercy and greatness and love. But if we think of His Divine mercy and greatness and love itself, the words are far too poor. For to speak of



His Divine goodness and love surpasses not only all the tongues of men in all ages, but of all the orders of Angels. It will fill not the world only, but Eternity. Then will the Angels know fully what now "they desire to look into." Then will each of the redeemed know the mystery of the Redemption, and the exceeding love of "God manifest in the Flesh," "which passeth knowledge." Then from all, men and Angels and Archangels, Cherubim and Seraphim, will the praise of our Redeeming Lord, the King of Glory, echo on through all created space. It will fill all; but it will not reach His Fullness. For His Love and Wisdom are infinite as Himself.

And yet of His works and words of love, while yet in the Flesh, how few have been related. How do we wish to know something of His sacred Childhood! How, of the thirty years, of which we know only that He taught the Doctors in the Temple, and was subject to His parents, and was a Carpenter! How should we long to know the "gracious words which proceeded out of His Mouth" at Nazareth, or those which Mary, who sate at His Feet, heard; or of those forty days when, after His Resurrection, He spoke "of the things pertaining to the kingdom of God."

We turn, again and again, with kindling love, to those deep words and long discourses of love which St. John records just before His Passion. How often have we mourned, that they were so soon ended! And since such was one discourse, which occupies not one short hour, what must all those many, many words have been, which for the three years and a

\* Acts i. 3.

half of His Ministry, He spake! How would we reverently approach, if we might, those Divine thoughts of love, when He wept near the grave of Lazarus, or when He "was moved with compassion on the multitudes because they fainted and were scattered abroad, as sheep having no shepherd." What His thoughts were, in His Mysterious Agony and at His Crucifixion, when in His outstretched Arms He embraced the whole world in His love, and knew how the price of His Blood would be wasted in many who were called by His Name, and through what perils of death He would lead many whom He yet should save, none but Himself could tell. They embraced the whole time and eternity of the whole human race. The seven words which He *did* utter on the Cross have been the food of devout minds, ever since He spake them. And yet how little do we know of the full meaning of what He did say; how little do we know of what He said at all! How often is all which is said of them but faint guesses at the full meaning of His Words, each explaining but a little, or only one side or aspect, of what He said. And how have the Evangelists been guided to record oftentimes the same words and deeds only, sometimes teaching us by the very way in which each relates them, yet seeming to tell us the less of Him, because they tell the same things. So did He in His Glory complete the humility of His lowliness. He offered Himself to reproaches; He forbade His good deeds from being known. He hid Himself from being made a King; He went forth to them to be crucified. And now, few of His deeds or words are told; and of His inward thoughts scarce anything

by Himself, save that for us He tells us, "My meat is to do the Will of Him that sent Me," and that slight glimpse into His sufferings, "My soul is exceeding sorrowful even unto death." What is told too, is told in such simple form. Like Himself, it wins those who have hearts to receive it, and draws and binds and glues them to Him, that they cleave for ever to Him; but to the wise in their own conceits, it is still a stone of stumbling and rock of offence.

As with the Master, so, in their degree, is it with the disciples. Of most, we know almost nothing. The few of whom we hear something, mostly come out before us, for a little while, and then vanish out of our sight. St. John, the beloved disciple, tells us that His Master loved him. But after the Ascension of our Lord, we hear only that he had part in one miracle wrought, but not what part he had; that the High Priest marvelled at his and Peter's boldness, but we are not told one word which he spake; only, that he was an unlearned and ignorant man; and then he is hidden from our eyes, until, after sixty years, we find him in the Isle of Patmos exhorting the Churches which he had founded, and beholding the visions of God. And then, (strange close of an Apostle's life!) we hear that he was reserved for extreme weakness, so that he could only say, "little children, love one another," and his own flock were wearied by the sameness of *his* teaching, who had seen the heavens opened, and our Lord in glory, and had gazed above Cherubim and Seraphim, to the throne of God, and thence told us, "In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God,

and the Word was God." And then when they told him their weariness, he humbly told them that, "perfect love is the whole of man."

We hear of the wisdom and spirit with which St. Stephen spake, but none of his words, save those which brought on his death. St. Peter appears at the beginning of the Acts, St. Paul at their close. For twenty-two years, the sacred history tells us of no act of St. Peter. We hear of him last, declaring at the Council, how God made choice of him, that the Gentiles should hear, by his mouth, the word of the Gospel and believe. He tells how he believes, not that the Gentiles only should be saved, but that "through the grace of the Lord Jesus Christ *we* shall be saved even as they," giving the first place to those whom God had converted through him. And then he gives place to the Apostle, who was Bishop at Jerusalem. St. Paul's history is closed with the account how ill the Jews received him, and the brief words, "he dwelt two years in his own hired house and received all that came in unto him." He had sped like lightning through all lands, preaching, working miracles, disputing with the wise of this world, looked upon as a God for his eloquence in Asia, and for his miracle at Malta; and Holy Scripture closes this account, not with his martyrdom, or his hearing before the Emperor of the world, but in his hired lodgings, speaking of Jesus to those who came to ask him. How should we long to hear him, as he stood alone before the Emperor Nero! All forsook him, as our Lord was forsaken by His disciples. "No man," he says,<sup>b</sup> "stood with me."

<sup>b</sup> 2 Tim. iv. 16, 17.

“But the Lord stood with me and strengthened me, that by me the preaching might be fully known and all the Gentiles might hear.” This hour he had looked on to; this had been foretold him, “Thou must bear witness of Me at Rome;” then, probably, he converted even those of the very household of the Emperor; this was the end of years of prison and of suffering; and all which God bids him tell us of it is, “The Lord stood with me and strengthened me.”

Take again the Apostle of this day.<sup>c</sup> Of others we hear little; of him we do not know who he is. He seems to be the same as Nathanael to whom our Lord gave that great praise, “Behold an Israelite indeed,” one worthy of the name of the people of God, one who was “a prince with God,” “in whom is no guile.” Yet we do not know *with authority* whether he whom Jesus so praised was admitted to be one of His Apostles; and so, we know not certainly, whether St. Bartholomew, though one of the twelve, was so honoured by his Lord. Our Lord promised to St. Philip and Nathanael, “Hereafter ye shall see Heaven open, and the Angels of God ascending and descending upon the Son of man.” Yet *when* they saw this, we are not told; whence some have thought that our Lord meant only that they should spiritually see, that He was the Son of God, Whom Angels served. And so, as to his close. It is certain that he preached the Gospel in India. It is said that he preached in Lycaonia, and suffered martyrdom in Armenia, countries as far apart as the whole of our Europe. We know that he was one of “the noble army of martyrs;” but by what death he glorified

<sup>c</sup> Preached on the Feast of S. Bartholomew.

God, whether flayed alive, or crucified, or both, what torments he endured for and with Christ, that he might be glorified with Him, we know not.

My brethren, it may well shame us, to turn from the thought of Him, who left us "an example that we should follow His steps," and from those who did so follow them, to our petty trials in this day. We might almost be ashamed to have to learn humility from such examples as these. Yet there is but one path to Heaven; one way, but with different tracks; one ascent, though with different heights; one fight with our fallen nature, and one victory through our One Lord Who "instrengtheneth" us, though the amount of victory is manifold; one glory of the grace of God, although in Eternity "star" shall "differ from star in glory."

And the first step on this road is humility. Our Lord first descended, then ascended. First He came down and took our nature; then He descended lower to the shame of the Cross, and so He placed our nature at the Right Hand of God. We fell through pride, lifting up ourselves to "be<sup>d</sup> as God;" we must rise by humility, lowering ourselves that God may raise us up. One law there is. Wouldest thou become great in God's Eyes, be little in thine own. Wouldest thou enter the Kingdom of Heaven, "thou must be converted," our Lord says, "and become a little child." Wouldest thou be exalted there, and have there more of the sight of God and the love of God, and the fulness of God, "take the lowest place" here.

But "how is it possible," one may say, "how can it be true? God has kept me from great sins; He

<sup>d</sup> Gen. iii. 5.

has fenced me from great temptations. 'By the grace of God I am what I am.' But would it be thankful to the grace of God, would it be honest, would it be real, to own myself less than those who have openly fallen from God's grace?" My brethren, well is it, if any man from the heart says, "By the grace of God, I am what I am." Well is it, if any, by the grace of God, have been kept from great sins, not of the body only, but of the soul also. For the sin of the fallen Angels was a spiritual sin only. Through spiritual sins, envy and pride, the Pharisees delivered our Lord to be put to death. Through anger and unbelief, His own citizens would have "cast Him headlong." Through "love" of "man's praise" or vanity, the Chief Priests and Scribes "could not believe in Him." Spiritual sin alone is enough to destroy the soul, although in fact, since "God resisteth the proud," the proud mostly fall even into disgraceful sins. God, even, lets them so fall, that their eyes may be opened to see their own misery, which before were closed up with pride.

Yet it must be true, that "he that is greatest, must be as the least;" for our Lord, the Truth, has said it. And this not in outward act only. Outward acts of humility help much to make us humble. Yet the outward acts alone would be the body without the soul, a slavish service, or hypocrisy. It must be true that we are in lowliness to "esteem others better than ourselves," since God the Holy Ghost has so taught us.

For most of us, such as we are, this might be easy enough. It might seem no great thing to own our-

selves "miserable sinners", when we know that we are such, or to think that others are not so great sinners as we. But so, I believe, it is with those who have great graces of God. To prefer others, is not with them matter of understanding, but of grace. Such know the greatness of the grace of God towards them; they know His Gifts and their own sins, negligences, short-comings, failure to that grace. What good there is in themselves, they know to be God's work. In themselves they see God's good and their own evil. In others they close their eyes to evil which it is not a duty to see, and see only whatever grace there is. And so the grace of God becomes a sort of nature to them. They know that any good they have, although *in* them, is the gift and grace of God. But the evil which remains is too truly their own. We know not, either in evil or in good, what we are in this life. "That Day shall declare it, which shall try every man's work, of what sort it is." And so, by a blessed blindness, while they forget their own good and see the grace of God in others, they readily believe that any one, (not openly God's enemy) is better than themselves, and that even those, now God's enemies, may, through His converting grace, and intenser love, become more His friends than they.

There is so much of good, so much which is touching and lovely, in those who are most outcast from the world, so much which, by the grace of God, may yet shine in them with His lustre for ever, that it seems to be no hard thing for those who have much of His grace, to think that, as to these poor outcasts too, "the last may be first, the first last." Thus a



holy and humble man said, "If<sup>e</sup> Christ had loaded any wicked man whatever with the same mercy which He has shown to me, I suppose that he would have been much more grateful than I." And, "Every man is what he is in the sight of God. Not from the opinion of men who are often deceived, but from the judgment of God, is the state of each to be accounted. But who knows what is his own, what another's state before God? Who knows how God looks on him and on another? Who knows that another is fallen, himself upright, when in a moment their state might be changed, and he who stood might fall, and he who was fallen might rise again to great grace? If we know not these things, on which man's greatness depends, well may we account ourselves least of all, and set ourselves in the lowest place."

And for us, my brethren, humility is the beginning of all solid good and of every grace. It opens the heart for them, and guards them, where God has given them. Humility scoops away the barren sand of our self-conceit, that so our foundation may rest solidly upon the Rock which is Christ. Then may the building which we raise, reach to Heaven by love; for it cannot fall, being founded on the Rock.

Of humility there are many steps. Lay the first solidly, and God will lead thee onward. The first is to know seriously, truly, sincerely, thine own nothingness. Many will confess, in words, that they are nothing; but they neither believe themselves, nor wish to be believed of others. They say that they are miserable sinners. It is true and right. We all are.

<sup>e</sup> S. Francis of Assis. in Bonav. Vit. ej. c. 6.

We confess it daily ; and we must not confess mere words, nor lie to God. But it is one thing to own that we are all by nature sinners, that we have come short of the glory of God ; that we and our neighbours cannot stand in God's sight. Very different is it, to be ready to own and that others should believe, that thou thyself art a sinner. If men really believed this of themselves, would they be so vexed that others saw some fault in them ? would they even be so vexed themselves, at their own failures ? If we felt ourselves really helpless, should we be so surprised and annoyed that we stumbled ? I mean not in the greater sins. Those who are in the grace of God may be kept from these. But were it not for pride, we should grieve for, not be annoyed by, our own failures or infirmities, from which man, in this imperfect state, can scarcely be free. Still less would people try to hide such faults from others, or excuse themselves so eagerly ! And yet is it not an every day thing to hide a negligence or carelessness by a lie ? If a person has done a vain thing and is charged with it, will he not lie to excuse it ? Lovely indeed must humility be, since they who have it not, are so ashamed of not being humble, that they will sin to hide it. Still stranger is the perverseness that people will accuse themselves, in order that they may not be believed. They will call themselves sinners, generally, or they will own lighter sins in themselves, as that they are quick-tempered, or hasty, but they will be angry if they are taken at their word. They accuse themselves, in order that others may excuse them. They own the truth of themselves, that others may disown it to them, and cast dust in their eyes.

How does it startle them, if their own words be echoed to them, as seriously true! "O ye sons of men, how long will ye love vanity and seek after leasing?" What nothings will men own of themselves! They will own that they are liable to be overtaken by faults which, in man's sight, have something noble mixed in them, or clever, or at least is not despised. But to own that they are, in any measure, what man despises, or that God hates what they are, how will they shrink from it! How common is it, (ye know yourselves) to give soft names (misfortune or the like) to open deadly sin! And yet those really in the grace of God, have seen that they had in themselves the germs of all the deadly sins. They have felt in themselves, that were the grace of God withdrawn, they might fall into any sin. "Thou knowest, Lord," says one,<sup>f</sup> "that there is no sin which man ever did, which another man might not do, if his Creator, by Whom man was made, were wanting to him."

Well might men shrink from the truth, if it thereby ceased to be truth. But the truth is as surely truth, as God is God. To what end to draw a veil over your eyes, since the Day of Judgment is near at hand, when every secret thing shall be revealed? "Own<sup>e</sup> and remember thy evil now, and God will forget it; forget thy good, and God will remember it."

This, then, let us learn, first to know, that we are by nature nothing, that through our own fault (not of our nature, for God's grace would have been sufficient for us) we became worse than nothing. It is to rob God, to take anything to ourselves, any power

<sup>f</sup> Solil. i. 14. ap. S. Aug.

<sup>e</sup> S. Chrys. on S. Matt. Pt. i.

of nature, any strength, understanding, memory, quickness, knowledge, taste, art, any gifts of body, or mind, or estate.

What is thy body? "Dust thou art and unto dust shalt thou return." How then should "earth and ashes" be "proud?" What thy mind? The gift of God, of which He can deprive thee at once, destroy thy memory, darken thy understanding, take from thee clearness of mind, or words to utter it. What thy soul? Precious indeed above all price, infinite in value, since it is the price of the Blood of Christ! If it is in grace, beautiful is it above all created beauty, since it partakes of the Brightness and Glory and Image of God! But what of this is thine own? Thy sins, by which, in whatever degree, thou hast marred the work of God in thee, or by which the Brightness of God's grace is darkened, or hidden, or dulled in thee! All else is the work of God. Now, think in thyself, how often thou hast, at least, in thy younger years, neglected the Voice of God, done what thou oughtest not, not done what thou oughtest. Nay, if thou thinkest *now*, that thou fully obeyest the Voice of God, and doest all which His Grace would enable thee to do, it shows this only, that thou knowest not, how powerful, gentle, tender, swift, mysterious, is the Grace of God. It comes, it speaks; if thou have not hearkened, it is gone. If thou listen to thine own will, thine own pleasure, thine own pride, or vanity, it is, for the time, drowned.

What wouldest thou think of thyself, if this world's glories and greatness had been offered thee for some short toil, some self-denial, abstaining from some

pleasure, rising early, and seeking the Love of Him Who could give it thee ? Or what if thou mightest have had strong powers of mind, gifts of speech, skill, invention, memory, the wisdom of Solomon, if thou wouldest have been at pains with thyself ? What wouldest thou think, if thou hadst put these things aside, not as our Lord did the riches of the world and the glories of them, not because thou mightest be more easily saved, in a lowly place, but through thine own fault ?

What, again, if thou hadst treated with shameful thanklessness, forgotten, insulted Him Who, in love for thee, offered thee these things. Surely thou wouldest despise thyself, wouldest be indignant with thyself, thou wouldest not boast thyself of any of the poor things thou hast ; the thought of thy loss would come before thee, and thou wouldest be dumb with shame ! And what if others praised thee for what thou hast, wouldest thou have pleasure in it, or be proud of it, or wouldest thou not think with grief and shame of what thou hadst wasted ? But what were all the riches and glories of the world to the least possession of the grace of God ? What to be the very first in this world, to being the very last of those who for ever see God, know God, love God, are beloved by God ?

What any of us have wasted by our pride, our negligences, our sins, has been, if, by God's mercy, we are saved at last, or unless, by His grace and greater diligence, we yet recover it, that degree of the power of loving God, and being beloved by God. We have wasted His goodness, His grace, His love towards us, the price of the Blood of Christ, our

Lord and God. And what knowest thou whether any other in the whole world have wasted more? It may be that what others think well of thee for, are rather God's natural gifts, than graces won by the grace of God. It is no great thing to be easy tempered, if God made us so. It *is* a great thing, by the grace of God, to subdue a quick, angry temper, if it be the trial which God appointed us. And what knowest thou of the hidden graces of others? or with what toil, by God's grace, they gained what to thee seems so imperfect? There is so much imperfection in the good, so much good in all who have not wholly shut out the grace of God, that it seems no hard thing to suppose that any may be better than we; no hard thing, if we but know ourselves, our own unfaithfulness to the grace of our God, our abuse of His grace. But this we know that if we have all gifts, without love, it profits us nothing; if we could have all without humility, it would be worse to us than if we had them not. For if we abuse the gifts of God to pride, or vanity, or to exalt ourselves, better for us that we had them not! The building not founded through humility on the Rock, the higher it is, the more heavily it will fall. The Publican went down to his house more in God's favour than the Pharisee.

What our Lord came, above all things, to teach us, what He taught us, what He teaches us now, by His very Being as Man, what He preached in act from His Birth in the manger to His Death, bared of all and in shame, upon the Cross, what He made the first step to His Apostles who were filled with the Holy Ghost, to "become as little children," must

be needful for us. Such rules as these may be useful. They have been tried.

Know thyself. Pray God to show thee thyself. Bear in God's light to see thyself, bared of all outward advantages, what thou thyself hast made thyself, what thou hast been, what thou art. By God's grace, the sight will never again let thee be proud.

Keep ever present with thee the knowledge of thine own infirmity.

Never seek praise, nor speak of any good in thee, except for some good end, nor say, what may draw out praise. Yea, rather if it be useful to speak of thine own experience, it is best mostly to hide, in some true way, that it is thine own.

Do not even blame thyself, if it makes others think thee humble.

Mistrust thyself in everything, and in the very least things, seek, whenever thou canst remember it, the help of God.

Be afraid of the praise of others. If there be good in thee, own it, at least, in thy heart, to be God's, and think of thy evil and thy sins.

Take patiently any humiliation from others. It is a precious gift of God. "Humiliation is the way to humility, as patience to peace, reading to knowledge." If thou endurest not to be humbled, thou canst not be humble.

In all things, humble thyself under the Hand of God. Take all things, through whomsoever they come, from Him.

Do not excuse thyself, if blamed, unless respect or love, or the cause of truth and of God require it. It is of more value to thee to detect one grain of

fault in thyself, than to show to another that thou deservest not, as it were, a hundred weight of blame.

Be not careful to conceal any ignorance or fault in thee, unless it would hurt another to know that thou hast it.

Do willingly humble offices, humbly.

Give way to all, in all things in which thou mayest.

It is but for a short time, at the longest. Seek here to be humble with the humble JESUS, and He will exalt thee. As thou becomest, by His grace, lowly here, thou shalt be exalted there. *There*, is greatness, which none envies ; treasures, of which thou wilt deprive none ; joys, in which all will joy with thee. There, not thine own lips or thine own thoughts, but thy Saviour will praise thee. Seek humility, and thou wilt find it ; and when thou hast found it, thou wilt love it, and by God's grace, wilt not part with it : with it, thou canst not perish. Yea, thou wilt reign for ever with JESUS, Who was humbled for thee, and with the choirs in the heavenly dwellings. For there too, thou wilt be humble, not, as now, in the need of all things, but in the possession of all things, in glory, and honour, and power, and beauty, and knowledge, and wisdom, of which we have but the faintest shadow here ; and all from God and in God. For there, if thou attain, thou shalt cast thy crown before the throne, saying, " Thou art worthy, O Lord, to receive glory, and honour, and power ;" and giving back all to God, thou shalt receive all from God, in bliss everlasting, through His Merits, Who humbled Himself to thee, that thou, being humbled with Him here, shouldest enter into His Glory and His Joy.



## SERMON V.

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PATIENCE.  
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SECOND SUNDAY AFTER EASTER.

1 ST. PETER ii. 22.

*“ Even hereunto were ye called: because Christ also suffered for us leaving us an example, that ye should follow His steps.”*

PATIENCE is the endurance of any evil, out of the love of God, as the will of God. There is nothing too little, in which to approve ourselves to God; nothing too little, in which, without God, we should not fail; nothing too great, which, with the help of God, we may not endure. The offices of patience are as varied as the ills of this life. We have need of it with ourselves and with others; with those below and those above us, and with our own equals; with those who love us and those who love us not; for the greatest things and for the least; against sudden inroads of trouble, and under our daily bur-

dens; disappointments as to the weather or the breaking of the heart; in the weariness of the body, or the wearing of the soul; in our own failure of duty, or others' failure towards us; in every day wants, or in the aching of sickness or the decay of age; in disappointment, bereavement, losses, injuries, reproaches; in heaviness of the heart or its sickness amid delayed hopes, or the weight of this body of death, from which we would be free, that we might have no more struggle with sin within, or temptation without, but attain to our blessed and everlasting peace in our rest in God. In all these things, from childhood's little troubles, to the martyr's sufferings, patience is the grace of God, whereby we endure evil for the love of God, and keep ourselves still and motionless, that we offend not God.

All other virtues and graces have need of patience to perfect or to secure them. Patience interposes herself and receives and stops every dart which the Evil one aims at them. "Patience<sup>a</sup> is the root and guardian of all virtue;" impatience is the enemy of all. Impatience disquiets the soul, makes her weary of conflict, ready to lay aside her armour and to leave difficult duty. Impatience, by troubling the smooth mirror of the soul, hinders her from reflecting the Face of God; by its din, it hinders her from hearing the voice of God. It makes the soul outrun, or fall short of, the will of God. Impatience listens to nothing, heeds nothing, fears nothing, hopes nothing, judges aright of nothing, perseveres in nothing except in restlessness. Impatience is a burden to

<sup>a</sup> S. Greg. Hom. 35. in Evang.

itself, distrusts man, rebels against God. It shakes every virtue, and enters into almost every sin. It casts aside every remedy for itself or for any other fault. Impatience made Cain a murderer, and Absalom a parricide,<sup>b</sup> and Judas a Deicide. Impatience, not waiting for God, turns even goods into evils. Jeroboam waited not for the goods which God had promised him ; he forfeited them, destroyed his own house which he wished to raise, and left of his ambition no memorial save that it was he “ who<sup>c</sup> did sin and who made Israel to sin.”

The sins of the Jews in the wilderness, (our examples,) whence sprang they, but from impatience of hunger and thirst, or of the sameness of the food God gave them, or of Moses delaying in the Mount, when they “ made gods to go before them into Egypt,” whence God had redeemed them ? It might seem a natural thing, that impatience should be the groundwork of anger ; but strange it is, that even deadly indulgence in miserable pleasure should be the fruit of impatience.

How does it shake faith to be impatient of evils, either in the world, or in the Church, or those which befall a person’s own self ! How does impatience with others’ defects chill love, or impatience with even our own failings and short-comings extinguish hope ! To be impatient at blame is a blight to humility ; at contradiction, destroys meekness ; at injuries, quenches long-suffering ; at sharp words, mars gentleness ; at having one’s own will crossed, obedience. Impatience at doing the same things again and again, hinders perseverance ; impatience

<sup>b</sup> 2 Sam. xvii. 1—4.

<sup>c</sup> 1 Kings xiv. 16.

of bodily wants, surprises people into intemperance, or leads them to deceive, lie, steal.

“In patience” our Blessed Lord tells us, “possess ye your souls.” By patience, we have the keeping of our own souls; we command ourselves, and our passions are subdued to us; and “commanding<sup>d</sup> ourselves, we begin to possess that which we are.” What is to possess a thing, but to have entire command over it, that we may do with it what we will? What, then, is to “possess the soul,” but to be lord over all its powers, motions, emotions, and by the grace of God, to control and direct them, according to the will of God? Whence even the world calls a man “self-possessed,” who cannot be thrown off his guard, but, gathered up within himself, and immovable, has a clear, steady command of all the powers of his mind. He is spiritually “self-possessed,” who, by the grace of God so keeps himself, that “no<sup>e</sup> vehemence of delight masters him, no tribulation wears him out, no sudden temptation carries him away, no unworthy affection draws him down from God.”

Patience, then, is the guardian of faith, the fence of love, the strength of hope, the parent of peace. Patience protects humility, keeps meekness, is the soul of long-suffering, guides gentleness, strengthens perseverance. Patience “bridleth<sup>f</sup> the tongue, restraineth the hand, ruleth the flesh, preserveth the spirit, tramples on temptations, drives away offences; breaks the force of passion, calms the violence of pride, quenches the fire of variance,” bids, in its

<sup>d</sup> S. Greg. l. c.     • Paradise of the Christian Soul, P. iv. p. 61.

<sup>f</sup> See Tert. on Patience, c. xv. p. 346. Oxf. Tr. S. Cyprian on Patience, § 14. p. 262. Oxf. Tr.

Lord's Name, wind and storm "be still; and there is a great calm."

Patience makes the soul to be of one mind with God, and sweetens all the ills of life. It casts the light of Heaven upon them, and transforms them into goods. It makes the bitter waters sweet; the barren and dry land fruitful. Desolation it makes loneliness with God; the parching of sickness to be the fire of His Love; weakness to be His Strength; wounds to be health; emptiness of all things to have all things from Him; poverty to be true riches; His deserved punishments to be His rainbow of mercy; death to be His Life.

Great must be the blessing of evil, since it is so widely spread in the works of a good God. Deep must the blessing of evil be, since God vouchsafed it so largely to those whom He made most like to His own Son in the flesh. Very necessary must evil be to us, since none, fence themselves as they may from it, can escape it. None *do*, in any great measure, escape it, save those who, resisting God, are at length abandoned by God, and, forsaking Him and forsaken by Him, are left unvisited by Him in His Mercy, until they have treasured up His wrath to the uttermost. So strongly is this stamped upon our fallen nature, that even the heathen<sup>s</sup> felt that unmingled

<sup>s</sup> "I wish both for myself and for those for whom I care, that sometimes we may succeed, sometimes fail; and so pass through life, rather than succeed in all things. For never did I hear of any one, who succeeded in all things, and did not at last end ill, utterly perishing." Amasis to Polycrates in Herod. iii. 40. see iii. 41—43. 125. and of Cræsus i. 34. "M. Furius Camillus is said to have prayed, that if his own fortune and that of the Roman

prosperity was the herald of woe to come. Absence of chastisement or trial, the fulness of the world's prosperity, are the worst outward tokens of man's salvation. Blow upon blow, and wound upon wound, are signs of His Mercy.

Blessed are ye then, my poorer brethren, if ye know your own blessedness, that God has allotted to you a larger portion of the hardships of this life. Far easier and safer and humbler is your lot, to endure the daily trials of this life, than for us to find out self-denial for ourselves. In this too, "blessed are" ye "poor, for yours is the kingdom of Heaven." A ready road and straight path have ye to Heaven, if, for the love of God, ye endure patiently the ills which God appoints you, bless Him in them and for them, and let not yourselves be turned to the right hand or the left, nor seek to remove them by doing what will displease God.

Blessed indeed, must patient suffering be, since it was the portion of the Son of God. "Even hereunto," to suffer patiently, "were ye called," because "Christ also suffered for us, leaving us an example, that we should follow His steps." How must not that be the way of salvation, which He, the Saviour, trod and endured for us? how not hallowing to us, which He has hallowed for us, by undergoing it? how should it not be the path to Heaven, which He people seemed to any of the gods or men too great, he might abate this displeasure by his own private trouble rather than by the least public evil of the Roman people." Liv. v. 21. "Q. Fabius Max. said that he feared fortune itself, lest it should seem to any of the gods, to have been too great towards him, and more constant than was consistent with the things of man." Ib. x. 23. See further Valck. ad Herod. iii. 40.

has tracked for us with His own Blood? Glorious is it, for the soldier to bear the ensigns of the Captain of his salvation. Glorious for the Christian to bear the marks of His Lord. What more blessed for the bride, than to be likened to the Bridegroom? what for the members than to be likened to the Thorn-crowned Head? His Sufferings have even now passed anew before our eyes. All the Sufferings of His Life were gathered before us in His Death. What of bodily suffering was missing, when every spot in His holy tender frame was rent with scourges, when limb was disjoined from limb,<sup>h</sup> every sense racked with agony, when from the thorn-encompassed Head, in unrest upon the hard Cross, to the pierced Feet, all was "wounds and bruises and putrifying sores?" What suffering was spared, when the ears were sated with blasphemies, the heart betrayed, denied, forsaken; the Soul seemed to be forsaken of the Father; and the consolations of the Divine Nature, wherewith It was united, were denied to It? What when man disowned his Redeemer, and accused the Holy One as blaspheming Him Whose Will He came to do; and the Father, for the time, owned Him not? And now how is it? The scars of His nailed Hands and wounded Feet, and pierced Side remain, but in what glory! He rose again, a spiritual Body, yet with the tokens of His Passion. Then He showed Himself to His Disciples, to be seen, touched, felt. With that same Body, He ascended into Heaven. In that same Body, He there "liveth to make intercession for us." These glorious Wounds, received for us, plead for us with the Father night and day, to turn

<sup>h</sup> Ps. xxii. 14.

away His wrath from us. And how? The beloved Disciple saw Him as man *could* see Him, all-radiant with glory, and “fell<sup>1</sup> at His Feet, as dead.” There, in the brightness of the Godhead, streaming with the unspeakable glory of the Godhead, transparent, radiant, brilliant, beaming above the piercing dazzling rays of the sun, are those Ever-blessed Wounds, the memorials of His Passion, the ensigns of His Victory. Brighter are they than all created brightness; for their brightness is the glory of the love of God. Such is the reward of Suffering; such the pattern ye, in your measure are to follow; such the image to which we are to be conformed, of patient suffering here, and everlasting reward; for “if we suffer with Him, we shall also be glorified together.”

But how, ye will say, can we be made like unto JESUS? how can our poor irksome sufferings, of cold or hunger, or poor fare, or aching of limbs, or stiffness of our joints, or sleeplessness, or weariness, how can they be hallowed to us, how can they be borne, so as to make us like our Lord? First, many of these sufferings our good Lord took in order to hallow them for us, to give them a worth and a joy, painful as they are, because they were His. Was He not weary by the well, and a hungred after His temptation, and were not His Knees stiffened on the Cross, and His limbs out of joint? Was He not chilled with the dew of Heaven as He passed whole nights on the mountain or in the garden in prayer for us? and was not HE, Who feeds all creation, fed by the barley-loaves, the gift of His creatures to His poverty?

<sup>1</sup> Rev. i. 17.



But then, how did He hallow them ? By enduring them as the will of God. “ My meat is to do the will of Him that sent ME.” He “ became obedient unto death, and that the death of the Cross.”

And so for us. It is matter of faith, that everything, what seems to us the greatest and the least, is ordained or overruled by God. What is good He gives ; what is evil He overrules to the good of His own. To God, nothing can be great ; as to us, nothing is little, which in any way affects our souls. To God, the fall of empires, the crash of the world, the dissolving of the whole universe, were as nothing. By His Word were they created ; at His breath they would pass away. More precious to Him than the whole world is the value of one single soul. For the world shall perish, the soul endureth. The world and all its wondrous beauty is but the work of His Hands ; the soul, made and remade in the Image of God, was redeemed by the Blood of Christ. It were more reasonable to think that God had not made man at all, than to think that He had set him in the midst of this His creation, and left him the mere sport of chance, or of rude unbending laws, and did not order every, the least, thing concerning him for the well-being of his soul. We often think of God as too like ourselves. To us, it is a trouble and weariness, to look into little things, to attend particularly to this or that. And so men picture to themselves Almighty God, as having made certain great laws of our world ; but they cannot bring home to themselves, that every, the very least, accident of every day is known, willed, overruled, by Almighty God. If they ventured to put their thoughts into

words, they would think it a trouble to Almighty God to attend to all the little details of our daily life. As though God were like ourselves, beholding with effort things one by one, giving His Mind (so to say) now to one thing, now to another, or, as though having set this world in motion like a great machine, He put it in His own stead, to govern itself, and did not weary Himself about it! Rather, Almighty God, not being divided and not having parts and a bounded mind, as we, sees all at once, past, present, and to come; all things which to us have been, or are, or shall be, or all things which could be; all things which He has made, or all which, if He willed, He could make; all which He shall make, and the whole history of every creature of His, spread out before Him, as in the mirror of His Infinite Mind, present there. Unchanging, He changeth all things; in perfect rest, He ordereth all things. By His will He made them; by His will He upholds all which is upheld, and leaves to decay whatever decays. Everything at every moment of time, is seen in the perfect stillness of His Infinite Mind, and is ruled and overruled by His Infinite Will. He so "upholdeth all things by the Word of His Power," that our Lord saith, "Not a sparrow falleth to the ground without My Father;" "The hairs of your head are all numbered."

Our Lord teaches us, as to those very little things, in order that we may know and feel, that nothing is too little to be ordered by our Father, nothing too little in which to see His Hand, nothing, which touches our souls, too little to accept from Him, nothing too little to be done to Him. Since the

hairs of our head are all numbered, so is every throb or shoot of pain, every beating or aching of the heart. Every tear which starts is seen, and, if wept to Him, is gathered up by Him. Every secret sigh He hears at once from every bosom in His whole creation. Every secret wish or prayer He hears, while yet unuttered or unformed. He Who is in the highest Heaven, and filleth all things, but is contained by none ; He is present to each single heart, and hears ; and, if the heart form its wish to Him, He hearkens.

This then is the first great ground of patience, that God is our Father, All-wise, All-loving, All-good ; that “ He<sup>k</sup> knows and wills and can what is best for our souls,” while “ we, poor beings, neither know, nor can, nor, as we ought, will it.” He knows not only every illness which in His Good Providence He sends, but every ache or pain of it. He knows our every want, in every day, and whether we shall look to Him in it, or no. He knows every cross which befalls us ; how piercing every wind is ; how it threatens your future harvest.<sup>1</sup> Every blade of your corn which it nips, is as clearly before His eyes, as if in the whole universe there were nothing besides. He Who “ breaks the ships of Tarshish with the east wind,” and sendeth rain upon the earth or withholdeth it, “ causeth<sup>m</sup> it to rain,” He saith Himself, “ on one field, and not on another,” giveth it in one year or month, and withholdeth it in another ; and that, to correct us, humble us, teach us our dependence upon Him.

<sup>k</sup> Bishop Andrewes.

<sup>1</sup> Preached in a village, in a parching spring.

<sup>m</sup> Amos iv. 7.

This is a faith, such as the heathen might have had, and, in some measure, had. "God,"<sup>n</sup> St. Paul says, "had not left Himself without witness, in that He did good, and gave us rain from Heaven, and fruitful seasons, filling our hearts with food and gladness." The heathen in a way, prayed or looked to God for rain and for their needs; and He, the Father of all, gave it to them.

But further; not only His gifts in nature, but the hearts of men; not only the ills in nature, but the evil wills of man, are in His Hands. "Wind and storm fulfil His Word," even when they lay waste the face of His own world. Mankind and each several human being, with all their sins, waywardnesses, negligences, ignorances, work out through their own ungoverned wills, exactly that measure of trial which Almighty God, in His Infinite Wisdom, knew to be best, for the perfecting of those who love Him, or for the chastening of those who may be turned to love Him. God wills not the wickedness of the wicked. But, while they, by their sinfulness, bring on themselves destruction, their very sins are to the good the occasions of good. God, being good, makes men's evil, against their will, work to the good of His Own. God willed not the hatred of Cain, nor the grudge of Esau, nor the oppression of Pharaoh, nor Saul's blood-thirsty following of David, nor the curses of Shimei. Yet they, through what was against God's will, were to Abel and to Jacob, to all Israel and to David the instruments of the holy will of God. The Chaldeans who fell on Job's flocks and herds, thought only of their own booty.

<sup>n</sup> Acts. xiv. 17.

In God's Hands their evil will proved and made glorious the patience of Job, as much as the wind of the desert, which smote the corners of the house where his sons were. The Assyrian thought only of his own might and greatness ; the Prophet tells us that he was "the rod of God's anger." The envy of the Chief Priests, the treachery of Judas, the fickleness of the poorer Jews, and their fear of the Romans, the cowardice of Pilate out of an evil conscience, accomplished only that, "which God's counsel had determined before to be done." Judas' accursed kiss was the fruit of his disappointed covetousness and hypocrisy ; the very money which he received, and his own base act fulfilled prophecy and wrought out the will of God. Evil men are not the less evil, they are the more evil, because God is good ; but God is so good that they can do no real evil ; their evil but works to good to those who love God. St. Paul, when he persecuted the name of Christ, and took part in the death of St. Stephen, against God's will, fulfilled His will ; when converted, he fulfilled more blessedly the will of God by doing it. The whole noble army of martyrs have been enrolled one by one, through the cruelty of men who hated God and slew them.

And so now too. God willeth not the wickedness or death of the sinners ; but no sinners can harm the good. Nothing can harm us, while, by the grace of God, our own will stands firm to serve God. God willeth not that man should be angry, revengeful, slanderous ; but He wills, (if so be,) that our tempers should be proved by angry words, our patience by the slanderous tongue.

This then is of faith, that everything, the very least, or what seems to us great, every change of the seasons, everything which touches us in mind, body, or estate, whether brought about through this outward senseless nature, or by the will of man, good or bad, is overruled to each of us by the All-holy and All-loving will of God. This is the first lesson of patience, that whatever befalls us, however it befalls us, we must receive, as the will of God. If it befalls us through man's negligence or ill-will, or anger, still it is, in every the least circumstance, *to us* the will of God. For if the least thing could happen to us, without God's permission, it would be something out of God's control. God's Providence or His Love would not be what they are. Almighty God Himself would not be the same God; not the God Whom we believe, adore, and love.

But since whatsoever befalls us of suffering or ill is, however it comes, the will of God to us, what then should we do when it comes? Surely forget, as far as we may, all besides, and go up in thought to the Eternal Throne, and behold in mind, the Heaven opened, and JESUS standing at the Right Hand of God, thence looking down upon us, allotting to us our trials, even through the wrong tempers of men; thence pouring down His strength to us, if we will, to bear them; thence looking to us graciously, if we bear them, through His grace, aright; thence preparing us for the place in Heaven which He ascended on high to prepare for us. O how do all the ills of life fade into nothing; how glad may any trial be, though painful to flesh and blood; how should we greet as goods the evils of life; how would its

sadness become gladness, its thorns a crown, if we but see in them the Eternal Hand of God, moulding us by them for everlasting glory; refining away, through outward ills, our own inward evils; chastening us that we might not perish; checking us, that we might not go astray; recalling us when astray; alluring us by His Goodness; and then again, weaning us from this world, by its very unrest and suffering, that in Him we might find everlasting rest and peace.

A firm faith knows that whatever befalls it from without, will, if, by God's grace, it perseveres, turn to its everlasting good. "There should be no greater comfort to Christian persons," our Church teaches when we are sick, "than to be made like unto Christ, by suffering patiently adversities, troubles and sicknesses. For He Himself went not up to joy, but first He suffered pain; He entered not into His Glory before He was crucified. So truly our way to eternal joy is to suffer here with Christ; and our door to enter into eternal life is gladly to die with Christ, that we may rise again from death, and dwell with Him in everlasting life."

To this faith, the stepping-stone is humility. Faith tells us that all which befalls us, is the will of God. A humble faith knows, that if it is good, it is of God's goodness, not of our desert; if evil, it is less than we deserve. There was no evil in Paradise. Death, sickness, pain of body and soul, came to us by sin. We are sinners, sick in soul, more or less, whether we know our sickness or no. They know their sickness best, who are least sick. It is the worst sickness, not to know that we are sick. St. John,

whom Jesus loved, says "If we say that we have no sin, we deceive ourselves." Life is one long sickness, in which those of us who are using God's grace, are regaining our health, until the time come, when He Who "forgiveth all our sin," shall "heal all our infirmities, and crown us with mercy and loving-kindness."

Meanwhile, every evil is, in God's purpose, a medicine to our soul, bitter, painful, but full of everlasting health. If we have a mortal disease of the body, we bear, if we are wise, the knife which severs a limb, that the whole body may live; we take readily what is nauseous, endure what is hard, abstain from our food, if we indeed believe that it is for the life of this body. Even so, if we are wise, we should receive every ill of life, not as God's will only, but as the wise and loving will of God, the tender Physician of our souls, Who gives us no one pain which is not, in His Hands, a means to everlasting joy.

"No chastening for the present seemeth to be joyous, but grievous." Every, the least, trial has its own weight. It is our wisdom and humility to own this. Were it not so, people would not bear petty trials so ill. It is not lack of patience to feel an ill, nor to be oppressed by it, nor to be "heavy and exceeding sorrowful under it." Our Loving Lord sanctified such human feelings by the heaviness which, in the garden, He allowed to come over His Soul. Impatience is not, to feel the weight of suffering, but to attempt to throw it off; not, to be bowed down, but to rebel; not, to be cut to the heart with anguish, nor to writhe in agony, but not "out of the deep, to call upon God." Impatience is not, mutely to shrink



from suffering, but to toss feverishly, forgetting God. The heart may, and must, rise and sink ; we can, by God's grace, control it, hold it down, keep it outwardly still, hinder it from having any wrong vent ; we cannot hush its beatings. Hard words *will* vex ; unkindness *will* pierce ; neglect *will* wound ; threatened evils *will* make the soul quiver ; sharp pain or weariness *will* rack the body, or make it restless ; cold *will* fret the frame ; hunger *will* gnaw it. But what says the Psalmist ? " When my heart is vexed, I will complain." To whom ? Not of God, but to God.

As thou learnest this lesson, to carry all thy sorrows to God, and lie at thy Saviour's Feet, and spread thy grief before Him, thou wilt find a calm come over thee, thou knowest not whence ; thou wilt see, through the clouds, a bright opening, small perhaps and quickly closed, but telling of eternal rest, and everlasting day, and of the depth of the Love of God ; thou wilt forget the darkness of the cloud, in the rich beauty of His all-encompassing Bow, the witness of His enduring love, and of His unwillingness to punish, which, without the cloud, thou couldest not see. Thy heart will still rise and sink ; but it will rise and sink, not restlessly, nor waywardly, not in violent gusts of passion ; but, whether rising or sinking, amid all outward heavings of this world's waves, resting in stillness on the bosom of the ocean of the Love of God.

Then wilt thou know for thyself, that " God is nothing but good" to thee ; that chastisements are but an austere form of His Love. Thou wilt find for thyself, that tribulation, by the grace of God, opens

thine eyes to thine own defects, and to the love of God ; softens thine heart ; cleanses thy soul ; guards thee from resting in the things of this life, and taking up with thy portion here ; rouses thee from carelessness ; keeps thee humble, even when thou succeedest well with thyself ; teaches thee to mistrust thyself, and trust wholly in God, thy everlasting Strength.

Then shalt thou learn, not to endure only patiently, but, in everything against thy will, humbly and quickly to see and to love the loving Will of God. Thy faith, and thy love, and thy hope will grow, the more thou seest the work of God with thee ; thou wilt joy in thy sorrow, and thy sorrow will be turned into joy. It will be a joy to thee, to be likened in suffering to thy Lord, even though it be like the dying robber at His Side. "Thou," says a holy man,<sup>o</sup> "O Lord Jesu, art both, to me, the Mirror of suffering, and the Reward of the sufferer. Each strongly urges me on, and mightily kindles me. Thou teachest my hands to fight, by the example of Thy virtue ; Thou, after victory, crownest my head with the Presence of Thy Majesty. Whether I look on Thee fighting, or look for Thee, not crowning only, but the Crown, both ways Thou allurest me wondrously. Both ways art Thou a most mighty cord to draw me. Draw me after Thee ; gladly do I follow Thee ; more gladly to enjoy Thee. If Thou art so good to those who follow Thee, what to those who attain Thee !"

<sup>o</sup> S. Bern. in Cant. Serm. 47. § 6.

## SERMON VI.

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### SELF-KNOWLEDGE.

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ST. MATTHEW XX. 22.

*“ Jesus answered and said, Ye know not what ye ask. Are ye able to drink of the cup that I shall drink of, and to be baptized with the baptism that I am baptized with ? They say unto Him, We are able.”*

WITH glowing, burning fire of love did the two blessed Apostles say, “ We are able.” With their whole heart and with the lightning swiftness of their affections, did they say it ; yet ignorantly. They loved their Master. They had shared all with Him till now ; His poverty, His temptations, His loneliness, the contempt and upbraidings and strivings of the world. They thought that they could share all besides which was His, His Cup ; because it was His. To love, nothing seems too hard, if shared with him whom it loves. They thought, perhaps, of toil and labour and weariness and other sufferings to which they were accustomed ; but with the sustain-

ing Presence of their Lord. They thought not of their Master being taken from them, of the seeming failure of their hopes, the delay of reward and glory to a distant day, and now, to see His Suffering. Often as He had warned them, they had not been able to think of Him, as really giving Himself up into the hands of wicked men; His Power not put forth; His Glory turned into shame; Himself, the willing prisoner of a mad multitude, and themselves, powerless and forbidden to aid. Ignorantly they said it; for when He did drink of His Cup in the garden, they could not "watch with Him one hour," but were "asleep for sorrow." When He gave Himself up to His enemies, they too forsook Him, and the Apostle of this day,<sup>a</sup> who, first of the glorious company of the Apostles, was to shed his blood for His Name, stood not by the Cross.

Yet they said it with truth of heart; and our Lord promised them the truth of deed also, and His strength whereby to do it. *Now* they were unable; but Christ promises; and what He promises, He performs, that what they long to do, they shall hereafter have power to do. "Ye shall indeed drink of My Cup." But He tells them, that the future rewards shall not be given by any favour even of His Own, to those whom He had called "My Friends." "It is not Mine to give," in any way of choice or favour; "but it shall be given to those for whom it is prepared of the Father."

The blessed, glorious seats in Heaven shall be given according to the measure of faith and love which each, receiving first from the grace of God,

<sup>a</sup> Preached on the Festival of S. James.

shall, by his freed will, cherish. The measure of the bliss of His redeemed shall be according to their diligence in using His Grace, and the degree of attainment in all things pleasing to God, which by His Grace they shall reach. Your eternal rewards and everlasting lot in Heaven, if ye attain, will be given, not for mere asking, not to ambition or lofty desires, not for merely longing, but according to eternal laws of right and truth and holiness, whereby "God will reward every man according to his works." God gives each of you the grace and power, if ye too will, to do His Will. He gives to all freely. But "God is no acceptor of persons." Whoever is holy, good, pleasing to Him, becomes so by using the grace of God which God gives him, having first given him the heart to use it. But although any good in us is God's gift in us, which we have received, He will give to all whom He receives into Heaven, just that place, for which through their faithful use of His free grace, they are fitted.

Our Lord does not say to these two Apostles, that they *shall* sit near Him, as they longed; nor does He say to them, that they shall *not* so sit. But He tells them, that *then* was not the time for giving it; *then* both for the Master and the servant was the time for drinking the Cup of suffering. "It behoved Christ to suffer, and after that, to enter into His Glory." For the servant there is no other way than for the Master. The servant must suffer in subduing sin in himself, as his Master suffered in redeeming him from it, and paying the ransom of his soul. "It *shall* be given," then, when in the eternal brightness of the truth of God, "the secrets of all hearts

shall be open," and in the light of His Holiness no one shall envy another, no one shall grudge to another his greater nearness to the Throne of God, or his fuller knowledge of God, or deeper joy ; no one shall long for a seat above that, which, in the Eternal Counsels of God, shall be allotted to his measure of faithfulness to the grace of God.

Even these great Apostles then, whom, from the ardent glow of their impetuous love, our Lord calls "sons of thunder," were, before the descent of the Holy Ghost, deceived in two ways. 1. They thought that our Lord would bestow by favour the glories of His Kingdom and nearness to Himself. 2. They were mistaken as to themselves, and their own power to endure that hardness, through which they were to enter into eternal Bliss. In a word, they knew fully neither their Master nor themselves.

This will always be. We judge of God by ourselves. No man who knows not himself, can know God. Man shuts his eyes to that, whatever it be, in God, which being unlike himself, he does not wish to see. These very judgments of the Apostles are repeated every day. Men think that they shall enter into the Kingdom of Heaven, because they say "Lord, Lord, and do not the things which He says." They think that because they bear the name of Christ's disciples, are called Christians, He will own them as Christians in the Great Day. They think that they can drink of their Master's Cup, because they know not themselves, nor Him.

Strange it is, my brethren, but if ye have been turned away from God, and now are turned to God, ye know that the last thing in Heaven or earth,

about which man, by nature, desires to know, is that which most concerns himself; *himself*, his very self. Man will interest himself about all things around him. He will be curious to know the news of the day, what is passing in other countries, or perhaps the works of God, the courses of the stars or of the winds, the history of past ages, the structure of the world, or even of the human mind, or the evil of his neighbour. One thing, unless touched by the grace of God, he will not wish to know, nay, he will strive to forget, to bury it amid the knowledge of the things which he knows, the state of his own soul. He will seek to know all things, for this very end, to forget himself. Men wish to know about what they have, the goods which perish; they wish to forget what they *are*. They wish to know of the health of their bodies which must die; they strive, not to know the health of their souls which must live, in weal or woe. And why this? First, it is a trouble to people to look really into themselves. Then, in order to avoid the pain of looking into themselves, they persuade themselves, that they know enough of themselves. Then, they half suspect that if they did look, they would find what they do not wish to see, and would have to give up ways which they wish to keep, to leave undone what they do, and do what they leave undone.

And so if they look at all, they look at what is good in themselves, or at defects in their neighbours. They look in others at faults which they think they themselves have not, as a sort of balance for faults which they suspect they really have, but will not see in themselves. They think like the Pharisee, "I

should not have done what this man did; I should not have fallen like that; I should not lie, nor steal, nor be intemperate, as this, or that, or the other." As though almost any one man had upon him the whole body of human sins, or as though it were to love God with the whole heart and mind and strength, not to break all His Commandments! Yet so do men hide from themselves their own faults, and their neighbours' good; they behold their neighbours' evil and their own good; in order doubly to deceive themselves, both as to their own good and their own evil.

But to what end not to know now, what thou must know hereafter? Of what avail not to know on earth, when thou mayest amend it, what thou must know in the Day of Judgment, when thou canst not amend it? If Apostles, so fervent in love, as St. John and St. James, before the day of Pentecost, did not wholly know themselves, how surely must thou not know thyself, unless, by the light of God's grace, thou look well into thyself! The very heathen knew that to "know thyself" was the sum of true wisdom. They knew too, that, without pains we cannot know ourselves. They bade us thrice,<sup>b</sup> before we sleep, review ourselves, what we had, in the past day, been and done.

If we know not ourselves, we cannot know God, nor love God, nor become less unlike God, nor become like Him. We cannot know God. "If we *love* not our brother whom we have seen, how can we love God Whom we have not seen." So too, if we know not what is so nigh to us, as our own souls,

<sup>b</sup> Pythagoras.



made in His image, how can we know Him Who made them, Who made and Who fills Heaven and earth? If we understand not the least, how can we understand the Infinite?

We cannot know God, also, even because we cannot love Him unless we know ourselves. All things which God hath done and doeth, hath made and upholdeth and ordereth, are "very good." But they seem so only to those of humble and cleansed hearts. "God," says the Psalmist, when sore tried by the evils of the wicked, "God is nothing but good, unto Israel"—but he adds, to the true Israel, "the pure of heart." To those who know themselves, all things work together for good, and all things seem to be, as they are to them, good. The goods which God gives, seem "very good," and God Himself in them, because they know that they deserve them not. The evils which God allows and overrules, seem also "very good," because they see in them His loving Hand, put forth to heal them of what shuts out God from the soul. They love God intensely, in that He is so good to them in each, and every, the least good, because it is more than they deserve; how much more in the greatest! They love God for every and each, the very greatest, of what seem evils, knowing them to be, from His Love, real goods. For He, by Whom "all the hairs of our head are numbered," and Who "knoweth whereof we are made," directs everything which befalls us in life, in perfect wisdom and love, to the well-being of our souls. He fits every trial to the strength or sickness of that in us, which is to be tried or purified. Now, if ye know

• *לְמַעַן יֵדְעוּ* Ps. lxxiii. 1.

yourselves, ye see quickly, at once, why just this trial was sent, and ye would bow before the justice of God, and adore Him for His Love. What is all the complaining in the world, but that either men forget God, and believe not that all things are from Him, or they forget themselves, and so know not the wisdom of His dealings with them? What we shall see hereafter, he who knows himself sees now—how perfectly God's ways are fitted for our souls.

Those who know God's works in nature see the end of every part of every herb and flower; they see how every part of our human body, or of all the varied "living creatures, each after its kind," which God has made, exactly answers the end for which it was made, supplies its wants, or upholds it in being. And can you think, that God Who hath "so clothed the grass of the field," Who hath so provided for the beasts which perish, or for our own perishable bodies, hath provided less for the soul, which He made in His own Image and Likeness, which He gave His Son to save, which He would adorn with grace, beautify with virtues, draw by His love, make a dwelling-place for Himself here, fit it to behold the Infinite Beauty and Majesty of His own Being, prepare it to enter into His own joy everlastingly? There, if we attain, we shall see in the Brightness of His Presence, how, from our birth in the flesh to that last most blessed and eternal birth, everything was, on God's part, ordered, at each moment and turn of our being, in the fullest wisdom and love for us. Then we shall find that, on God's part every single thing was bestowed or, withheld, delayed or taken away, as should most

tend to our salvation. Not so surely does the door turn upon its hinges, each part being fitted to the other, so that it should open and shut at our will, as our salvation turns on the events which God in His Infinite Wisdom has fitted for us, and in His Love appoints for us. It remains for us only, by His Grace, to fit ourselves to them. Our whole lot is by God's love ordered for us, as is best for each one of us; every the least event in our lives, and the whole course of them, is such as is wisest for us; all, our fulness or our needs, our joy or our sorrow, our disappointments or the gaining of our joys, things against our minds and our wills and our hopes, nay against our very desire, (as we hope) to serve God, or God's granting our heart's desire, is fitted by the finest and most delicate Wisdom of God, to something in our souls. He wounds them that they may be healed, prunes them that they may bring forth more fruit, takes away our earthly stay, that we may lean on Him. But then, in whatever degree we know our souls, we shall know and love God's will in each single token of His good-pleasure. A child who has loving and tender parents knows this. It knows, as far as it knows itself, that its parents give, delay, withhold the things it wishes for, whether for the health of body or soul, wisely and lovingly. Much more must the Eternal Father of spirits, Who formed us for Himself, and things around us for us, Who, before man's fall, made all things "very good," and now that man, believing the evil one, has drawn on himself the knowledge of good and evil, makes both good and evil work to his salvation, if he will,—much more must the Eternal Father, in Whose

Hands are all things, man's heart, and the things which touch and affect his heart, know how each, the very least thing will, by His Grace, correct and amend that heart, and fit it, cleansed and purified, for His everlasting love. All the complaining in the world is in truth, to deny that God knows what is best for each of us, and knowing, sends it. God knows us through and through. Not the most secret thought, which we most hide from ourselves, is hidden from Him. As then we come to know ourselves, through and through, we come to see ourselves, more as God sees us, and then we catch some little glimpse of His designs with us, how each ordering of His Providence, each check to our desires, each failure of our hopes, is just fitted for us, and for something in our own spiritual state, which others know not of, and which, till then, we knew not. Until we come to this knowledge, we must take all in faith, believing, though we know not, the goodness of God towards us. As we know ourselves, we, thus far, know God.

This, then, is one great blessing of knowing ourselves, that we hereby come to know and love the doings of God towards us. Then is the ground of all rebellion against God's Will cut off, because we see, that even, in seeming evil, He knows and wills and works our good. Then is all rebellion turned into love, because knowing our sin and the punishment which sins deserve, we know and feel the love of God which we do not deserve.

Without knowledge of ourselves, I said, we cannot become less unlike God. For the first step to become less unlike Him, is to see that we *are* unlike

Him, and to grieve, for love of Him, that we have injured His likeness in our souls. But none knows this truly, save the humble of heart, he who has often sifted himself in the sight of God, so that the light of God fell upon him and revealed him to himself. A man, except so far as he is in the grace of God, will own in himself just so much as he cannot help. No one would own quietly to himself, "I am avaricious, or grasping, or niggardly, or vain, or worldly, or sensual, or ill-tempered, or conceited." We see and know of many, that they have these or other faults; but they themselves, if they know anything of them, call them by light names, and soften them, or forget them.

But meanwhile, what thousand, thousand sins, which are not a man's chiefest outstanding sins, pass by unheeded! He lessens in his own sight, what he cannot but see, and sees nothing which he can help. He blinds himself when he can. If he cannot shut out the light wholly, he shuts, or half shuts his eyes, that it may not disclose to him what he wishes not to see, *himself*. But thus, day by day, he adds to a load of unrepented, deepening, sin. Sin itself, if it lasts, blinds the eyes to itself. Conscience is a very tender thing. If we listen to it, to know ourselves or what we are doing, it speaks to us more plainly. If we hush it, attend not to it, stifle it, we deaden it, until it awake to condemn us.

Men think that they *know* themselves, because they *are* themselves. And yet of others we are all ready to think that they do not know themselves. You yourselves think that you know well that your neighbour has this or that fault. At least, people

speak of their neighbour's faults, undoubtingly, and condemn them, as though they well knew that, what they condemned in them, was quite true. Think you that in most cases, *they* know their own faults as much and as clearly as you think *you* know them; that *they* see them, as *you* see them? Surely, if many so saw their own faults, as others see them, they would be at more pains, by God's grace, to subdue them.

Since then, as thou thinkest, people around thee, those in whom thou seest ill, whom in thy mind, at least, thou condemnest, deceive themselves, how knowest thou, that thou art not deceived thyself? The very heathen knew this self-deceit. "Change but the name" they said,<sup>4</sup> "the tale is told of thee." We know in what awful sins David was sunk. His conscience murmured doubtless, and shook his soul at times, during that long year of impenitence. But it needed a Prophet's voice to tell him, "Thou art the man." Thou seest that others are ignorant of themselves. How knowest thou, that thou knowest thyself?

One only way there is, as God bids you, "examine yourselves." "Examine your own consciences," our Church repeats, "and that not lightly and after the manner of dissemblers with God"; "examine your lives and conversation by the rule of God's commandments." If thou hast not yet thoroughly examined thyself, be sure that thou dost not yet know thyself. Thou must examine thyself that thou mayest know thyself. Thou must examine thyself, that thou mayest keep the knowledge of thyself, and not

<sup>4</sup> Hor. Sat. i. 69.

forget thyself. Thou must examine thyself again and again, as thou wouldest glean after harvest, that nothing be lost. Thou must examine thyself, not by the examples of those around thee, nor by the maxims of the world, nor heeding the praise, (if so be,) which men give thee, but by the light of God's commandments. Above all, thou must pray to thy Father Who seeth in secret, that He would shed His light into thy soul, to teach thee, of what to repent, what to amend ; to turn thee inside out to thyself ; that thou mayest know all, sorrow for all, leave all, be forgiven all, which is against the will and goodness of the All-Good God.

As that is true which the Truth spake, "What doth it profit a man, if he gain the whole world, and lose his own soul?" so then is that also true, "It profits thee nothing, if thou know about the whole world, and know not about thine own soul." Though thou couldest know, not the things of the whole world only, but the things beyond the world, all mysteries and all knowledge, except the loving knowledge of God and the knowledge of thyself, it would profit thee nothing. Yea, it would be worse than nothing. Knowledge of all things out of thyself is but a baseless fabric, which shall vanish into nothing ; like the airy buildings in the clouds, but no real, solid, substance. Such "knowledge" puffeth<sup>e</sup> up, empty and vain, like a bladder (so the word is) distended with wind ; but "charity," or the love of God or man, "edifieth," or buildeth up on the solid foundation, which is Christ.

My brethren, ye cannot, many of you, have much

• Φυσιοῦ.

human knowledge, but ye can have Divine. Ye cannot know much now about earth or the things of earth; but ye may know of the heavens and the heaven of heavens, and Him Who dwelleth in the highest heavens, and in the lowly heart. Ye cannot know very much of things which concern you not; but ye can know all which concerns you. Ye can know "the love of God which passeth knowledge," and "the peace of God, which passeth all understanding"; and ye can know the way to eternal life, even Him Who is "the Way, the Truth, and the Life," "Whom truly to know is eternal life," and "then shall ye know, even as ye are known." "Many," says a holy man,<sup>f</sup> "seek knowledge; few, self-knowledge. But if with the same zeal and care, where-with worldly and vain knowledge is sought, self-knowledge were sought, it would be found more readily, and kept more usefully." "Where<sup>g</sup> shall wisdom be found," asks Job, "and where is the place of understanding? The depth says, it is not in me; and the sea saith, it is not in me. God understandeth the way thereof and He knoweth the place thereof; and unto man He said, behold the fear of the Lord, that is wisdom, and to depart from evil, that is understanding." But "thou must know thyself," says a holy man,<sup>h</sup> "that thou mayest fear God; thou must know Him, that thou mayest love Him, In the one, thou hast the beginning of wisdom, in

<sup>f</sup> Tract. de Interiori Domo. c. 10. inc. auct. int. opp. S. Bernardi. Ed. Ben. tom. ii. p. 354, ed. Ben. Al. de Conscientia. c. 2. Ed. 1586, tom. i. p. 1430.

<sup>g</sup> Job. xxviii. 12, 14, 23.

<sup>h</sup> S. Bern. in Cant. Serm. 37. § 1.



the other thou art perfected. For 'the fear of the Lord is the beginning of wisdom;' and 'the fulfilling of the law is charity.'"

But, above all seeking of thine own, and in all seeking to know thyself, pray God to enlighten thee. He will pour His grace into thy soul, and will shew thee thy own deformity and His restoring Hand; thy readiness to sin, the frequency of thy falls, and their occasions. He will teach thee to know thy weakness, and by His grace, to shrink from what, in thine ignorance, thou knewest not. And so as thou knowest thyself, and condemnest thyself, He will pardon thee; as thou seest thyself to be blind, He will enlighten thee; as thou knowest thyself to be weak, He will strengthen thee; as thou feelest thyself ready for all evil, He will lead thee to all good. For He will teach thee to seek Him, ask of Him, cleave to Him; and sooner shall Heaven and earth pass away, than that one who truly sought Him, shall not find Him. "Heaven and earth shall pass away, but My Words shall not pass away." But His Word is, "Ask, and it shall be given you; seek, and ye shall find; knock, and it shall be opened unto you," even the everlasting gates, where whoso entereth shall never more go out, but shall dwell before the Face of the Lord, in the joy of the Lord, for ever.

## SERMON VII.

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### LIFE A WARFARE.

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1 CORINTHIANS ix. 26.

*“I therefore so run, not as uncertainly; so fight I,  
not as one that beateth the air.”*

WE all own that life is a warfare. Holy Scripture is full of it. It tells us of foes, fighting, armour, rewards, life, death. It tells us of war within us, and without us. Within us, are “the<sup>a</sup> lusts which war in our members,” “war<sup>b</sup> against the soul,” “the<sup>c</sup> law in our members, warring against the law of our mind, and bringing us into captivity to the law of sin, which is in our members.” Without us, are foes, deadly, implacable, unsleeping, unceasing, experienced in near six thousand years of human weakness, and passions, and unsteadfastness, and sin. “We<sup>d</sup> wrestle not,” says St. Paul, “against flesh and blood, but against principalities, against powers,

<sup>a</sup> S. James iv. 1.

<sup>b</sup> 1 S. Peter ii. 11.

<sup>c</sup> Rom. vii. 23.

<sup>d</sup> Eph. vi. 12.

against the rulers of the darkness of this world, against spiritual wickedness in high places." There seem to be ranks and powers of the evil angels, as of good. One of these our Lord singles out, as our chief enemy, who has an access to our souls; "takes<sup>e</sup> the word out of men's hearts;" the father of lies, and of those who<sup>f</sup> will not obey God; who entered into Judas, and put it into his heart to betray our Lord; and who desired to have Peter, to sift him through and through, if so be he might fall.

As a pattern to us, our Blessed Lord, although without inward motion towards sin, allowed His rebel creature to tempt Him with those three temptations under which men fall. Our Lord withstood them in our nature that He might withstand him and overthrow him in us. He gave power to His own to "tread<sup>g</sup> on all the power of the enemy." He promises to bruise Satan under our feet also. He sets before us, at once, the greatness of our warfare and of our defence. He arms us from head to foot, that we "may be able to stand in the evil day." He gives us "the shield of faith, the helmet of salvation," and the rest of that Divine armoury. Yet He shews us thereby, how whole and entire our armour must be, if we would not be wounded. He exhorts, by St. Paul, "to fight the good fight," and to "lay," grasp, "hold of eternal life," as being one and the same thing. "I have fought the good fight," says St. Paul, when about to suffer death for our Lord. Our Lord speaking to the whole Church of all times, in His words to the seven Churches of Asia, closes alike rebuke or encouragement with the

\* S. Mark iv. 15. † S. John viii. 24. ‡ S. Luke x. 19.

promise "to him that overcometh." Whether they had to repent of leaving their first love; to hold fast what they had, and "to keep His works unto the end;" to strengthen what remains; or to cast off lukewarmness, and "be zealous and repent;" the promise to all alike<sup>b</sup> is, "to him that overcometh." Our Lord sums up in the last, His sevenfold promise, "to him that overcometh will I grant to sit with Me on My throne, even as I also overcame, and am sat down with My Father on His throne." "He<sup>1</sup> that overcometh shall inherit all things, and I will be his God, and he shall be My Son," are almost His closing words. To be "saved<sup>k</sup> from the hands of our enemies," "delivered from the hands of our enemies, that we might serve God in holiness and righteousness before Him all the days of our life," is the sum of the promise "by the mouth of all His holy prophets, which have been since the world began."

We have a warfare then to wage, a warfare within ourselves, against ourselves, and against those, more powerful, subtle, skilful than we; enemies, who know many of you, your weak points, better than you know yourselves. We have "a strong man" with whom to fight; a stronger through Whom to overcome. Against us, is the craft of Satan to overthrow us. The strength, the wisdom, the love of Christ our God, may be ours, through which to overcome.

And about what is the strife? The soul, its life or death. And what the loss? To be shut out from the love of God, and be the companion of

<sup>b</sup> Rev. ii. 7; ii. 17, 26; iii. 5, 12, 21.

<sup>1</sup> Ib. xxi. 7.

<sup>k</sup> S. Luke i. 71, 74, 75.

devils, hating and hated. What the reward? God Himself. He Himself says, "I am your exceeding great Reward."

And what are ye doing then? Fighting, surely, with your whole might, with the whole grace of God, straining every nerve, watching at every moment, guarding against every peril! This is, surely, your first thought in the morning, "What may I do this day to make this great prize my own, to escape that unbearable woe?" This is your last thought at night, "Wherein have I failed this day? what can I amend on the morrow?" Whatever else ye do, this cannot but be your first thought. This must be the aim of all your aims. All things must be precious, or cheap unto you, as they further this or no. For if ye win this, all loss here is endless, boundless gain. If ye lose this, all gain will but mock you, and add intensity to that unendurable loss.

This ye would do, as wise men in this world, were the struggle for some good of this world. For what bauble of this world will not men rise early, and late take rest, or toil, it may be, their whole lives, to gain, at the end, what they must part with as soon as gained? If ye are not doing this for the life to come, what *are* ye doing?

Ye believe, ye cannot but believe, that God has promised to those who are faithful and overcome, those rewards; Himself and the unspeakable joys, the overflowing torrent of pleasure, in His Wisdom, Power, Glory, Beauty, Love. Ye believe, ye cannot but believe, that to those who are overcome, and obey Him not, but obey Satan and their own passions, He has threatened that unutterable endless

woe. Ye believe, ye cannot but believe, (for our Lord the Truth has said it,) that ye must "overcome," in order to enter into His joy. And to "overcome," there must be conflict, as God warns us. God the Son took our nature, not only to redeem us, but to endure and overcome in it. God has assigned one way to Heaven, a way of struggle, effort, striving for the mastery over ourselves. How is it, that men can believe, that God has appointed to man this warfare against Satan and man's own corrupt nature, has given him His Holy Spirit to ensure him the victory, if he wills; and yet be so much at ease about themselves, although not engaged in that warfare; as much at ease, as if they were already safe in Heaven? How is it, that so many can be content, though not struggling at all? So many, though continually defeated? So many, though making no progress? Men can hardly imagine that they are doing what God has appointed for their salvation, and yet are as unconcerned and secure, as if they were saved already, and could not miss it. They are walking blindfold, yet have no fear of missing their way.

The truth is, men blind themselves, and our very proverbs tell us, that no blindness is so entire.<sup>1</sup> They know not themselves, and so do not know how deeply they are slaves of their special sin. They know that they have not all sin, and so, although they cannot think themselves to be struggling, they can think that they are not in all points defeated.

How does this self-deceit come? To know how it comes, may save some of us, my brethren, by

<sup>1</sup> "None are so blind as those who won't see."

God's grace, from falling into it, or by His mercy may open our eyes, that by His grace we may be freed from it.

Most commonly, alas! the self-deceit comes through sin itself. It is hard to do sin, and to own that it is sin. God's image, although defaced, is still stamped upon the soul. God's law is, in a measure, written in the heart. God's Holy Spirit, unless finally driven away, lives within the soul. Our moral nature, the Word of God, the Voice of God's Holy Spirit, teaching, pleading, checking, warning, upbraiding, will not be silenced, so long as the soul itself lives. Most, who have fallen into grievous sin, can recollect that the first act of sin was violence to themselves. Sin, to which any one is not tempted, seems to him, what it is, not an offence against God only, but shocking and revolting. There is scarcely a sin however shocking or revolting, at which the soul shrank back once, to which it cannot be accustomed, so as to forget that it is sin. "Custom," you are wont to say, "is a second nature." For good or evil, it changes nature. It changes nature, not only by commanding it, as a master, and demanding what it is wont to, but by destroying the very feelings which once resisted it. The change is the less felt, because it is slow. The poison of sin creeps slowly through the soul. It ends in death; yet no one can say, which drop will destroy life. The thought of sin flashes through the soul, and is abhorred. It comes again, and is thought impossible. "Is thy servant a dog, that he should do this thing?" Perhaps the soul admits it the more in thought, because it thinks it can never do it. It will have the pleasure

of acting it in thought, because it thinks itself safe from doing it. It would have the pleasure of imagining, without the guilt of doing. How often have persons allowed themselves thoughts of revenge, anger, contempt, rivalry, display, covetousness, because they never meant to act them ! Satan is on the watch ; they are unguarded ; and before they know it, the act is done. Then comes self-reproach, and either quick repentance, or the stifling of self-reproach. Sin which seemed unendurable, little by little, looks less grievous ; then it looks light ; then it is thought necessary ; then it is not felt ; then the soul is dead. Acts become more frequent ; frequent acts become custom ; custom, unbroken, becomes necessity ; necessity, unless God's chastening arm awaken the sinner, is death.

But in every stage of this deadening of the soul, the soul can retain the knowledge of what sin is, only so far as it is not inured to it. We can only fully understand what grace or virtue is, by ourselves acting it. For God gives us light, while by His grace, we do it. We can only understand the hideousness of sin, by *not* doing it. For those who do it, blind their own eyes to it. One who is perfectly true, or has been trained to think it disgraceful to tell a lie, can hardly imagine himself saying what is not true. His whole nature revolts at it. One, inured to lies, can scarcely imagine them to be wrong. Those who steal make pleas to themselves, that this or that is not stealing ; those who backbite their neighbours, say that one cannot be so rigid about speaking ; those who jest profanely, think that it is innocent mirth, and that others who are shocked at



it, are over-nice ; the angry man pleads that he cannot help anger or impatience. Avarice becomes prudence ; dissipation, largeness of heart ; to cast away God's truth, liberality. Even in sins which desolate families, and mar innocence and purity, the fault is cast upon God, Who made us as we are. Man makes his sin into a necessity to him ; and what is necessary, he holds to be God's doing, not his own. One, inured to sin, either thinks that all are secretly like himself, or that those who are not, have chosen amiss, in not choosing his enjoyments.

Man must have peace. And so, if he will not choose to be of the same mind with God, he must make to himself a god of the same mind with himself. " Perfect<sup>m</sup> love casteth out fear, and so does perfect sin." He who walketh in light, fears not evil ; for he sees it, to avoid it. He who blinds himself, fears not evil ; for he sees it not, till he falls into it. There are two ends in which men struggle not ; when they are wholly free, and when they are wholly bound.

This then is one vast wilderness of self-deceit, in which men lose themselves. Every act by which a man gives way to sin, blinds him to that sin, and, in a measure, to all other sin. For it blunts the fineness of his feeling of good and evil ; it dulls his sight to the beauty of good, and the deformity of evil : it makes his ear heavy, that it hears no longer the gentle whispers of the voice of God. Everything, good or evil, in the soul, reveals or hides God's light to it.

And yet, until a man is wholly enslaved by his sin, he is, of necessity, at times freed from it. Some-

<sup>m</sup> S. Bern. de grad. hum. c. 21.

times he is not tempted to it ; perhaps, if tempted, he half escapes it. He deceives perhaps, but does not directly lie ; he indulges overmuch, but does not lose his reason ; is vain, but does no great open act of vanity ; takes unfair advantage, but does not nakedly defraud or steal. And then whatever the sin is, he quickly forgets what he has done. He drowns, or distracts his thoughts ; the world and Satan help him, and God, after a time, leaves him. He thinks that he is not sin's slave, because he is not always sinning in this particular way. A man will count himself generous or kind, if he does from time to time, kind or generous acts. He will not think that he is given up to sin, although he commits it whenever a strong temptation comes. And so he abuses even God's mercy, Who by His Providence shields him from temptation, and thinks that he does not much offend God, because God keeps from him the temptations to offend Him.

Again ; our trial, by God's appointment and mercy, lies mostly in some few things. We bring trials upon ourselves, which God did not intend for us. We increase manifoldly our own trials by every consent to sin. But by nature no one, scarcely, has the whole mass of human sin and temptation to strive with, although men have ended with staining themselves with well-nigh all. Most are born with some one leading fault, in which their own chief trial lies. But few are born with very many faults ; most have some natural graces. If angry, they soon forgive ; if wanton, they do some kind acts ; if covetous, they are careful for their own families ; if they destroy their own souls, they are, it is said,

“no one’s enemy, but their own.” And so whereas, if we were wise, we should forget any good thing in us, owning that whatever it is, it is God’s gift in us, and should think only of our remaining evil, people blind themselves to their own evil, by thinking of the evil of others and of their own good. Such was the Pharisee, whom our Lord condemns. Doubtless, he was “not an extortioner, unjust, adulterer,” or, in many ways, “even as that Publican;” he used some bodily denial, and gave alms. These things he dwelt upon. And so he contrived to hide from himself his own besetting sins, pride and contempt. We ought to compare ourselves with no one, except to abase ourselves; and men do compare themselves with others, only to exalt themselves. We may see in well-nigh every one some grace better than our own, from which we may learn; and men look to see in every one some evil which is not in themselves, to comfort themselves that they are not worse than others. To see graces in others, is often a natural pain, because it is a reproach to themselves; to see defects in the good, is a comfort to them, because they themselves look less evil.

Still sadder is it, when men use truths of God, to comfort themselves in listlessness and want of faithful service to God. True it is, “that in us, that is, in our flesh, dwelleth no good thing;” that we have “a law in our members warring against the law of our mind;” that “what we *would* do, that we cannot;” that “in many things we all, offend,” or stumble. But did God tell us this, to make us slothful, or to rouse us? If we are told of a disease, do we what in us lies to check it, or do we give it

full play? Patriarchs, Apostles, Prophets, Martyrs, had the same sinful nature cleaving to them, as we. St. James and St. John sought high places; St. Paul was a persecutor; St. John was fiery; St. Mark shrank from peril; St. Peter was rash and denied our Lord; all forsook Him in the time of peril. But what became they? How was Saul the persecutor transformed by the grace of God into the likeness of his Master, and his soul conformed to Him, and his spirit obeyed every motion of His Holy Spirit, until he could say, "not I, but Christ liveth in me." And yet these blessed Apostles, whose names were written in Heaven, and whose names on the true Foundation, were laid in the foundations of the holy City;<sup>a</sup> they who, themselves subdued to God, subdued the world unto the Crucified; these, chosen vessels of the Most High, to "bear His Name before kings and princes," who made an unjust judge tremble before his prisoner, and a king "almost" to exchange his crown for their bonds; these, to whom "to live was Christ", who "bore about in the body the dying of the Lord Jesus," to whom our Lord bequeathed "the fellowship of His sufferings," to "fill up" what He willed to "remain over of suffering for His Church," these men were born with the same passions as we, with the same law in their members as we; they had the same struggle which every child of Adam has had to endure, whether conquering or conquered. "By the grace of God," they "were what they were". Wherein we have fallen short, not God's grace has been wanting to us, but we, to the grace of God.

<sup>a</sup> Rev. xxi. 14.

There is yet one more way of fighting uncertainly, which besets even many who are conscious of their own besetting sin, and are in some measure, earnest against it. I do not now mean open sins, deliberate breaches of God's commandments, such as plain lying, or stealing, or being drunk, or swearing, or breaches of the seventh commandment, from which a man, if he would be a Christian at all, must by God's grace, keep himself wholly, or, if he have fallen into any, must repent and break off altogether. Yet nothing is more common, (and some of you must have felt it, my brethren) than for persons to know more or less, what are their most besetting faults, to pray, more or less, against them, to be grieved and downcast about them, and yet to see in themselves little or no progress towards subduing them. It may, indeed sometimes be, that they are really making progress, though perhaps slow, even though they see it not. For faults which a person through infirmity, (as of temper,) falls into, may be less frequent than before, or in themselves less grave. Although sometimes defeated, you may gain the victory more often than before; and when defeated or overtaken, you may not fall so badly. For, step by step people wade into the mire of evil habits, and step by step must they mostly wade out of them; and though still soiled, and drenched, they may be in less deep water and nearer to the shore of their deliverance. Still, there is a good deal of uncertain fighting, and Christians waste their strength and lose grace and peace, still from the same want, "they know not themselves." They struggle, but they know not against what; they know not on which

side to expect their foes; before they are aware, they are overtaken and overthrown.

Our first step is to gain a knowledge of our own selves, as a whole; what our faults are. Then, what our chief fault is, (whatever it be;) that from which the rest, whether it be pride, anger, animal pleasure, or the like. It is something to know thus much. For thus we know what to pray against, what grace to pray for.

But we must have a nearer, more determined, conflict still, if we would not waste our strength, and fight in the air. And the same rule will be of use in many of those temptations to more grievous sin. Observe carefully, day by day, the occasion of thy fall; what just before happens, which leads thee to it. Thus, whether the fault be anger or pride, (to take these,) people generally know thus much, that they are liable to be put out, or to be proud; and perhaps they could tell, if they thought, that this or that calls up their anger or their pride. But their temptations come, now this, now that, in the different accidents of life. They know that they do feel angry or proud, and they wish they did not. But they do not think distinctly what are the things which lead to their anger and pride. And so they fight at random and uncertainly. Now here, too, the trials of each of you are fewer, than most of you think. Here, too, we are spared many trials which we might have had. If we be tempted to pride, or anger, or gluttony, yet all things which tempt others, do not tempt *us*. And mostly, you will find that the things which tempt *you* to your besetting sin, are much fewer than you think at first. You are con-

fused about them, because you do not know them ; and not knowing them, you think that they are many more than they are. For, until you know them distinctly, you do not know that it is one and the same trial, coming again and again. Persons who have observed narrowly, what are the outward temptations to their sin, have often found, that even to some very besetting sin, as anger, there have been, at most, some seven or eight occasions. To know this, and to know the occasions themselves, is, with God's help, a great gain. We say commonly "forewarned, forearmed." The very temptation to sin becomes, when you know it well, the sentinel to warn you against it.

Does this seem to you a long, toilsome process ? It looks toilsome only, till you begin in earnest. Persevere but a little, and it will grow easy to you. Custom, which binds some miserably to sin, will, by God's grace, be a help to you to do easily what you do for Him.

But does the whole strife seem to you long and weary ? Look to eternity. It is nothing to look on to endless time. Time is no measure for eternity. For when eternity comes, time will no longer be. Yet even thus, look on to eternity. Look on to it, if but as countless, endless time, no nearer to any end, when thousands of thousands of years such as we now count them, yea if each of these thousands of thousands of years were told over as often as there are grains of the dust of the earth, or sand on the sea shore, shall have rolled by ; still thou must begin again, and again, and again, and when time and thought have failed thee, thou art still no nearer.

And then say, what is the longest life on earth? Shrivelled into nothing. In the presence of eternity, or of that countless time, not thy life only, but the whole being of this world is as nothing. But look on again in that eternity. I ask not where God hath said thou shalt be, but, what shalt thou be? Unchangeable as the unchangeableness of God, what thou hast become in this world, good or bad? And where then is this weary strife which now seems to thee so long, so hard, so unendurable? Shrivelled up into nothing, past and gone. And what is there besides? One unchanging, unchangeable state. In all eternity, thou wilt be one and the same, even as God Himself is One and the Same. Here we may ever hope for change. We hope ever to be other, better, than we are. But change, growth, amendment, enlargement of the heart, is *here* alone. *There* our state is fixed. It is an awful thing in itself to think of our state being fixed; of all power of amending it, by God's grace, being gone. Who of us could endure the thought of being in all eternity what they are now, of having no more power to love than they have now? But think for one moment, what that unchangeable eternity would be in woe, an eternity "in the fire which never shall be quenched, where their worm dieth not, and the fire is not quenched!" And what will it be to you, my brethren, if ye, by the grace of God, hold on for this little while? What is Eternity? Eternity to the blessed, is God's unchangeable love, shedding upon the countless hosts of Heaven, Angels and Archangels, Cherubim and Seraphim, Martyrs, Prophets, Patriarchs and the whole glorious company of the redeemed, and, if



thou willest, by His Grace, on *thee*, the fulness of His infinite love, opening to them the treasures of His Infinite Wisdom, encompassing them round and round with His Infinite Bliss, satisfying their souls with His Infinite Beauty, and awakening in them, a continual longing which shall ever be filled, never be cloyed.

He saith to thee, "All which I have is thine," thine, according to thy power to contain it. Now He bids thee, with one earnest strife, cast out of thyself what chokes thy heart, that thou canst not contain everlastingly His Love. He bids thee, by His grace, enlarge thy heart, that He may fill thee more largely. All of this world will soon have passed away. But God will remain, and thou, whatever thou hast become, good or bad. Thy deeds now are the seed-corn of Eternity. Each single act, in each several day, good or bad, is a portion of that seed. Each day adds some line, making thee more or less like Him, more or less capable of His Love, fitter for greater or less glory, to be nearer to Him, or to be less near, or to be away from Him for ever. Is the strife long and hard? Long and hard it would be, to be ever defeated. But Christ shall lighten it for thee. He will bear it in thee; He will bear thee over it, as He will bear thee over the molten surges of this burning world. Christ will go before thee. He saith unto thee, "Follow Me, and where I am, there shall thou be with Me." "Follow thou Me." "Be of good cheer, I have overcome the world." "If Christ be for us, who shall be against us?" Safely mayest thou fight, who art secure of victory. And thou art safe if thou fight for

Christ, and with Christ. Only give not way. If defeated, be the humbler, and rise again; begin again, and pray to persevere. If thou succeed, give "thanks to Him Who giveth us the victory, through Jesus Christ our Lord." And He will, by His Blood, intercede for thee; He will, by His grace, fight in thee; He will keep thee unto the end, Who Himself crowneth, and is crowned, in all who are faithful to His Grace.

## SERMON VIII.

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### THE BESETTING SIN.

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#### HEBREWS xii. 1.

*“ Wherefore seeing we also are compassed about with so great a cloud of witnesses, let us lay aside every weight, and the sin which doth so easily beset us, and let us run with patience the race which is set before us.”*

THUS does St. Paul close that glowing account of the deeds of faith under the Old Testament. He had first taught what faith was. “ Faith is the substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen.” Faith makes the things of the life to come, our life with God, our eternal rest in His love, and our glory amid that rest, as present to the soul, as if we saw them. They are or subsist in themselves eternally. They are as present in the mind of God, now, as they shall be to us, when we shall be amid them. Faith makes them to subsist in us. Faith is a divine knowledge, given by God, whereby

we know the things which shall be after death, as certainly, though not as fully, as though we saw them. Faith makes them to exist in the soul. The being which they have, it makes to be in us. We see by faith, what by our bodily eyes we see not; but we behold it as certainly, as if it were before our eyes. Blessed, if we lose not sight of it!

Then, St. Paul sets before us, one by one, some of the noble band of the faithful under the Old Testament, and shews us the sort of faith of Abel, and Noah, and Abraham; how they acted on their belief; shewed their faith by their faithfulness; forewent things present for the sake of things unseen; and obtained the praise of God, and the earnest of things to come. Then, from single heroes of a mighty faith, the captains of God's army, the leaders of the people, he goes on to the whole army of Martyrs and Confessors, who had suffered for God, before Christ came; who were "stoned, sawn asunder, slain with the sword," every word speaking of some noble deed of faith, crowning a life of faith. And so he turns to the Hebrew converts. They too might *then* be martyrs. The flame of persecution was lighted, and was around them. But what does he teach them? "Having" he says "so great a cloud of witnesses," these witnesses to the might of God, and the power of faith, and the reality of things unseen, which yet in their souls they saw; "having these witnesses," encircling us as a cloud, uplifted above the earth, flashing forth with the light of God, the lustre of their mighty deeds, and the refreshing streams of their heavenly teaching, "let us"—do what? follow their example? do and suffer what

they did and suffered? St. Paul, as a wise teacher, begins with the beginning, not with the end. He says; lay aside what hinders you from being like them, that so in the end, ye may be like them, with their Saviour and yours. "Let us lay aside every weight, and the sin which doth so easily beset us."

This is the first step. "Cease to do evil," and so "learn to do well." He speaks of us as in a race, a race for life eternal, of which our Lord and God, Who gives us strength to run, the Author of our faith, will be Himself the Finisher, complete it in time, reward it in eternity. Now, two sorts of things hinder men in a race, a weight to carry, or what ever and anon entangles their feet. What is the weight in our way to Heaven? Is it not the mass of worldly thoughts, cares, longings, the confused heap of sins, which bow us down, of which we confess, "the burden of them is intolerable"? And what then, is the one sin which doth so easily beset us? It is that we are mostly born with one special temptation; we have not, all, the same trials; but we have each, one special weakness or passion, or evil inclination, which besets us again and again, is ever twining itself around us, and from which until we disentangle ourselves, we make but little progress. It is the occasion of our stumbling, our falling, our slowness in heavenly things. It comes to us, sometimes in the very same shape, sometimes in another. It takes us sometimes by surprise, sometimes by storm; sometimes in acts so slight that we heed them not, sometimes, in temptations so vehement, that they carry us off our feet. It comes to us, as I said before,<sup>a</sup> mostly

<sup>a</sup> Sermon vi.

in a few ways, but these so in and out, as it were, sometimes in the one, sometimes in the other, that till men examine it slowly, and take it away piece by piece, it seems much stronger and more manifold than it is. So you have felt when briars have entangled you and hindered your walking. The more you stumbled on impatiently, the more hold they seemed to have of you. If you took them off quietly, you were surprised sometimes, how slight a thing it was, which was hindering you.

St. Paul's words, then, suggest to us two sorts of work before us to be done by the grace of God : 1. We have to strive against the whole body of sin, everything which is against the holy will of God, "every<sup>b</sup> evil inclination, all iniquity and profaneness, neglect and haughtiness, strife and wrath, passion and corruption, indolence and fraud, every evil motion, every impure thought, every base desire, every unseemly thought." 2. We have all, probably, some one besetting fault, which is our own special hindrance. Both of these we must learn by looking into ourselves. They vary in all. No two persons have exactly the same temptations, as no two minds are exactly alike. And so we ought not to judge of others, nor can we judge of ourselves by them. We must look into ourselves. And this is the examination of ourselves, which St. Paul bids us use ; of which the Church reminds us ; which the heathen knew to be good, though they knew so little of its use, without the grace of God ; and which all who have grown in the grace of God, have known to be necessary for the soul ; and those most, who have been most holy.

<sup>b</sup> Bishop Andrewes.

We have then, these two searches into ourselves to make ; one into every part of ourselves ; the other into that part of ourselves, which is the weakest, and through which we most often fall. Of these, holy men recommend that we should begin with our besetting fault. For this, there are many reasons. It lies, most likely, at the root of many other faults. It burrows under ground, as it were, and comes up at a distance, where we look not for it. It branches out into other faults ; twines round and kills some grace ; hides itself behind other faults or virtues ; puts itself forth in the midst of them. It colours every other fault ; it interferes with, or overshadows or overlays every grace. But the more this one fault spreads, the more, if you uproot it, you will clear of the field of your conscience ; the more will your heart become the good ground, which, freed from thorns, shall bear fruit, thirty, sixty, an hundred-fold, to life everlasting. When in clearing your field or your garden, you pluck up thoroughly some one weed, whose roots lie deep and spread widely, you have often seen, how much more and far more widely you have uprooted, than you thought beforehand to be possible. You have loosened, too, the whole ground, and other lesser weeds are, without your knowing, pulled up with it, and lie down and die. In like way, when you set yourself in earnest against your besetting sin, you uproot from your soul much more varied evil, than you knew or thought of. We have a picture of this in Holy Scripture. The Philistines were the enemies of Israel, and blasphemed God. When Goliath their champion stood, they stood and defied the armies of God ; when he

fell, they fled. Your besetting sin is your Goliath. Set yourself earnestly by the grace of God, to subdue *it*, and the rest, will, by that same grace, give way.

Then, too, your besetting sin is that, by which you most frequently offend God, and offend Him most. They who would keep a fortified place against an enemy, would defend most carefully its weakest points. It is there, that he would most assail them. So Satan most assails thee, wherever thou art weakest. But, wherever he has power over thee, he gains power over thy whole self. If thou sinnest, it is thy whole self which sinneth. It needs not, to make thee a sinner, that thou shouldst have the whole weight of all sin upon thee. If Satan holds thee by any one sin, he holds thee effectually back from God. It is by thy besetting sin, that he makes thee most often displease God. By thy besetting sin, he keeps thee down to earth, afraid of God, a stranger to God, empty of God, because thou art filled with things which displease God.

For thy besetting sin lies most deeply in thy whole nature. It springs from the most corrupt part of thyself. It hurts thee most, because it is the sin thou hast most love for. Other faults lie on the surface; this goes to the very depth of thy soul. Other faults are not so done with thy whole heart. Thou art in most peril, as to thy besetting sin, that it take up thy whole heart, master thy affections, occupy thy imagination, fill thy thoughts, engross thy time, enslave thyself.

Thou hast then great reason to be most watchful to uproot thy besetting sin, because 1. It is the root of other sins, gives occasion to them, makes them as



bad as they are, makes acts which would have no sin, to be sinful, because they have this sin in them. And so while thy besetting sin reigns in thy soul, it is the parent of many other sins; when it is dethroned, and destroyed, many others die with it.

2. It is the sin which has most hold of thy mind, and so it is the cause why thou most often offendest God. It comes to thee oftenest, tempts thee most strongly, and thou art the weakest here, and yieldest the most readily. This is another separate evil. People are wont to think of sin as a weakness, whereby they do what is wrong. They own to themselves, that it is their weak point. They do not think to themselves, until God has touched their consciences, that every single act is an offence against Almighty God, contrary to His Holy Will and to His Love. But this besetting sin so multiplies sin. It is called the besetting sin, because it continually besets thee; that is, it is always about thee, always on the watch for thee. It entangles thee at every step. More of a man's sins are done through his besetting sin, than through all besides. It becomes his companion. He becomes so inured to it, that he does not think of it as sin, or justifies it, or, at least, pleads to himself that his nature is weak and that he cannot help it. Nature *is* weak; but grace is strong; yea, Almighty. But so he sins more habitually. He multiplies sins, whenever the occasion or temptation comes. And so there results, at last, a fearful heap of sin against Almighty God. God says that He "will bring every work into judgment with every secret thing, whether it be good or evil." God takes account of single acts. Every single sin

is treason against Almighty God. It is to choose what He forbids and what Satan tempts to. God says, He "will bring *every* work into judgment, with *every* secret thing."

Sin then has two aspects. It is a condition, a way of being, a whole, offensive to Almighty God. And every separate sin is a separate defiance, or neglect, or, any how, disobedience to Him. Dead leaves fall, one by one, light almost as the air through which they fall. What a heavy, putrid mass they become, when they are thickened together, full of all uncleanness! In like way a man commits sin, and thinks so lightly of it, that he will not be able to tell, after a time, how many very deadly sins he has committed. But, when he sees all, festering in their own corruption and foulness, within and around him, what a loathsome sickening sight they—yea he himself is to himself. A man may have committed the same grievous sin every day, or three times in two days. In two years he will have committed a thousand deadly sins against Almighty God. It has been the ground-work of solid conversion to God, to see, in a review of life, how many thousand sins a person has thus, through this one sin, committed against Him.

But even short of anything so frightful, the besetting sin grows, day by day, sometimes in darker forms, sometimes in lighter, but still continually. It is the cause of most of those acts for which thou wilt be judged; for which, but for God's mercy, thou wouldest be condemned.

3. Then too, it is the occasion of a man's worst sins, because a man yields his mind most to it, goes

along with it, does it with pleasure. All sin is, to choose something else, rather than God. But to choose a thing eagerly, with zest, taking delight in it, against the wise love of God, this is the deadliest form of sin.

4. Then it will most likely be, that when not tempted in act, a man will be tempted to the thought of his besetting sin, both before and after. And so he acts his sin over again in thought, when he cannot in deed. Thus he may multiply his sin, beyond all power of thought. For thought is so quick; each minute may have many thoughts crowded into it. And minutes pass quickly by, when engaged in thoughts upon which a person likes to dwell. And so the sin is thought of beforehand, again and again, before it is done; and this is deliberate sin, and continued sin of full choice against the will of God. The sin is thought of afterward with pleasure; and this is confirmed rebellion against the will of God, even when the temptation to the actual sin is not present. No man, unless he has well sifted himself, can imagine how manifold these thoughts will be. The mind sinks naturally into the thoughts, which it likes to dwell upon, as a stone rolls downwards. It rests there, when not moved elsewhere. They are its home, its resting-place. Yet in this way, not only are sins multiplied exceedingly, but the very mind and will are corrupted. Everything around us suggests something connected with what is nearest to the heart. To those who love God, all God's works speak of God; to those who deeply grieve, all sights or sounds furnish some fresh memorial of their grief; to those who love sin, all things suggest thoughts of sin.

Such then are grounds from the nature of the besetting sin itself, why thou shouldest earnestly and specially strive against it. It is thy deadliest enemy; that which most keeps thee from God, if unhappily thou art separated from Him; if not, still it is that which most offends Him, hinders His love from flowing to thee and filling thee, hinders thee from loving Him with thy whole heart. It is the cloud which chiefly comes between thee and the Face of God; the chain which binds thee down to earth; the snare which entangles thy feet, that thou "runnest not the way of God's commandments," followest not the steps of Jesus, Who died for thee, that serving Him, thou mayest be with Him for ever. It closes thy heart to the full Presence of the Holy Ghost the Comforter, Who wills that, partaking of His holiness, thou mayest have the fulness of His joy.

But then for thyself, too, it is thus that thou wilt have most courage to fight. It has been, no doubt, discouraging at some time, to most of us, that we could not become good, all at once. We wished to please God; to be what God loves; not to do what He forbids; to do what He commands; but we knew not wherewith to begin. Our garden, which we were to make clean, seemed full of weeds. They seemed to spring up fresh every day; how could we clean it? And so the weeds of our sins grew, as they would, left to themselves, with more luxuriant, foul, rankness. It is said that one who thought thus, dreamed that He who had given him his garden to cleanse, came to him and asked him what he was doing. He said, "I lost all hope of cleaning my garden, so I laid down to sleep." His Good Father

said to him, "Clean every day as much as thou coverest, where thou art lying, and all will be, in time, cleaned." So God speaks to us. "Set about some one thing for ME; set thyself to get rid of some one sin for love of ME, to become in one thing more pleasing to ME, and I will be with thee; I will give thee victory in this; I will lead thee on from victory to victory, from strength to strength; thou shalt "run, and not be weary; thou shalt walk, and not be faint." By the same strength, by which thou prevailest over thy first enemy, thou shalt prevail over the rest. In human warfare, those who fight are tired even by their victory; in Divine warfare, they are strengthened. For they fight not in human weakness, but in Divine strength; and "My strength," He says, "is made perfect in weakness." In victory over sin, God will give, if it be good for thee, sweetness of consolation, and the comfort of His Love, and good hope of *His* continued favour, "Who has begun a good work in thee." In any case, thou will find, that, in using the strength of God to subdue one sin, thou hast, in a way unknown to thyself, weakened the hold of many upon thee. So banded are sins and graces together, that he who makes progress in subduing one sin, has done much to subdue all; he who has made room in himself for the fulness of one grace of God, has prepared the house of his soul to receive all, has nerved his soul to strive and strain for all, through His grace, Who giveth all.

This is another good in fighting against thy besetting sin. Thou art gathered upon one point. Thou art striving with thy whole heart to please God in that point; thou wilt be asking for and using God's

grace for this. But therewith, secretly, thou wilt be transformed thyself. In learning to subdue one sin, thou wilt have been learning how, in time, to subdue all. Thou wilt have learnt the wiles of the enemy ; the weakness of thy own heart ; the force of outward temptations ; the need to avoid, if thou canst, the outward occasion, but, in any case, the necessity of resisting in the first moment of assault. Thou wilt know, for thyself, the might which God gives thee when thou so resistest ; the power of instant prayer. Thou wilt have felt the peril of tampering with sin ; the value of watchfulness ; the danger of security after thou hast conquered ; how the tempter withdraws in order to assail thee more vehemently ; the peril of very little acts or thoughts, at all connected with the sin thou wouldest conquer. Thou wilt have tasted the blessedness of gathering up thy whole mind to serve God ; and giving thyself to Him, morning by morning, to please Him in this, and not to displease Him. Thou wilt have known, in thine own soul, the value of obeying, at once, any suggestions, which, by His Holy Spirit, or in thy conscience, He giveth thee to avoid this or do that. These and other things thou wilt learn in thy first resolute, continued, endeavour to uproot, by God's grace, thy besetting sin. But, therewith, thou wilt have learnt to become a good soldier of Jesus Christ ; thou wilt have learnt the way of the heavenly warfare, and the temper of its armoury ; thou wilt have proved its weapons, and gained skill to use them. By one sin our first parent broke God's commandment, and brought sin into the world. He had forfeited the obedience of his innocence ; he became

disobedient. He sacrificed his obedience to his self-will, and became a rebel to his God, and all other rebellion flowed from this one. Sacrifice thou one darling passion to God, and thou wilt be, by His grace, on the way to recover full obedience to Him.

It is true that God could, if He would, transform thee at once, as He did Mary Magdalene, or the robber on the cross, or as He made St. Paul a lamb for a wolf, an Apostle for a blasphemer, full of love instead of full of fury. He might, in one moment, open thine heart as Lydia's, or the jailors. He does, when He sees good, work wonders now in turning souls, in one moment, to Him. So, in the course of nature, He sometimes heals suddenly without human means. But it is to presume upon His mercy and to tempt it, to wait for this. God has not promised it, nor is it the common way, which His Wisdom has chosen. In grace, as in nature, He wills, that we should learn with pains, with industry, with watchfulness, with perseverance, with humility, with dependance upon Him. He would not drive out the Canaanites before Israel, at once; but He "drove them out by little and little, lest the beasts of the field should increase upon them." Amid too easy victory, we might neither know the deadliness of sin, nor its hatefulness to God, nor its power over the soul, nor the mercy of our Redeemer, nor the depth of the riches of the love of God. We might just miss that very lesson which, for all eternity, God is teaching us, by placing us amid the perils and temptations of this mortal life, in which, through His Grace, we have to work out our salvation amid toil, and hardship, and the deceitfulness of our own

hearts, and the world's seducing, but deadly sweetness.

And now, before I go further, will ye, my brethren, in such leisure as ye shall have, think, during this week, each of you, within your own hearts, what *your* besetting sin is? It is as manifold, as human minds are. "In many things we all offend," the Apostle says. But besides those manifold infirmities, negligences, omissions, most have, as I said, some one leading fault; the captain of all his faults; that which most enters into all. The most widely destructive are some appetites of the body. Other sins slay their thousands; sins of the flesh, their ten thousands. But as to spiritual sins also, in some, it is pride; in others, vain-glory, or love of praise, or vanity about their poor bodies or their minds; in others, envy or jealousy; in others, unforgivingness or bitterness; in others, discontent or restlessness; in others, selfishness; in others, hard-heartedness, or want of sympathy or of tenderness; in others, sloth; in others, self-will; in others, anger; in others, ambition; in others, covetousness; in others, self-complacency; in others, perverseness or obstinacy. Alas, my brethren, how many enemies there are, who would dispute with us the love of God, and our salvation. But mightier is He that is in you, than he that is in the world. Many though your enemies are, when their champion is dead, the victory is, in earnest, won.

Ask God then in earnest prayer to shew you, each of you, wherein *his* chief fault lies. Think, when death, and the Day of Judgment comes before you, what sin most frightens you; or by what you fall most often;



or for what your conscience most reproaches you ; or against what you have made most good resolutions, and have broken them ; or what fault it would seem hardest to you to give up ; or what makes you most unhappy, or weighs most upon you when alone ; or what seems most to keep you back from God, or afraid to think of Him ; or what seems to stand most in your way, when you would wish to serve God ; or about what your conscience oftenest smites you in hearing God's Word, or reading some good book ; or in what you would least like others to know you just as you are ; or what you feel most guilty about, when it is blamed in others ; or what frightens you from coming to Holy Communion, or when you come to It ; or what sin you are most tempted to turn away from, and hide your own eyes from, that you may not see it ; or again, on the contrary, what subject your thoughts, when you have nothing else to do, most dwell upon ; or what thoughts flash across you, amidst other occupations, and come oftenest to you, and you entertain them or take pleasure in them ; or for what others have most often blamed you ; or what you recollect, when you were little, was your chief fault, of which your parents oftenest told you. In some or other of these ways, God will shew you wherein your chief sin lies ; or those who know you well and love you, could help you ; or perhaps God may, all at once, if you are in earnest, bring it before you.

You will, I hope, by God's blessing, have been encouraged to day to fight that good fight of faith. God willeth that you should prevail. He will help you, Who wills to crown you. Only purpose to

fight, as St. Paul bids you, "looking unto JESUS, the Author and Finisher of your faith." In the Name of JESUS, is untold strength. Without Him, ye can do nothing; with Him, ye can do all things. For He will do all for you. Only He will do it, with you, in you, through you, not without you. He has overcome sin once *for* you, and slain it by His own Death. Now, if ye will, He will overcome it *in* you. When your hearts fail, He will comfort you; when ye are weak, He will strengthen you; if ye stumble, He will uphold you; if, amid real strife, ye fall, He will lift you up; if ye be bruised, He will bind you; if ye be wounded, He will heal you; if ye be faint and weary, He will refresh you. Only look to Him, pray Him; and He will be in life your strength; in death, your stay; in eternity, with the Father and the Holy Ghost, "your exceeding great Reward."

## SERMON IX.

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### VICTORY OVER THE BESETTING SIN.

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ST. LUKE iv. 1, 2.

*“ And Jesus, being full of the Holy Ghost, returned from Jordan, and was led by the Spirit into the wilderness, being forty days tempted by the devil.”*

OUR Blessed Lord endured temptation, as well as whatever besides He did and suffered, for *us*. It must have been one of His most grievous Sufferings. Whence in our Litany we beseech Him “by Thy Fasting and Temptation, Have mercy upon us.” Within Him, there was nothing to yield to temptation. He was All-Holy, being the Son of God. There was nothing in Him which could rebel, could balance between good and evil, could be drawn towards evil. In our temptations, there are four stages. First, the thought is suggested; then comes an inward pleasure in the thought; then follows the struggle; and men consent or do not consent; they yield in act, or conquer. *Our* nature, being corrupt,

has a feeling of inward pleasure in what it likes, even though God forbids it. If through the Grace of God the feeling is put down at once by our will, it belongs to the sinfulness of our nature, not to our own. By putting it down, we gain the victory over our own sinfulness. To yield even in thought, by an act of our own, is sin. Our Blessed Holy Lord ever beheld sin, as God, with the same eyes as God the Father. His Human Will was ever perfectly one with His Divine. In Him there was neither sinfulness, nor sin, nor capacity for sin. He ever hated sin, which He came to destroy, with a perfect hatred, while He loved us sinners.

To Him, temptation was simply suffering. To restore our nature wholly, He willed to endure in our nature the presence of temptation. Loathsome to Him above all thought of ours, must have been the presence of that rebel being, and his accursed touch. Intensely hateful to His All-Holy soul, must have been Satan's smooth words, his hypocritical suggestions of evil under the guise of good, his alleging the words of God in defence of rebellion against God; and the thought put before Him outwardly, that He too should rebel against His Father. This, too, He endured for love of us, to conquer Satan in this way also, in our nature, and to teach us how to conquer him.

Satan tried against our Holy Lord the threefold temptation, by which he conquered the first Adam. First, the desire of the flesh, that is, of what in us, the flesh thinks necessary for it, what we think it must have, and are tempted to give it against the will of God. This was when he said, "If thou be the Son

of God, command this stone that it be made bread." Then Satan tried "the desire of the eyes," or what in us is covetousness, when, "in a moment of time, he shewed our Lord all the kingdoms of the world." Then he hoped to find what, in us, is "pride of life," or vain-glory, when he said, "If Thou be the Son of God, cast Thyself down from hence, for it is written, He shall give His Angels charge concerning THEE."

Adam gave way to the desire of the flesh, when he ate the forbidden fruit; to pride, when he listened to Satan's, "ye shall be as God;" to the desire of the eyes, or covetousness, when he hearkened to his, "knowing good and evil." Our Lord, in our Nature, not only defeated Satan in these same things, but taught us how to overcome them. First, by answering Satan at once. To hesitate, to parley with Satan, is the first step, (as you will unhappily have felt,) towards defeat. We are in our own power, at the very first moment of temptation, in a way, in which we are not afterwards. Our mind is free, unclouded; our will, firm. We can then, by God's help, gather ourselves up in one, and cast the evil one from us like a serpent. It has become a proverb from sad miserable experience, "Who hesitates, is lost."

Secondly, in answering Satan, our Blessed Lord does not vouchsafe to enter into his subtleties. Satan twice says, "If Thou be the Son of God." It may be, he wished to know whether He were the Son of God, "the seed of the woman," Who, he knew, was to crush his head, and destroy his kingdom. To this our Lord answers nothing. He does not enter into questions, whether to do this were, or were not, befitting the Son of God. He simply puts down Satan,

with words of Holy Scripture, teaching us in our fight with Satan, to set before us God's plain words, to take some one plain command of God, and say to him, and to ourselves, "It is written." Temptations are sometimes very subtle. But the conscience, enlightened by God's Holy Spirit, will readily see in them, some one thing, which is plainly against God's voice within it, and His Word. Hold fast to this, and it will lead thee. Thus Satan often suggests to people, "This or that is not to break the seventh commandment." Call to thyself the text, "Thou, God, seest me," or "God shall bring every secret thing into judgment." Think whether you would do this or that, if Jesus were by, or your parents, or one you loved and respected, and then think, "Can I dare do this, since God is by, in this very room?" And so, as to any grudge to one another, Satan tells you, "You cannot help feeling so and so towards such an one. You would not do him any injury. You would not wish him evil." To wish or to do evil would be greater evil. But call to thyself quickly, "A new commandment I give unto you, that ye love one another; as I have loved you, that ye also love one another." Did our Lord love us when we were good or when we were evil? And so on, in other temptations.

Thirdly, our Lord teaches us, that there is an order in Satan's temptations; not the same order in all, as perhaps He meant to teach us, when He appointed that His temptations should be related in a different order, by St. Matthew and St. Luke. In both, the first temptation is that of the flesh, perhaps, because this is the first and widest and most deadly

temptation of men. Then in St. Matthew, follows that to vain-glory, perhaps because we are tempted to vain-glory, through our very victories; and then perhaps the order was varied in St. Luke, because covetousness may lead to vain-glory, or vain-glory to covetousness.

But on the subject of which I was speaking to you, last Sunday, our besetting sin, our Lord has been thought, by successively subduing Satan in each of our three chief temptations, to teach us to gather ourselves upon our temptations, one by one, and so when we have, by His grace, thoroughly uprooted one, to go on to uproot another.

But now, before going further, I must again say, that, in speaking of each one's chief fault, I do not mean certain open deadly acts of sin, which a person cannot do, and at the same time be a Christian at all. There are some things which ought either never to have been at all, or if, unhappily, they ever have been, ought never to be again. You would, of yourselves, understand this, if I were to speak of murder. You could not picture to yourselves, a man committing murder again and again, and repenting, and resolving not to do it, and breaking his resolve, and again murdering another. Even this, no doubt, has been done in lands, where people have been more tempted to deeds of violence, than men in this land now are. In *this* self-deceit we should see, how far the human heart, and so, our own, can deceive itself. "The heart of man is deceitful above all things, and" of itself "incurable."<sup>a</sup> But what says

<sup>a</sup> Jer. xvii. 9, שׁוֹרֵר is so translated, Job xxxiv. 6, Jer. xv. 18, Micah i. 9, of "a wound"; Jer. xxx. 15, of sorrow. In Isaiah

God's word? "Be not deceived. Neither fornicators, nor adulterers, nor thieves, nor covetous, nor drunkards, nor revilers, nor extortioners, shall inherit the kingdom of God." Plainly, God is not here speaking of even these sins, if repented of. God forgives all, for which He gives the heart to repent. And further, when He ranks the "covetous" or "revilers" with those extremest sins, He means the extreme form of these sins. St. Paul is speaking of sins, which kill the soul at one stroke. God may bring the soul to life. But the sin itself is death. Do not deceive yourselves, my brethren; but judge of those sins, to which ye are tempted, by those to which ye are not tempted. In sins to which ye are tempted, the temptation bribes you. When ye are not tempted, ye can judge, as God bids you. As then ye would not think of a person's committing murder again and again, and repenting again and again, and yet being a Christian, so neither must any of you, married or unmarried, do those things which God forbids, and think that you are Christians, because when the sin is done, and the temptation over, ye wish that ye had not done it.

It is true, that even such deadly sins are to be conquered in the same way as others. It is true, that no one must despair, into whatever sins he falls. But when Holy Scripture speaks of our Christian warfare, it means a warfare, whereby we should be wholly conquerors over such sins, as drunkenness, or the deadly sins of the flesh, since the Apostle would xvii. 11, it is rendered "desperate"; and so our translators probably mean, in this place, that the heart is "desperately" sick, that is, difficult to be cured, or, by human help, incurable.



have those who so sin, separated from the common intercourse of Christians, that they may be ashamed.

But although those sins kill at one stroke, other sins steal away the heart from God, and banish God from the heart. A vessel will sink, whether filled with heavy stones or with sand. Fine grains of sand will bury travellers in the desert. Fine flakes of snow, so light that they seem to hang in the air, and scarce to fall, will, if they gather over the sleepy wayfarer, extinguish life; if they drift, they will bury whole houses and their dwellers. Fine, delicate sins, as people think them, will chill the soul and take away its life.

In speaking, then, of the battle which ye have to fight with sin, I *do* mean a battle for your life, for your undying souls, a battle, in which your prize is to win God; your loss, to be shut out from God, and to be with devils.

But I do *not* mean, chiefly, strife with such sins, as, if ye guard yourselves diligently, ye need never have to fight with. No one is plunged into all sin at once. No man would be tempted to commit murder, who had not often given way to strong passion. No one would be tempted to be drunk, who had not often indulged himself more than he knew to be right. No one would be tempted to great dishonesty, who had not allowed himself in petty acts, of which he thought lightly, but which he would be ashamed to have known. And so, no one would be tempted to grievous sins against the seventh Commandment, who had not first tampered with less.

I *must* say this, my brethren, lest any of you should think that I set before you, as your Christian warfare,

a fight, wherein the question would be, whether ye should be Christians at all. If any, unhappily, have this fight, let them not think themselves shut out. They must use the same means ; yea, use them the more earnestly, because they are tempting the long-suffering of God, and stifling His grace, and provoking God to withdraw it, and deadening their own hearts, and searing their consciences with a hot iron ; and what is so seared and deadened may be left by God, and so, never again live. Surely our conflict is, to uproot everything which interferes with the love of God, and the thought of God, and the likeness of God in our souls. Surely our warfare is, to subdue our whole souls, every thought and wish and motion of our hearts, to the will of God ; so that we should will, love, choose, avoid whatsoever God wills and loves, and willeth us to choose or avoid. What saith Scripture ? “ He that hath this hope purifieth himself, even as He is pure.” “ Be ye perfect, as your Father Which is in Heaven, is perfect.” “ As He is, so are we in this world.”

I gave you some hints last Sunday, how you might each, (if you knew it not already), discover your besetting sin, hoping that some thoughts would help one of you, some, another. For not only has God made us differently one from another, but we ourselves increase in ourselves, each our own fault. We, most of us, come into this world with some leading good disposition which God gave us ; and we bring with us, mostly, some leading wrong temper, through the corruption of human nature, from our earthly birth. That one fault is our besetting sin. But even that one fault would not have so much hold

upon us, had we used the grace which God, through Baptism, entrusted to us, and which He has ever since been renewing to each of us, if we would have it. This besetting sin it is, I said, with which our conflict for life eternal, chiefly lies. This if we subdue, we shall most grow in the grace and the love of God. For this sin most closes our hearts to His grace and love.

But if any of you have not been able to discover your besetting sin, or should not be certain about it, do not therefore give up having some special battle with your sins, some one strife in which, by God's grace, you shall endeavour to have complete mastery over some one sin. Pursue, strike it down, whenever it appears. One blow will not do to death a besetting sin. It would not be well for us to have the victory so easily. We might be puffed up with our success, and think success an easy matter, in our own hands. We might think it our own work, not God's, and so cast out one devil by another, pride, and in the end, be the slave of both. It is this mistake, as though sin were an easy thing to conquer, which makes people linger so securely in their sins. They do not like to part with them now, and think that they shall be able to part with them when they please. They hope to have their pleasure in them now, and yet be free from them, as soon as they wish. None can know how hard it is, to get rid of any, even deadly sin, until they in earnest strive. And yet they half suspect that it is very hard; but they do not like to own it to themselves, lest they should be constrained to strive in earnest.

And yet, on this very ground, thou must not be

discouraged by any defeats. We should be humbled for them, always ask God pardon very humbly for each of them, for Jesus' sake, but never despond about them. Whatever a man's besetting sin is, he has, through careless childhood, or self-willed, self-pleasing youth, strengthened its hold upon him. Thin, fine, invisible, as a gossamer's thread, when the light from God shines not upon them, seem the single threads of our sins. The enchantress<sup>b</sup> sin smiles sweetly on you, that you may conceive no ill, until she has wound them slowly round you. When she has wound them, she will clap her hands and say, "Thou art mine." Slowly they intertwine, line with line, fibre with fibre, sin with sin; once intertwined, no human strength can burst the tightened cord. Stronger than thou, is he who, whilst thou wert asleep and listless, wound them round thee; but stronger than the strong man is He Who will unloose thee. Yet, one by one, didst thou let these cords pass over thee; by little and little didst thou give thyself to be bound; little by little will God unbind thee; that thou mayest know into how evil and sore a bondage thou hast sold thyself, how helpless and powerless thou art to free thyself.

If thou canst not find out thy chief fault, apply thyself to any bad one. It is better to gather thyself to an earnest conflict with almost any one, than to lose thy time in debating which to grapple with.

<sup>b</sup> The language and image are taken from Southey's *Thalaba*. viii. 21—28. All deep moral poetry has a sacred meaning beyond its words. A Hebrew proverb says, "Evil desire in the beginning is like a spider's web; afterwards it is like a cart-rope." Tract. Succah.

Whilst thou art in earnest engaged about one, God will disclose to thee others. Persons are often mistaken as to their chief fault. They think it to be one, while it is another, because they do not know themselves. And so they hew at the branches, not at the trunk. Still, hew on, and God will guide thy strokes. One, practised in the knowledge of others' souls and of his own, could often help thee. In any case, God will not be lacking to thee, if thou art in earnest, and not lacking to Him.

In this warfare there are some rules, alike for all sins, some, special to each; some, which relate to self-knowledge; some, how to be on our guard; some, to help our repentance; some, whereby we may gain strength to fight.

It is of the very greatest moment, to know the occasions of our sin, and the way in which it shews itself. To know the occasions, puts us on our guard; to know how our sin shews itself, gives us the means of stopping it. Thus, as to these occasions; one is made angry, if he is found fault with roughly, or even at all, or slighted, or spoken slightly of, or laughed at, or kept waiting, or treated rudely, or hurt even unintentionally, or if his will is crossed, or he is contradicted, or interrupted, or not attended to, or another be preferred to him, or if he cannot succeed in what he has to do. These sound little things, my brethren, when we speak of them in this house, in the Presence of God, and in the sight of Eternity. But these and such like little things make up our daily trials, our habits of mind, our life; our likeness or unlikeness to God, Who made us in His own Image; our eternity.

Our first step is to know these things; our next, not to despise them. For as we act in them, such we become ourselves, and as we become now, so we shall be everlastingly. In these little things, then, you must know yourselves, and thank God that, by taking heed to such little things, you may please Him.

As you learn to know yourself, you will come to be upon your guard: and morning by morning, you should tell Almighty God in simple words what are the temptations to this sin, which, by His grace, you would subdue, and ask Him for grace. Tell Him also, the wrong ways into which it betrays you, one by one, and pray Him, to give you strength to keep from the least shadow of them.

Even in graver sins, it is very needful to observe whether the temptation begins from within or from without. Thus, of two men who are greedy, to the one, the greediness will begin with the thought; to the other, suddenly, in the act itself of taking food. Thou must guard specially against that which is to *thee*, commonly, the first beginning of the sin. This will be the case even as to much graver sin. To dwell with pleasure on praise, to be fond of dress, of being admired, or loved, to go over in the mind soft words, have most often been the beginning of deadly sin, where there was no other temptation to it. But in all cases, you must set yourself diligently to observe where the temptation begins. For this is the entrance of death, which you must the more carefully close up. The remedy in one case might be to check vanity; in another, it would be to abstain at least, from fulness of food, or from strong drink.

Again, if our temptation were anger, we might perhaps be quiet when no one provoked us, and yet suddenly surprised by any slight rudeness of another, and resent it; or, if we were of a quieter sort, we might not be tempted to resent it at all, but brood over it in our souls, and cherish unlove within us.

Then, it is useful to have special rules, with regard to the special sin. Let them not be too hard, nor for too long a time. It is easier to set before one a rule for a short time. If we find it good for us, we shall gladly renew it.

Thus, if we wished to gain contentment, we might try such rules as these. 1. Allow thyself to complain of nothing (not even of the weather) knowing that everything is ordained or overruled by God. 2. Never picture thyself to thyself under any circumstances in which thou art not. 3. Never compare thine own lot with that of another. 4. Never allow thyself to dwell on the wish that this or that had been or were otherwise, than it was or is. Almighty God loves thee better and more wisely than thou dost thyself. 5. Never dwell on the morrow. Remember that it is God's, not thine. The heaviest part of sorrow often is to look forward to it. "The Lord will provide."

Some few simple rules of this sort will be of use against any other ruling passion. They brace the soul, give it a definite steadfast aim; teach it to fight, not as uncertainly; set acts before it, whereby it may please God. They give it tests to itself, whether it is exerting itself to please God or no.

Then do not try only, to abstain from sin, but strive, by God's grace, to gain the opposite grace.

If thou wouldest save thyself from falling backward, thou wouldest throw thyself forward. If thou wouldest not slip back into sin, thou must stretch forward to Christ and His holiness. It is a dull, heavy, dreary, miserable, toilsome way, just to avoid sin. It is to give up the miserable pleasure of sin, without receiving in return the heavenly pleasures of delight in God. It has nothing generous, nothing noble, nothing ennobling, nothing worthy of the price paid for us, nothing befitting what we have been made, the sons of God. Thou wouldest not simply not be impatient; thou wouldest long to be like thy Lord, Who was meek and lowly of heart. Thou wouldest not only not openly murmur; thou wouldest surely long, like the beloved Apostle, to rest on Jesus' breast, and will what He wills. Thou wouldest not, only not be a defiled and loathsome thing! Thou wouldest have thy soul a fit dwelling for God the Holy Ghost; thou wouldest have thy body fit to be transfigured after death, into the heavenly glory of thy Lord, and radiant with His purity; thou wouldest not have one thought unmeet for the heavenly Inhabitant; thou wouldest have thy thoughts free to soar aloft to thy future dwelling-place and be, not with the beasts which perish, but with the holy Angels, with them beholding, adoring, loving, their and your Lord. Thou wouldest not only escape hell, thou wouldest long to have thy capacity enlarged to contain the Infinite love of God.

And now to review the method of this warfare. This is a practice by which others have in a few months gained more than in years before.

First go into thyself; ask light of God to see thy-





self; bear to know thyself, and to know well what thy sins are; and resolve firmly, by thy Saviour's help, to part with them, rather than with Him.

Then observe, which of these is thy besetting sin. If thou canst not find this for thyself, another, as I said, perhaps may tell thee. Any how, take steadily some one sin, which seems to stand out before thee, to root it out, by God's grace, and every fibre of it. Purpose strongly, by the grace and strength of God, wholly to sacrifice this sin or sinful inclination to the love of God, to spare it not, until thou leave of it none remaining, neither root nor branch.

Then, as to this very sin, look carefully, day by day, what gives rise to it. Observe, with especial care, whether the temptation comes to thee from within or from without. But observe also all the ways in which this sin overtakes, surprises, masters thee; that thou mayest be on thy guard against the assault and against thyself.

Observe too, as well as thou canst, the very ways in which thou yieldest to the sin, thine anger, impatience, or whatever else it be. Observe the very acts or words thou most often usest, in giving vent to it. Thou wilt find, very likely, that it is some one, or some few ways of acting or speaking, into which thou fallest again and again. If thou art on thy guard, thou wilt often be able to stop the usual vent of thy sin; if thou stop this, thou wilt have gained time, by God's grace to stop the sin too.

As you observe these, fix them in your memory in the best way you can. If you can write, write down something which may recall them. If you cannot, God, if you are in earnest, will help you to remember them.

Fix, by God's help, not only to root out this sin, but to set thyself to gain, by that same help, the opposite grace. If thou art tempted to be angry, try hard, by God's grace, to be *very* meek; if to be proud, seek to be *very* humble. In this way, God, seeing thy earnest wish to please Him, will help thee more; and thou wilt be further from the borders of sin, and so in less peril.

Then frame to thyself, or ask some one to help thee to form for thee, some simple rules, which may help to guard thee, or check thee from giving way to thy sin, or which may aid thee in gaining the grace thou desirest.

These things thou mightest do, once for all, or for a long time, while thou art engaged in battling with and destroying *this* sin. It will not hinder thy work, to think how thou mayest please God; or thou mayest on Sunday, think with thyself, or ask one who will help thee. Thus far is like making the instruments of thy daily work. When thou once hast them, they may require sharpening from time to time; but thy daily work is to use them.

Thy daily exercise may be very short. God looks not at the length of words, but at the earnestness of thy heart. If thou hast longer time, God will look graciously upon thee, the more of thy time and thought thou givest to Him. In this too God saith to each of you; "If thou hast much, give plentifully; if thou have little, do thy diligence gladly to give of that little: for so gatherest thou to thyself a good reward in the Day of necessity." If thou hast but little, a few minutes will suffice.

When you wake, or as soon as you are dressed,

offer up your whole self to God, soul and body, thoughts and purposes and desires, to be for that day what He wills. Think of the occasions of the sin likely to befall thee, and go, as a child, to your Father Which is in Heaven, go to Him Who died to redeem you, and tell Him in child-like, simple words, your trials. Be not ashamed of using simple words, or of telling Him your trifling troubles, or trials you are ashamed of. We listen gladly to our children, as they tell us their little troubles. To God, all of ours is in itself, alike little. But all which concerns our soul, is not little to Him Who sent His Son into the world to redeem us; it is not little to Him Who became Man and died for us. The measure of the soul's value is His Love Who is Infinite.

You can tell Him, then, your trials, and ask for grace, in some such simple words as these;

O Good JESU, my Saviour, and my God; Thou Who didst make me, knowest how weak I am. Thou knowest, Good Lord, that I am tempted to—*[then name the temptations to it, and the ways in which you sin, as well as you know them.]* But, Good Lord, for love of Thee, I would this day keep wholly from all *[naming the sin]* and be very *[naming the opposite grace.]* I will not, by Thy Grace, do one [N] act, or speak one [N] word, or give one [N] look, or harbour one [N] thought in my soul. If Thou allow any of these temptations to come upon me this day, I desire to think, speak, and do, only what Thou wilt. Lord, without Thee I can do nothing; with Thee I can do all. Accept, Good Lord, this my desire; help me by Thy Grace that I fall not, or if I fall, bring me back quickly to Thee, and

grant me to love Thee better, for Thy tender mercy's sake.

It will help thee much in thy warfare, if thou first set before thy soul thy Lord, as He showed forth that grace which thou wouldest copy. If the grace be humility, think of Him washing the disciples' feet; if meekness, think of His receiving the traitor's kiss, and how thou hast betrayed Him by thy sins; if it be patience under injuries, behold Him standing meekly, while they buffeted, reviled, mocked, spat on Him; if it be love of thy brother who offends thee, think of Him stretching out His Hands upon the Cross, and embracing the whole world, and thee too with thy brother, in His love. There is no thought which has such power over the soul and over sin, as the thought of JESUS. Behold Him in thy soul, as thou hast seen Him here, pictured before thee.<sup>c</sup> Gaze on His meek Countenance, His Eye full of love resting on thee, the suffering of His Brow pierced for thee, and so ask Him for His love's sake, that thou mayest love Him, and be less unlike Him. And then be very watchful; watch with thy Lord, for a short time; summon thy whole strength to keep thyself wholly from every form of this one sin.

But you cannot know whether you fail or no, unless you examine yourself; and you will find that it costs you less time, less weariness, less irksomeness, and is more hopeful, to examine yourself twice or thrice, than once only at the end of the day. Thy meal times will give thee a break. There is some leisure before thy meal; and to look back a few

<sup>c</sup> A representation of the Crucifixion in the east window of the village Church of Pusey.

hours, two or three minutes will suffice. At the end of the day, the whole day becomes one confused, colourless distance. Thou canst distinguish no objects in it. It is like looking back on a day's journey. If thou look back from time to time from some height, thou canst see spread out before thee what thou hast passed through. If thou wait to the end of the day, by no effort of thy mind canst thou bring back more than some two or three points which arrested thee. Thinkest thou this a hard thing? A very heathen<sup>d</sup> advised to examine every morning on rising from bed, what thou wert about to do, of how much moment it is, not to give way to thy failings, and to renew this oftener than morning and evening.

Listen not to Satan, telling thee it is hard. It *is* hard, when thou beginnest. It *is* hard to resist sin; it *is* hard not to follow thine own will; it *is* hard to save thy soul; but it is harder far and unendurable to lose it and the sight of God. Thine own easy ways will become hard to thee: God will make hard ways easy.

Listen not again if Satan tells thee, when the hour comes: "It is good, only not now; now I am tired, weary, I can remember nothing, think of nothing. How can I think of what I have said, thought, or done, through these hours?" Pray God to shew thee. Thou wilt most likely see but little at first. All things are done ill at first. Only pray God to forgive what thou seest. It will be a great gain, if thou hast truly seen and repented of, but one thing. To have learnt, in one day, with sorrow of heart for

<sup>d</sup> Galen de cognosc. curandisque animi morbis c. 5. 6. See further note A, at the end.

love of Jesus, to look into thyself and bewail, not thy sinfulness only, but the sins of that day to Him, is the first and hardest step to eternal life. Pray to persevere, and all the rest will be easier. Thinkest thou that it will be toilsome to thee, so, day by day, to remove every speck of sin. What is it, then, which it is so wearisome to cleanse? A house which will again be defiled? a mirror which will again be clouded? a dress which shall again be soiled? or this poor outward form, which is one day to decay? These things thou thinkest it no hard thing to cleanse, day by day, or week by week. What is it then which it is so wearisome to look to, to cleanse? Is it something which concerns thee not, something for a time only, something for another? Truly it is for Another too. For it is for the All Holy Trinity. It is that thine own soul, thine own self, thy very inmost self, whom thou shouldest love, may be enlarged to contain God and the love of God; the eyes of thy soul be enlightened that they may see Him as He is, and more fully in whatever degree thou hast cleansed them here; it is that thy soul may be brightened to shine with the Brightness of God; thy senses may desire nothing but what they have in that blessed-making Sight of God, and have what overwhelms all their desire, to be blessed in His Bliss, wise in His Wisdom, good in His Goodness, joyous in His Joy, full of God, yet stretching forth to God; all thine which is God's, save His Infinity, and that will be for thee too, for thou canst never reach the bounds of His Perfections and His Goodness. And shall this too be for a time, my brethren? No! for ye shall be, if ye attain, eternal

in His Eternity. Ye will not think it a hard thing again, my brethren, to prepare yourselves for such fulness of bliss. God grant that ye may, in some way, begin to-day. "To-day" is ever "the Day of salvation."

## SERMON X.

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### PRAYER HEARD THE MORE, THROUGH DELAY.

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SECOND SUNDAY IN LENT.

ST. MATTHEW xv. 28.

*“Jesus answered and said unto her, O woman great is thy faith, be it unto thee even as thou wilt.”*

LENT is especially a season of prayer; and these are in many ways Lenten days,<sup>a</sup> days of sorrow and anguish of heart, days of penitence, days of humiliation, days, in which, by our cries, to awaken our Lord, “Arise and help us, and deliver us for Thy mercies’ sake.” And so our Lord, through the Church, sets before us this great example of humble, penitent, persevering prayer, to shame us Christians by the lowly fervor of a Heathen woman.

Our Lord had withdrawn Himself for a time, from

<sup>a</sup> Preached at S. Saviour’s, Leeds, Lent, 1851. What was temporary and local is omitted.



the thanklessness of the Jews, and come to the border-country of Tyre and Sidon. He would not be known, that is, He willed to do those things whereby He should be hidden. But He willed too to be a blessing to the Canaanitish woman, to help her, and to teach *us* by the way in which He helped her. He had come into those coasts. "He could not be hid;" because His Divine love would not. He willed to be hid to those who sought Him not earnestly. This poor outcast, He drew by His secret grace, and willed to be found by her. And so He brought her out of her heathen country, its ignorance and its sins. He was sent first to the Jewish people, and He had said to His disciples, "go not into the way of the Gentiles," and so He held Himself in the border-country. But He received her when she came unto Him.

Us too He draws inwardly; yet He wills that we should, of ourselves, be at pains to find Him. So when the prodigal son was among the swine-husks, He put it into his heart to say, "I will arise and go to my Father." He gave him strength to arise and go; He ran to meet him, while yet a great way off, and fell on his neck. Still He willed that he should himself arise and go. So this poor woman had "to go forth out of these coasts." She, a Gentile woman in her heathenish sins, was a picture of as many of us, as have at any time, in our sins, forgotten our Lord. The sinful soul, if it would by true repentance, return to God, must not only turn away from sin, but must leave the whole coast of sin. If thou wouldest repent, thou must not venture on the borders of sin, thou must not do lesser acts which lead

to sin. Else most surely thou wilt fall back and not find Jesus, nor be healed. So she "went forth out of those coasts." In thy soul, thou must avoid all thoughts, which border upon the things thou repentest of, or which have led to them. In thy body, thou must keep clear of all houses or streets, or acts, or circumstances, or amusements or society, which are the certain or frequent occasions of deadly sin to thee.<sup>b</sup>

"She cried out." It is a great word, which God uses of this poor sinner. It is a loud cry. He uses the same word<sup>c</sup> of the loud cry by which our Lord called Lazarus out of the grave, and of the strong cry whereby the Son, when in the "flesh, offered up prayers and supplications, with strong crying and tears unto Him that was able to save Him from death, and was heard in that He feared."

This is the second condition of being heard; earnest prayer. The first was, to forsake sin, and to seek Jesus. The second when she saw Him, though afar off, to cry aloud to Him, and that earnestly.

"The Lord," says the Psalmist,<sup>d</sup> "hath not despised nor abhorred the low estate of the poor,"—but when he called unto Him, He heard him. "He

<sup>b</sup> To make this clearer by instances. It would be sin for one to hunt who found that hunting always caused him to swear; or for one to frequent a tavern or society, in which he drank too much; or for one to play, who is continually tempted to dishonest play. The cases in which the necessity is most stringent, are those which fall under the seventh commandment.

<sup>c</sup> Ἐκραύγασε Matt. xv. 22, John xi. 43; μετὰ κραυγῆς ἰσχυρᾶς Heb. v. 7.

<sup>d</sup> Ps. xxii. 24.

saith not," says a holy man,<sup>c</sup> "he was worthy, he was just and righteous, innocent in hands and of a pure heart, therefore will I deliver him, I will protect him and hear him. For if He said these, or the like things, who would not mistrust? Who shall boast that he has a clean heart? But now 'there is mercy with Thee, therefore shalt Thou be feared.' Sweet law, which places the ground of hearing in the loud cry for helping! 'He cried unto Me and I will hear him.' Deservedly is he not heard, who fails to cry aloud, either not asking, or asking lukewarmly or remissly. Earnest longing is a loud cry in the ears of God; relaxed earnestness is a low voice. How should it pierce the clouds? how be heard in Heaven? To teach us that we must cry aloud, our Lord admonishes us in the beginning of His Prayer, that our Father to Whom we are about to pray, is in Heaven; that we may remember that we are, with a certain might of spirit, to dart up our prayers thither. God is a Spirit, and he must cry aloud in the Spirit, who desireth that his cry should reach to Him. For as God looketh not, like man, on the face of man, but rather beholdeth his heart; so the ears of God are to the voice of the heart, rather than of the body. And truly is He called 'Thou God of my heart.' Hence although Moses spake not a word, he was heard within, and the Lord said 'Why criest thou unto Me?'"

And what did she cry? "Lord, have mercy upon me, Thou Son of David." She cried in love, for her daughter's sufferings were to her, as her own. "Have mercy upon *me*," she cries. She cries in faith, for

<sup>c</sup> S. Bern. Serm. 16. in Ps. qui habitat.

she knows Him Whom she calls, to be God and Man; our Lord, yet, after the flesh, one with us; Mighty as Lord, but "for us men and for our salvation, become Man"; Very God and Very Man; David's Lord and David's Son; The Lord of Heaven, but the Son of man. She cries also in humility. Her only plea is Mercy, "Have mercy upon me," All-Merciful! She pleads no desert, no good conscience, nothing of her own. She goes forth out of herself to the mercy of her Redeemer, the boundless, unfathomable Ocean of His Goodness. "Have mercy upon me." The depth of her misery cries aloud to the depth of His Mercy. She cries also wisely. She tells her griefs only, and leaves it to His Almighty Wisdom to deal with her as He sees fit. So Martha and Mary whom Jesus loved, sent to Him, "Lord, behold he whom Thou lovest is sick." She owns Him All-Powerful. Her daughter was grievously vexed, possessed by a devil, not vexed nor haunted without, but possessed within; not possessed nor harassed nor driven to and fro, only, but grievously,<sup>1</sup> the sport of devils.

Such was the faith, which Jesus tried, and by trying, purified and heightened it; and having purified it, rewarded it. And how did He try her? "He answered her not a word." This was a heavy trial even to David's faith. "Unto Thee do I cry, O Lord my God; be not silent unto me, lest if Thou be silent unto me, I become like them that go down into the pit." And if so to David, how much more to this poor heathen! He Who healed all the sick who were brought unto Him, Who, when "multitudes

<sup>1</sup> Κακῶς δαιμονίζεται.

came unto Him, having with them those that were lame, blind, dumb, maimed, and many others, and cast them down at Jesus' feet, healed them," this once alone seemed to be asked in vain. "He knew," says a Father,<sup>s</sup> "the pearl hidden in the woman, and willed that we should know it, and therefore delays, and vouchsafes no answer, that her great perseverance might be a lesson to all afterwards."

And not she alone, but the disciples ask for her, in vain. They say "send her away," knowing that their Lord sent none empty away. It may be, that they ignorantly dreaded, lest His answering her not might bring an evil report. "Dismiss her," they say, "for she crieth aloud after us." Our Lord's answer was a death-blow to her hopes. "I am not sent, save to the lost sheep of the house of Israel." In His Own Person, it pleased our Lord, to preach to the Jews only; us, His other sheep whom He would gather, He called by His Apostles. He was now probably withdrawn within the house, where St. Mark speaks of the cure. But her faith and love followed Him even here. He had refused even Apostles: He had spoken of her as not belonging to His care, not one of the sheep to whom He was sent. She who had been afar off, turns not away, but, being refused, neglected, an outcast, presses into His very Presence; she came to Him, fell at His Feet, doubtless held those sacred Feet, which had gone to and fro to seek the lost, worshipped them and said, "Lord help me." As though she would say, "True! I have not been one of Thy sheep, yet I would be now. I lie at Thy Feet, I look up to

<sup>s</sup> S. Chrys. Hom. 49. in Gen. § 3. tom. iv. p. 451.

Thee, as a sheep to its Shepherd. Lord help me. Nay, rather she lays aside all pleas, except her sorrows. She kneels before Him, as if in the whole world there were only He and herself, "*Lord, help me.*" "Thou art Almighty; I, in need: Thou canst help; I need help: Thou art the Creator; I, Thy creature: Thou camest to save the lost; I am as one lost. Lord help me."

Such is often the inmost prayer of the soul in need. It seeks not many words, knows not what to ask for; for it needs all. It needs forgiveness, purity, holiness, faith, hope, love, humility, freedom from Satan, power to pray. It knows not what first to ask for, or how, and so gathers all its needs in one, "*Lord, help me.*" "Thou knowest all I need; I need all. Thou canst forgive all my sins; Thou canst heal all my infirmities. '*Lord, help me.*'" The soul may ask for the more, in that it only shews to God all its leprous sores, and says to Him, "*Lord, Who canst, and willest, and knowest what is best for me, help me as Thou knowest.*"

One more trial remained, and it seemed the hardest. She seemed to have done her all; she was at His Knees. He does not say "*I will not;*" but He seems to say more, as it were, "*I may not.*" "It is not meet," not good, not becoming Me, "to take the children's bread, and cast it unto dogs." It was, as it were, robbery, to take from those whom God chose for His children and give it to the unclean, the unholy, the profane. Truly with God, we are children, not by nature, but by grace; and so without God and without grace, we are as brutes. "Man being in honour, hath no understanding, but is com-

pared unto the beasts that perish." "True, Lord," she answers, "it is as Thou hast said, I deserve not the children's bread; I am what Thou callest me, a whelp.<sup>b</sup> Yet, even as a whelp, I would be Thine. Deal with me, then, as Thine. Thou art my Master; Thou canst not cast me out. With thee are exhaustless stores of mercy. Thou ever feedest all, and never failest. Thou fillest and yet overflowest. Thy choicest gifts will not satisfy thy children less; Thy store for them will not be lessened, if Thou give me too the portion of a dog, the crumbs which fall from Thy, my Master's, table."

Her humility was completed, her perseverance accomplished, her faith perfected. Almighty God had allowed her to plead with Himself, and Himself to be vanquished. He had been pleased to allow His own words to be turned back upon Himself, with eloquent humility, which prevailed. Like the Patriarch Jacob, who said, "I will not let Thee go unless Thou bless me," she had power with God, and prevailed. She had accepted the likeness of the dog, and our Lord gave her the very title, which He gave His Mother, "O woman." She asked help for her child; she received, over and above, the praise of God, "O woman, great is thy faith." "Thou hast not," says a Father,<sup>i</sup> "seen the dead raised, nor lepers cleansed, nor heard the Prophets, nor meditated on the law; thou hast not seen the sea divided, nor any other miracle wrought by Me; nay, thou hast been reproached and perplexed by Me; I have rejected thy suffering and thou wentest not away,

<sup>b</sup> *Κυνάριον.*

<sup>i</sup> S. Chrys. de Chananæa, § 11. tom. iii. p. 443.

but didst persevere. Now therefore do thou too receive a worthy and becoming praise from Me. ‘O woman great is thy faith.’”

“The woman is dead, and her praise remains brighter than a diadem. Whithersoever thou goest, thou hearest Christ saying, ‘Great is thy faith.’ Go to the Church of Persia, and thou hearest Christ saying, ‘great is thy faith!’ Go to the Goths, the barbarians, the Indians, the Moors, the whole earth which the sun surveyeth. One word did Christ utter, and that word is not silent, but with a loud voice proclaims her faith, saying, ‘O woman, great is thy faith, be it unto thee as thou willest.’ He said not, ‘be thy daughter healed,’ but ‘as thou willest.’ Thyself heal her; be thou the physician; to thee I entrust the medicine; go thy way; apply it; be it unto thee as thou willest. The woman neither commanded, nor bade the devil, but only willed, and the will of the woman healed and cast out devils.”

Great was her faith, and so, abundant was the grace, “Be it unto thee even as thou wilt.” Humble, trustful, loving, persevering, faith obtains all it willeth. Being itself according to the will of God, its will is done. The Divine will is as it willeth. “Be it unto thee even as thou wilt. And her daughter was made whole from that very hour,” when Jesus spake. For He, as God, “spake and it was done.” He spake, as God spake in the beginning, “be there light, and there was light.”

And was it not good then, for the woman, that Jesus delayed to hear her prayer? Not only because the praise of the Master Whom she owned, has for



1800 years echoed through all lands, but because He thereby worked deeper grace in her soul. He not only freed her daughter from Satan's bodily possession, but enlightened her mind, and strengthened her faith, and taught her, by experience, how persevering prayer avails with Him, and deepened her humility; and surely He Who dwelleth in the High and Holy Place, and also in the humble and contrite heart, dwelt in her cleansed heart, and made it everlastingly, a dwelling-place for Himself. This heathen woman alone, and the heathen Centurion, drew down by their faith, the praises of the Son of God.

God hears, by delaying to hear. He never hears more deeply, than when He delays to hear. He delays only, in order to repay with usury. He delays only, in order to draw out of the inmost soul yet deeper longings, that He may satisfy them. He would but increase our hunger and thirst, that He may fill us with Himself. God is not poor and powerless, that He cannot give. But He giveth us, as we are able to bear. He giveth as a tender father giveth to his tender children. He giveth them not *what* will hurt them, giveth them not *as* will hurt them. A loving father will give a child bread; he will not give it poison. A wise father will give it food as it needs; he will not give what will surfeit it. A careful father will even make his child wait for the fitting time, when he may receive it more healthfully. A Christian father will not give at once, what is asked impatiently, lest the child, while supplied in body, should be hurt in soul.

This is the trial of our faith. Our whole life is a trial of faith. The very end of prayer is to nou-

rich our faith and love, that we may trust in God; speak to God, and through speaking to God, love God; through trusting in God, be grateful to God. But we see not that God hears us. "So often as I speak of prayer," says a holy man,<sup>k</sup> "I seem to hear in your hearts some words of human thoughts, which I have both often heard from others, and sometimes have experienced in my own heart. How is it that, although we never cease from prayer, scarce any of us seem ever to experience what is the fruit of his prayer? As we go to prayer, so also we seem to return. No one answereth us a word. No one giveth us anything; but we seem to have toiled in vain. But what saith the Lord in the Gospel? 'Judge not according to appearance, but judge righteous judgment.' What is righteous judgment, but the judgment of faith? For 'the just shall live by faith!' Follow then the judgment of faith, not thine own experience. For faith is true, experience deceitful. What then is the truth of faith, save what the Son of God Himself promises? 'All things, whatsoever ye ask in prayer believing, ye shall receive.' Let none of you, brethren, hold his prayer cheap; He, to Whom we pray, holdeth it not cheap. Ere it is gone forth out of our mouth, He hath it written in His book. One of two things we may without doubt hope, that He will either give us what we ask, or what He knoweth to be more useful to us. For 'we know not what to pray for, as we ought,' but He hath pity on our ignorance. He graciously receiveth prayer; but He giveth not, either what is altogether not good for us, or what need not be given

<sup>k</sup> S. Bern. in Quadr. Serm. v. § 5.

us so speedily. Yet will not the prayer be without fruit."

But the human heart faints through delay ; some prayers God hears, some He hears not. How shall we know whether ours be such prayers as He hears ?

God hears not the prayers of those who *will* go on in sin. " Though ye make many prayers, I will not hear. Your hands are full of blood." God hears not our prayers, if we pray for what will hurt us, or will not further our salvation, (as when St. Paul prayed for the removal of the thorn in the flesh, or the two sons of Zebedee, although He loved them,) or if we pray with a double heart, one heart for God, and the other for the world. God hears not self-satisfied prayers like the Pharisee's, or if we pray with lukewarm hearts ; or if we have pleasure in evil thoughts, or cherish anger or displeasure against another, or secret grudge, or dislike, or hard thoughts and words towards one who has wronged us. God then in mercy hears not, that we, seeing in ourselves, what hinders our prayers and His grace, may, by His grace, become such as He will hear.

Flee these things, and seek things pleasing to God, and yourselves, to please God, and God will hear you, when and as He sees fit, but more than you can desire or deserve.

Pray, modestly, as to the things of this life ; earnestly, for what may be helps to your salvation ; intensely, for salvation itself, that you may for ever behold God, love God.

Cleanse your heart now ; for " the pure in heart shall see God."

Be alone with God, that your soul may be free to

Speak to Him, and to hear Him. But be alone in your inmost hearts, shutting out busy, anxious thoughts, that they throng not in with thy prayers, and cloud not the sight and thought of God.

Practise in life whatever thou prayest for, and God will give it thee more abundantly.

Bear patiently and humbly all daily crosses, contradictions, rebukes, and whatsoever is against thine own will. They will conform thee to the mind of God, be channels of grace which will cleanse thy soul for yet further grace.

Deny thyself things earthly, if thou wouldest taste the sweetness of things heavenly.

But this day, our Lord teaches, above all things, to persevere in prayer. Many begin well; many hold on for a time well; many pray well from time to time; some alas! can even work themselves up from time to time, to think they pray well, and to feel what they pray; many begin, again and again, well. Few persevere; for few they be, who find the straight gate and narrow way which leadeth unto life.

If thou hast begun, pray that thou mayest pray better. If thou hast failed, pray to begin again, and to persevere. All who pray to persevere, gain what they pray for. None who so prayed has perished.

He Who heard the poor woman of the Gospel, still heareth us. He is present with us, when two or three are gathered together in His Name. He is more specially present when He, as now, is Himself the Priest, Himself the Sacrifice, Himself giveth to us His own Body and Blood. He Himself to Whom we pray, He, in Heaven, prayeth for us; He pre-

sents before the Father the tokens of His Passion in that Human Nature which for us He took, to plead for us. How should he not obtain all things, for whom, in whom, Christ prayeth? Prayer, in faith, hope, charity, humility, is the voice of God in our secret hearts. It goes up to God; it speaketh to God; it converseth with our Judge; not in our name, but in Christ's. What should hinder it from ascending to the Presence of God, to be presented by Him, not for our unworthiness, but for His worthiness, Who gave it to us, gives to it the value of His own Blood?

God is not as man, that He should change, or fail His promise. Which should fail, His Truth, or His Mercy, or His Almightyness, or His All-bountifulness, or His Love, which is Himself? All He has pledged to thee, if thou persevere in asking. Thou wilt persevere, if thou askest to persevere. Persevere in asking, and thou canst not perish. For "He is faithful Who hath promised. He also will do it."

## SERMON XI.

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### RE-CREATION OF THE PENITENT.

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PSALM li. 10.

*“ Create in me a clean heart, O God, and renew a right spirit within me.”*

PARDON, acceptance, peace, Heaven, are opened at once to all, who, with penitent hearts, return to God through Jesus Christ our Lord. In one hour, one moment, God could, if He saw fit, cleanse the whole soul, and, like the robber, remove the penitent sinner from the Cross to Paradise. Yet He doth so very rarely. He has willed mostly that we should “fight the good fight.” For some mysterious end in His Infinite Wisdom, He hath willed that we should be perfected through trial, wherein men manifoldly fail, recover, and, through difficulty, learn that every good gift cometh down from Him, and that His “strength is made perfect in” their “weakness.”

And so we "are saved," but "in hope" only. His Gracious Voice of pardon is the pledge of everlasting forgiveness; the love, wherewith He receives returning prodigals, hath its spring in His unchanging, unending love; the first gush of tears waters the seed which shall be reaped in everlasting joy; the intense, ardent longing to love is the earnest of that fulness, wherein we shall love with an everlasting love Him Who hath so loved us. Yet if man, when innocent, was to be perfected through trial, much more, when fallen! There must be some intense mystery of value in our learning freely to obey, that God became Man to restore to us the power and will to love and obey God. Intense must be the value of souls, that God hath purchased them, Scripture says, with His own Blood, and that He, the All-Good God, has seen good to form them thus, even at the cost of the Sufferings of the Incarnate Son, and the waste of such a countless multitude of souls, lost in endless misery.

We are replaced then, by repentance, on the road to life whence we had wandered; yet at the beginning, not at the end. God does not take away trials, or carry us *over* them, but strengthens us *through* them. When He turns men to Himself, He changes their will, not their trials. Whereas, before, forsaking His Grace, they were defeated, *now*, through His Grace, He gives them victory over their besetting sin. But there can be no victory without warfare; nor warfare without toil and pain. He turns men round, that, whereas, before, they "turned their backs" on Him, henceforth they should hold Him before them, aim at Him, stretch towards Him; and

He makes each act wherein they obey Him, a step towards Himself and His Everlasting Love and Bliss. Their whole course *now*, as a whole, is towards Himself, whereas it was, before, as a whole, away from Him. But where they left off in wandering from God, thence is their starting point in their return.

Sin does us lasting injury. Each separate act of sin changes, so far, our moral nature and our trial. Each leaves its effects upon our souls. Even heathen wisdom<sup>a</sup> saw that our acts, one by one, tell upon us. They form habits, and these, as ye know, are a second nature. And so, when we repent, we have not only that corrupt nature to subdue, which we inherited from Adam, but that second evil nature also, which by our own personal sins,—sins which, by God's grace, we might have withstood, but into which, through negligence or wilfulness, we fell,—we formed in us. And this evil nature, as we formed it by repeated acts of disobedience to God, so it is mostly, little by little, amid obedience to Him, and through His grace, that God unmakes and re-makes it.

Step by step, act by act, ye have become whatever ye are. Whatever the besetting sin of each is, ye can recollect the time, at least in childhood, when it was not such. Most can recollect the first decided act, in which their sin mastered them. It might without labour have been slain then. "Blessed," saith Holy Scripture, "is he that taketh thy little ones and dasheth them against the stone." "What," says a father,<sup>b</sup> "are the little ones of Babylon, or the great evil city of this world, but infant, unripened,

<sup>a</sup> Aristot. Eth.

<sup>b</sup> Abridged from S. Aug. ad loc.



new-born sins? Blessed is he who taketh them, ere they have yet gained strength, and dasheth them against the Rock, that is, Christ."

In whatever degree we did not this, our trial is changed. We nurture sin with our own hearts' blood, and when we have strengthened it against ourselves, we cannot at once destroy it. By the grace of Christ we may subdue, keep it chained, restrain its outbreaks; but it is there still. It is not dead, but lives within us, ever anew lifting up its head and hissing at us; still to be bruised again and again by *His* Cross, Who bruised the serpent's head, and will "bruise him under our feet shortly." It may be subdued by His Grace, amid unwearied watchfulness; but if we relax our grasp, it anew threatens, perhaps wounds us. Our path is in steep slippery places; if we loosen our hold of the Rock, we slip back.

This is a weary warfare. Even the Apostle cried out in the name of our whole nature, "who shall deliver me from the body of this death?" But we make it more weary to ourselves, by not owning that it is *now* our appointed warfare, and that our help henceforth is not in ourselves, but in God Alone. The Apostle answers his own cry for a deliverer, "I thank my God, through Jesus Christ our Lord." The Prophet David after his fall sets his whole hope in Him. "Create in me a clean heart, O God, and renew a right spirit within me."

Plain as this is, earnest souls often make their own burthen heavier, by forgetting it. They feel (as it may be) their minds darkened, unstrung, unearnest, sluggish. Their souls are haunted with jealous,

envious, proud, self-conscious, thoughts ; they feel perhaps the germs of every deadly sin within them. The thoughts, although they hate them, do not seem, like others, to flash across them, but to come from the very depths of their own souls. The worms, which crawl over them, seem to be gendered out of their own corruption. And so they brood over themselves and their wretchedness, and lose peace of mind and all sense of reconciliation with God, and impair their childlike love, and seem to fear God as an enemy or an offended Judge, and themselves to be enemies of God, not forgiven prodigals in their loving Father's house.

Yet to despond because we are what we are, what is this but still, in a subtle way, to imply that it is in our own power to become otherwise ? So only would it follow, that if our affections are not at once changed, as we would, this is our own present sin, and that we have not a heart right with God at all. But this is to suppose that we ourselves can make or mould or re-make our own hearts. Not so the Prophet David, in that great Psalm of penitence, which is the model for all true penitent souls ; the language of the aching, hungering heart, which longs to be restored to the full favour of God. In it, God teaches us what to own of ourselves, and how to pray ; what gifts we need, and how to ask for them.

David was forgiven. He had cast himself without defence, without excuse, on the mercy of God. He had summed up all in the great simple confession, "I have sinned against the Lord," and gathered into two words<sup>c</sup> a whole volume of confession. In him-

<sup>c</sup> תְּשׁוּבָה לַיהוָה

self he speaks of nothing but sin : he pleads nothing. All was one act of sin. " I have sinned," and that " against the Lord." All creatures vanish from his sight, " against Thee, Thee only, have I sinned." All else disappears from before him ; and he stands, as it were, alone in the whole world before God, himself wholly a sinner, face to face, before the All-Holy, All-Good God. And for his penitence he had received his pardon. " The Lord hath also put away thy sin." And yet, thus pardoned in the Name of God, he still prays for himself, as injured by his sin, his graces impaired, the gracious Presence of God's Holy Spirit diminished, the stain of sin in part remaining, the " free,<sup>d</sup> noble, willing, generous, princely," spirit, wherein he had, as " the man after God's own heart," done devoted service to God, dimmed. He was already pardoned ; and so, throughout the deep Psalm, there is not one prayer for pardon. But he had deeply wounded himself ; and so the whole Psalm is well nigh one prayer that God would restore the graces he had lost.

This restoration he prays for, as gradual. " Wash me thoroughly," literally " more and more," " from mine iniquity, and cleanse me from my sins." God *had* forgiven him ; David owns that He had not yet restored him wholly. " Wash me more and more," as though the white robe of purity and innocence, which, by his two-fold deadly sin he had so deeply soiled, needed an ever-renewed cleansing. Not once only, doubtless, but through his remaining life did he pray this, his own penitential prayer, " wash me more and more," many times, manifoldly, wash me ;

<sup>d</sup> נְרִיבָה

• נְרִיבָה

as confessing a deeply dyed guilt, which seemed as though it could not be cleansed except by repeated manifold washing. So our own good Bishop,<sup>f</sup> night by night, prayed "forgive the guilt, heal the wound, blot out the stains, heal my soul, for I have sinned against Thee," and St. Peter, cock-crowing after cock-crowing, wept his fall.

And then the royal penitent further prays: "Create in me a clean heart, O God, and renew a right spirit within me." God's working is a continual creation. "My Father," our Lord says, "worketh hitherto and I work." In one sense, "the works were finished from the creation of the world;" in another, all renewal of decay in nature, in our changing, corruptible bodies, is a continual creation, a renewed supply of life, displacing what is dead or decayed.

And so in one way, we are, once for all, at our first birth of Christ, "created in Christ Jesus." As the Apostle says, "We are His workmanship, created in Christ Jesus unto good works;" and "if any man be in Christ, he is a new creature," or creation; and "neither circumcision availeth anything nor uncircumcision;" whether any have been Jew or Gentile, it availeth not, but "a new creature," that is, that he have been re-created in Christ, a new being, living a new life of faith and love in Christ, re-born in Christ, having a spiritual being which before he had not, *in* Christ.

In the other way it is said, "be renewed in the spirit of your mind; and that ye put on the new man, which after God is created in righteousness and true

<sup>f</sup> Andrewes.

made holiness," that is, although already renewed in Baptism, ye must again, day by day, be renewed ; although clad with Christ, ye have need to be more wholly encompassed with Him, so that your old nature in no way appear, but Christ fill you with His Spirit, hide your sins with His Righteousness, adorn you with His Graces, Himself shed His grace abroad in your hearts, and the lustre of His holiness around your acts.

This " creation" is, in either case, from nothing. David uses the same word of our creation, which Moses uses of " the creation of the heaven and the earth." Our creation " in Jesus Christ," is no mere strengthening of our powers, no mere aiding of our natural weakness by the might of the grace of God, it is not a mere amendment, improvement of our moral habits ; it is a creation out of nothing, of that which we had not before. There was nothing in us whereof to make it. We were decayed, corrupt, dead in trespasses and sins. What is dead becometh not alive, except by the infusion of what it had not. What is corrupt, receiveth not soundness, save by passing away itself, and being replaced by a new production. " The old man" passeth not into the new man, but is " put off." It is not the basis of the new life, but a hindrance to it. It must be " put off;" and the new man " put on," " created in Christ Jesus."

" We are His workmanship." We are as much the work of His Hands by grace, as our bodies in Adam were by nature. We are the clay in His Hands, and were no more the authors of our own spiritual being than of the life of these our bodies.

Our creation out of nothing, in nature, was the work of His Almighty Power, calling into being things which were not, that they should be. Our creation by grace is the work of the Almighty Mercy of Christ our God, not through any merits or works of ours, since we were dead, but through His Creative Voice, which bid the dead to live.

Again, in our birth by nature, we not only receive the first gift of life from God, but that life is maintained, increased, nourished, through food which we receive, yet not by any power of our own. "For which of you," says our Lord, "by taking thought can add one cubit to his stature?" So is the life of grace upheld, strengthened, enlarged, not by any power of ours, but through nourishment supplied by Christ our Head, even "the love" and grace "of God" shed abroad in our hearts through the Holy Ghost which He hath given us."

Yet, again, the life which we had by nature seems, after some grievous sickness, to be given anew to us, and we seem not merely to be restored to health, but fresh life, as it were, to be poured into us, and what is corrupt is actually replaced. So in the life of grace, there are seasons, especially the first return of the prodigal soul to God, when decay is wonderfully effaced by grace, freshness of soul is anew created; child-like feelings, which seemed dead, revive in life; what was dried and sere, breathed upon by the Holy Spirit from above, lives through the life of God in the restored soul.

But since this is so, where is the room for our own acts? "He," saith a father,<sup>s</sup> the great teacher

<sup>s</sup> See in Preface to vol. i. p. xiv.

of the doctrine of grace, "He Who created thee without thee, will not save thee without thee." In the support of our bodies, we pray for "our daily bread," and when given, we receive it as the gift of God; and the daily decays of our bodies are restored through the powers which God gives us. So also in the life of the soul, it is ours to pray for the daily increase of grace, the enlarged gift of God's good Spirit, and receiving It, to use It. We cannot give to ourselves any grace; but we have the fearful power of not asking for it. We cannot give ourselves the talents which God entrusts us with, but we may through His Grace use them, or by neglect of His Grace, be slothful servants, and hide them, or bury, under a mass of earthliness, "our Lord's money," that Image, wherein we are "anew created in righteousness and true holiness," and the lines of which should, by daily contemplation of the holiness of Him in Whom we are anew created, be daily deepened in our souls.

The truth of God is our comfort and stay, our protection against our fears as well as against our pride. Since we have nothing, but what we have received; and all which is our own, is that we have not held back more from receiving it, where is boasting? What beggar would boast that he had not withdrawn his hand from the dole which a tender charity gave him? And we are beggars from the Hand of God. But since we cannot give ourselves any good gift, neither need we be cast down, because, as yet, we have it not.

We need not, then, we should not, toss ourselves to and fro, because we have feelings which we cannot

remove ; thoughts which come unbidden, which we hate, yea, though they seem to come out of a deep well of corruption within us, ever gushing forth and never stayed, never exhausted. That upon which our salvation hangs, is not what we have been, not what effects we suffer from our past sins, but what we now *are* ; and whether, if in the right way now, we persevere in repentance and the desire for the love of God. What is loathsome, if we hate it, may, by God's grace, but the more minister to humility and the love of God, Who loved us, when we could not love ourselves, being so loathsome. What we hate in ourselves may be the mere tormenting of Satan, or it may be the penalty of past sins. Evil thoughts which enter into the heart, but are hated, hurt it not. It hurteth us not, whether, from head to foot, we be covered with the scales of our former leprosy, and our soul be as loathsome to ourselves, as the shapeless mass of leprosy is to the bodily eye. One thing only, amid the mercy of God, can hurt us now, to part with God, to choose wilfully anything which is not of God, against the will of God.

What we have made ourselves, we cannot ourselves unmake. Be it then that we feel ourselves irreverent, lukewarm, selfish, envious, distracted, lifeless, unloving, unearnest, hard-hearted, yea though we seemed to grow, day by day, harder and harder, colder and colder, though all within us seemed to us hateful and displeasing to the Infinite Purity and Holiness of the All-Good God, we should not despond. It must indeed, in itself, be offensive to His Holy Eyes ; and yet we ourselves may be the objects of His tender Compassion and Mercy. What we hate



in ourselves and do not, by any act of ours *now*, make our own, will not, in His Mercy, be imputed to us, but to Satan, who torments us with it.

Are we then to sit still under it? Not so. But since *we* are helpless, *God*, Almighty and All-loving, and "more ready to hear than we to pray," to give than we to ask, *pray*. This should be our one resource. Pray for the Grace of God and for the second grace to use it; and then use it. "Create in me a clean heart, O God, and renew a steadfast spirit within me," a spirit (literally) firmly fixed,<sup>b</sup> established, steadied; not steady in itself, but steadied by God; steadied, as being firmly built on that Foundation Which is Christ.

We can, by the Grace of God, keep ourselves from present grievous falls. "He that is begotten of God keepeth himself, and that wicked one toucheth him not." We can, by His Grace, withhold ourselves from words and deeds, akin to our past falls and offences against God's goodness; we can keep ourselves from consenting in will to those sins, or the memory of them. We can, by His Grace, overcome, in the main, present temptations, fight against them through the might of Christ, be diligent in deeds of good, as too many were once in evil, and wherein, through human infirmity, we fail, we can by that same Grace, quickly return.

Seek we His Grace to do this, and by His Grace to do it, and then let us commit all the rest, all our past sins, all which at present we hate in ourselves, to His Almighty Mercy. "Create in me a clean heart, O God, and renew a right spirit within me."

<sup>b</sup> נָבִיחַ

Do we what by His Grace we can; and what we cannot, let us pray Him to do Who can, and will, do all things for good to those who seek Him.

Brood not in heaviness over thine own state, or what thou imaginest to be thine own state before God. Count everything temptation which holds thee back from GOD. God willeth that all should be saved. The Price of thy Redemption, Scripture says, is "the Blood of God," wherewith "He purchased the Church." Thy Saviour on the Cross stretched out His Almighty Arms to embrace the whole world, even thee in thy misery. Satan would hold thee back by even the semblance of graces, by a mock humility, as though thou wert not worthy, or by reverence of God, as though He could not receive one so vile. Satan would use all arts to keep thee back from God. God entitleth Himself, the Friend of Abraham, the Friend of those who do whatsoever He commandeth them; but also, in the Flesh, He vouchsafed to be called "the Friend of Publicans and sinners." He would use Almighty Wisdom and Love to win thee back to Himself.

They are well nigh wasted hours, in which thou broodest sorrowfully over thyself, as though there were no hope, unless they issue in prayer to God. There *is* hope, yea and assured salvation, for all who will now hear God's call, and turn to Him. Whatever thy disease, stop not short in thyself; but go forth out of thyself to thy Lord and thy God. Thou wouldest not brood in silence over a disease of the body; thou wouldest not hide thyself from the physician, though thou wert a leper as white as snow, and thy disease would seem to have reached thy very

bones. So now, though evil thoughts seem to be generated by the very substance of thy soul, though they be evermore thy first thoughts, the spontaneous produce of thy soul, and better thoughts come slowly after, as though from thy understanding and not from thy heart, faint not and hold thee not back; complain of thy misery, but to the All-Merciful. We come to Him, not because we are whole, but because we are sick. "Create in me a new heart, O God, and renew a right spirit within me." Let every pang of misery and self-reproach issue in a brief prayer to Him, a sigh for His Help, a longing for His Purity, and He will create in thee a clean heart, and every cry shall bring down the touch of His Hand to cleanse it.

This, as it is the ground-work of our humility and our hope, so is it of exceeding joy. "He made us and not we ourselves." He re-made us; and we, as far as there yet remains any good thing in us, "are His workmanship in Christ Jesus." He will once more re-make us, and prepare us for that endless Regeneration, when by our last blessed birth, death shall be swallowed up in Life, corruption shall put on incorruption, dishonour shall be enveloped in Glory, and even the memory of past sins shall be so overwhelmed by the presence of the love of God, that it shall but increase our love, that such as we once were, He chose, to be the companions of Angels, the image of Himself, the partakers of the joy of Christ Jesus, our Lord and God.

"Create in me a clean heart, O God." We shall then be the same and shall not be the same. We shall be the same selves, but all which now so clings

to us, as to seem engrained in our very nature, the whole old man shall be laid aside, melted away with the fire of the Divine Love, and replaced by "the new man which after God is created in righteousness and true holiness;" and this by the Spirit of God, by the gift of the Holy Spirit within us. "Renew a right Spirit within me." And meantime, this new self is re-created through every prayer to God. For prayer is the voice of the Holy Spirit within us, and calleth Him into ourselves. It is enlarged by every act of humility, for He dwelleth in the contrite heart; by every deed of love, for God is Love; by every imperfect obedience, for with those who obey Him He dwells; by every earnest calling on the Name of Jesus, for "He is very nigh unto all who call upon Him."

Faint not nor despond. If thou prayest, "thy heaviness shall be turned into joy." Let thy heaviness ever issue in prayer, brief, but longing; and while thou art yet in heaviness on earth, thy prayer which seems to fall back upon thee, Angels shall waft on their golden censers, and thine Almighty Intercessor shall present it before His Father; and unseen, perhaps unfelt, the Holy Spirit shall descend upon thee, and thou shalt, day by day, be renewed, not by any workings of thy own mind, nor by any power over thine own thoughts, nor by any change of thine own feelings wrought by thyself, but by His might "Who subdueth all things unto Himself."

And especially at Holy Communion, pray Him, when He vouchsafeth to come under thy roof, in that deep prayer of the Church, to "cleanse thy sinful body by His Body, and wash thy soul in His

Precious Blood ; and He shall dwell in thee and thou in Him, thy impurity cleansed by His Purity, thy lukewarmness kindled by His Love, thy pride changed into His Lowliness, thine angry tempers hushed by His Meekness ; that in the clean heart which He has created He may dwell, and with the right Spirit which He has renewed, thou mayest love and obey, and be conformed unto Him, and thy exceeding, everlasting joy be, that thou art wholly not thine own, but His ; transformed from thyself and made, Scripture saith, “ one spirit with Him, through His Spirit Which dwelleth in thee.”

## SERMON XII.

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### THE SIN OF JUDAS.

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PALM SUNDAY.

ST. MATTHEW XXVII. 3—5.

*“ Then Judas which had betrayed Him, when he saw that He was condemned, repented himself, and brought again the thirty pieces of silver to the Chief Priests and elders, saying, I have sinned, in that I have betrayed the innocent Blood. And they said, What is that to us? see thou to that. And he cast down the pieces of silver in the temple, and departed, and went and hanged himself.”*

STRANGE picture is this day, of the world around us, and in which we are; may we not be of it! Would it were altogether of the world around us! Would that, at this time, when our Lord comes almost visibly before us, in the mysteries of this holy week, to recall to us the boundlessness of His love, any multitudes of this great city\* would go forth to meet

\* Preached in London at the Chapel in Tichfield Street.

Him! Would that, as the Psalms which celebrate Him, were wont in the early centuries to echo in the streets and the ways,<sup>b</sup> so either hearts or voices in this great city would greet Him, their Redeemer, "Blessed is He that cometh in the Name of the Lord! Hosanna in the highest!" Alas! another voice sounds there, in the varied notes of an untiring, unceasing discord, "Great is the goddess of the Ephesians!" Hymns of praise go up on high from the luxurious dwellings of the wealthy, from the marts of those who speculate, from the counters of our tradesmen, from the care-worn, anxious crowds which throng our streets, from the "palaces" which are the haunts of our homeless ones; but they go up to the god of this world, not to the God, Who made them. There are, doubtless, in God's mercy, the seven thousand, who have not "bowed the knee unto Baal;" but from far more than seventy times seven thousand, one prayer there is from morning to evening, a prayer not from the lips, but from the heart; a prayer, not from divided affections, but from the whole heart; a prayer, not listless, but with the whole energy of men's being; a prayer, which lives on in acts suited to the prayer; "O Baal, hear us." What do men's daily acts speak in the smooth accents of the vicious refinement of the rich, or in the coarse ribaldry of the poor, but, "We will not have this

<sup>b</sup> "Of other of the Divine Scriptures, you may see most men remembering little or nothing; but the spiritual hymns of the Divine David you may see many, many times, calling to mind, in houses, and streets, and ways, and soothing themselves by the harmony of the song, and gaining benefit through this pleasure of the soul." Theodoret. Præf. in Psalm.

Man to reign over us ?" And none, well-nigh, careth, none regardeth ; none well-nigh sacrifices anything, none well-nigh prayeth, that this misery should cease !

This day, then, is now the picture, not of the world, but of those who come to meet Jesus at all. And what is it ? A multitude following Jesus for the hour, when something stirs them, and straightway forgetting Him ; nay, ready to give Him up and choose in His stead any worldly idol, which abets their ends, or flatters their passions ; and some repenting, some repenting not. His nearer disciples, trembling before the mad multitude, which denies and persecutes Him ; holding converse with Him at one moment, and then ashamed to own Him ; defending Him in an unseemly way and with hot, rash temper, and then denying Him ; and one, betraying Him, repenting a fruitless repentance, and dying in his impenitence.

We have begun, this morning, that solemn course of reading the four-fold history of His Passion ; His betrayal, denial, Crucifixion. We felt sorrow for it, condemned Judas, the Chief Priests, Pilate, the Jews. And yet it is but a portion of what too many have been, of what some are. For to choose sin is to reject Christ ; to be ashamed, for fear of man, to do what Christ commands, is to deny Christ ; to do, for fear of man, what Christ forbids, what is it but with Pilate, to condemn Christ ? for a Christian to be guilty of wilful deadly sin, what is it, but to crucify Christ afresh, and put Him to an open shame ?

Of these, Judas is the type of some among those who approach nearest and oftenest to our Lord, hear most His Words, and do them not. He, the betrayer



of our Lord, is not an ensample for the world, not for those who blaspheme Christ, or openly disbelieve in Him, or neglect Him, or go, like the prodigal, into a far country away from Him. He is the type and warning for those whom our Lord suffers to come nearest to Him; to whom He vouchsafes to disclose most of Himself; whom He counts among His friends; to whom He entrusts His sheep, (as to us, His Priests,) or to whom as Communicants, (whether priests or people,) He gives His own Body and Blood. He is a type and warning, in their degree, for all who have been made His members, or who hear His Word, who know, by hearing, of His truth and love, who come to His House, or have been taught to pray in His Name.

What then would our Lord teach us for ourselves, by admitting a traitor so near to His Sacred Person? "For ourselves." For more largely, He would teach us, if we have any good in us, to bear with the evil in the Church, as He bore with it, not to be impatient at evil, or with it; and whether there be seeming hope or no, never, even when the world is betraying its and our Redeemer, to give over labouring to win it. Even then, our Lord called him by his familiar name, a name which, like our name which we bear from Himself, might recall to him so many memories of our Lord's own patience, gentleness, tender teaching. As He loved His own, whom He loved, unto the end, so He endured those whom He endured, unto the end. He, the Lord of Heaven and earth, endured from His servant, whom He had chosen to be His familiar friend, the traitorous kiss on His all-holy Lips. He speaks to him by his

name, calls him "companion," if so He might recall him to himself and bring before himself the strangeness of his unthankfulness. "Companion,<sup>o</sup> wherefore art thou here?" Strange change of an Apostle, who ought to be there, to hearken, to reverence, to learn, to love, and who is there, to betray! "With a kiss, the Son of Man betrayest thou?" With the pledge and token of love, betrayest thou Me, Who became the Son of Man for love of thee? And shall it then be hard for us, to shew love; to bear with evil returns; to be unwearied in love, though it avail not; to endure unthankfulness; to tire out with kindness the world's hardness; to bear with those who, for love, as they think, to our Master, hate or speak disrespectfully of us?

But what would our Lord teach us, not as to others, but as to our own souls? What was the sin of Judas? Why was his repentance unavailing?

The sin of Judas, up to the last, had been a very common sin, a sin of which Holy Scripture speaks very severely, as a rejection of God and displeasing of Him, and setting up an idol in His stead, yet a sin of which we account so little, that it is rather the boast of this wealthy nation, "covetousness which is idolatry." Holy Scripture tells us in naked words the plain truth without our smooth excuses. It says, "He was a thief, and had the bag, and bare what was put therein." He bore that bag out of which our Lord, Who fed thousands by His creative power, with a few poor loaves, and fed the Angels, vouchsafed, together with His disciples, to have His Human wants supplied. It supplied the needs of our

<sup>o</sup> S. Matt. xxvi. 30.

Lord, the Apostles and the poor. But Judas was not without human excuses. He had, as we learn from the Psalmist,<sup>d</sup> wife and children. Outwardly, he had given up all gainful occupation. We are not told, that he employed what he took, upon open sin. In part, it belonged to him. His own needs he might supply therefrom. He took out of the common stock for his private ends, more than his due share; he took the property of the poor.

Alas! how has this sin of Judas been enacted again and again at different times well nigh throughout the west.<sup>e</sup> The patrimony of the poor was scattered among the rich, or taken to bear the burdens of the state, which the rich should bear. Again, are we stewards or owners of God's loans to us? Do we Christians belong to Christ, Who bought us, as now, at so dear a price? And if we ourselves are His, whose is our wealth, whose our means, our substance? Would we belong to our Good Master on such terms, as to be His, soul and body, to be bought by Him, fed by Him, supplied by Him, and ourselves lord it over all which we have, as though it were our own, given to us in perpetuity, and never to be asked of us again? If we keep for our own, spend upon our luxuries, or "the lust of the flesh, the lust of the eye, the pride of life," what He asks of us in His poor, to be fed, clothed, warmed, housed, tended in them, what are we, who bear the name of Christ's disciples, but thieves who bear the bags after Him, but bear ourselves "what is put therein?" Or if,

<sup>d</sup> Ps. cix. 9.

<sup>e</sup> Monasteries were plundered for their wealth in England, Germany, France, Spain, and Portugal.

in our eager haste to heap the more comforts on ourselves, we beat down the wages of the poor, in order to cheapen or multiply our own indulgences, what else do we than defraud Christ, Who, in them, still comes to us ?

Yet Judas, even now, was "a devil." Our Lord, Who sees all things now as they shall be, so called him, at the very opening of His Ministry, warning him of the germs of what he should be. Covetous now ; hereafter, a devil. Yet many have robbed Christ's poor, many defrauded ; "this nation," says the Prophet,<sup>f</sup> "from the least to the greatest are all of them given to covetousness." "They<sup>g</sup> seek every one his gain from his quarter." What then was the special sinfulness of Judas ? He was all along sinning against light ; he was wasting, or turning to evil, the providences of God. He stood in the presence of the true Light, and his soul chose darkness. Every blessing of God, unused, becomes a curse. Every aid of His Providence, neglected, becomes condemnation. If, being fenced round from evil, we become evil, our sin is the heavier, the rebellion deeper. Our Lord gave the bag in mercy to Judas, that, being able to content his desires, he might be saved from sin. "The thing which should have been for his wealth, became to him an occasion of falling." He became without excuse. What should have shielded him from sin, became an habitual sin. He was a thief. He heard, day by day, our Lord's Words, the same words which we hear now, of the future portion of Dives, the true use of the Mammon of unrighteousness, the treasure in heaven, the peril

<sup>f</sup> Jer. vi. 13.

<sup>g</sup> Is. lvi. 11.

of laying up treasure upon the earth, and of having our hearts here, the peril of gaining the whole world and losing our own souls, the reward of those who leave lands and houses, yea all, to follow Him. He heard all things, which we too hear ; and having left all, he went back. He made gain of his Apostle's office ; he sinned in the very sight of His Master, under His All-seeing Eye. Our Blessed Lord's Words were ever in his ear, never in his heart. He heard, and did continually the contrary to what he heard. How must his heart have often smitten him, and how must he have steeled it ! To follow a Master Who had not where to lay His Head, and himself to be enriched through Him, Who for him had become poor ! To hear, day by day, as ye too hear, of heaven, and to be fast bound to earth ! To be a hypocrite in the sight of Him, the discerner of the heart ! And so he prepared for his next fall. When for his covetousness he pleaded the cause of the poor, whom did he blame ? In name, Mary Magdalene ; in truth, Jesus his Master. For Mary's act was Jesus', Who allowed it. A hypocrite already in presence of his Master, he became a hypocrite in accusing his Master. He enacted the prelude to His betrayal, accusing *now* Him Whom he should afterwards betray.

Ripened hypocrisy ended soon in open betrayal. Stung, as it seems, by the gentle reproof through which his Lord would have brought him to himself, and by the loss of what he coveted, he sold his Master for the price of a slave. Yet, doubtless, here too, he had his excuses for himself. Avarice had blinded his eyes. The sinner seldom wants a

plea, or mitigation for his sin. Few cannot cozen or deaden themselves. What some have urged in excuse for Judas,<sup>h</sup> doubtless Satan taught him in excuse for himself. He doubtless too thought that our Lord should be a king; he had heard our Lord prophesy that He should be delivered up; he had seen His power and His miracles; he himself had wrought miracles in His Name. He had seen how Jesus passed through the crowd unharmed, when led to the brow of the hill of His city Nazareth; and in this very Jerusalem where they would have stoned Him;<sup>i</sup> and, again, but a very little before, when "they sought again to take Him." Why should He not now? Why might he not himself replace his share of the wasted ointment, and compel his Master to put forth His power and declare Himself the Christ. It is certain that he did not expect Jesus to be condemned; for when he saw that He was condemned, he repented himself. He persuaded himself, perhaps, that he might enjoy his gain, and his Master too be the gainer.

And so now too, men who detest the sin of Judas, and the Pharisees themselves, without even the wretched plea with which Judas may have cozened himself, buy and sell Christ. Christ is sold, whensoever any tempts another by money to commit deadly sin. And yet this is done full thirty thousand

<sup>h</sup> Abp. Whately's Characters of the Apostles, c. 5.

<sup>i</sup> S. Luke iv. 29, 30; S. John viii. 59; Ib. x. 39. "He quits them, as those who would not receive instruction; but He did not hide Himself, as one afraid, or fleeing into some poor house, or turning aside behind a wall or a column; but by heavenly power making Himself invisible to those who laid wait for Him." Quoted as S. Aug. in the Caten. Aur.

times every day, in open shocking sin, in this, which is called a Christian city. Christ is sold, whensoever for vain-glory, any is ashamed of Him, and exchanges Him for the breath of man's poor praise. Christ is sold continually, in the buying and selling, for unworthy persons, the cure of souls. Christ is sold in every wilful sin. And for what? For "thirty pieces of silver?" Nay, Judas who despised Christ, and fulfilled prophecy by selling Him at so vile a price, valued Him highly, compared with Christians now. For what is Christ not sold now? There is nothing too cheap, too vile, too sickening, for which Christ is not daily sold. In every petty fraud, in every brief delirium of defiling pleasure, in every wilful lie of vanity, in every false flattery, in every preference of every earthly toy, of every earthly sense, in every wilful excess, Christ is sold. "They<sup>k</sup> have cast lots for My people," says Almighty God, when pronouncing judgment on the heathen oppressors of the Jews, "and have given a boy for a harlot, and a girl for wine that they may drink." Now not boys and girls, but Christ is sold. Yea, what is this whole city, its luxuries, its pomps, its pride, its vanities, its covetousness, its selfishness, its neglect, and contempt, and trampling upon, and bartering away of the souls of Christ's poor, but one great market-place, wherein Christ is sold for nought?

Judas had covenanted to betray his Master; he had not as yet, in act, betrayed Him. Judas had been proof against teaching, example, holiness, gentle reproof. There remained yet but one sin more. It was against love. Judas returned, from selling his

<sup>k</sup> Joel iii. 3.

Master, to the Holy Eucharist. He came to the Holy Eucharist, not knowing what he did, but with treason half-accomplished, and future treason in his soul. Jesus received him, put no mark of shame upon him ; gave to him Himself Whom he was betraying ; gave him, as a token of friendship and honour distinct from the other Apostles, the sop. Judas was proof against all ; and since he would not receive Jesus in his soul, Satan entered in. Before, Satan had put evil into Judas' heart ; now he himself entered in,<sup>1</sup> whether actually into his body, or taking possession of his soul, that he should thenceforth be wholly his slave, to work sin at his will. A less practised infidel in France whom God had not yet abandoned, and who had not as yet quenched His Holy Spirit, once asked a more experienced, hardened, hoary, infidel, how he could get rid of the torments of his conscience. "Receive the Eucharist," was the answer, "and you will never be troubled more." It was done, and was found true. The Holy Spirit, Whose voice he, by this profaneness, sought to quench, spoke to his soul no more.

Jesus was not yet, in act, betrayed. Judas, doubtless, with a lingering awe of his Master, stifled and deadened his soul, during the dreadful interval of suspense, before his last act of sin. Those who sin deeply, contrive often to forget the thought of the sin itself, in the very business of preparing for it. They cannot bear to look it in the face, though they are bent to do it ; and so they fix their minds on something around it, in order not to be forced to look upon it beforehand, until it is done. The "swords

<sup>1</sup> S. Luke xxii. 3 ; S. John xiii. 27.



and staves," which Judas knew must be useless, and which perhaps, he hoped, would fall out of the hands which held them, are a picture of the way in which people cheat themselves from thinking of sin, which they choose to do, but which they shrink to think of.

Judas, although, in purpose, a devil, was a man still. The memory of his Lord's holiness, unwearied love, forbearance, gentleness, must have still struggled up against the sullen anger and disappointed avarice, wherewith Satan smothered it. He doubtless held it down with some unexplained hope, that he should escape, in some way, from the full guilt of his sin. It can scarcely be imagined that he *could* have approached with his accursed kiss, to his Master's Holy Lips, had he thought that he thereby sealed His Death. He severed<sup>m</sup> himself for a while from the rabble who followed him; he returned, as it were, to greet his Master, after an absence; he came unchecked by the warning, searching question, "Companion, wherefore art thou here?" gave the abhorred kiss; and that, with words of hypocrisy, "Hail, Master!" Could he have been self-deceived then? Could any human being have done it, not being self-deceived? God knoweth! Both were perhaps, in a measure, united in him. He was, perhaps, in part, half blinded; in part, forcibly, by a strong wilfulness in sin, he blinded himself still. There are depths in the mystery of sin, which no human eye can fathom. And this was the deepest depth of human sin. Judas persisted still, completed his treason under the form of love, and then finally fell away, was separated from Christ's disciples, and

<sup>m</sup> S. Matt. xxvi. 49.

was found among them" who would take Jesus, and fell to the ground before Him.

Alas! how many now salute Jesus with a kiss, and by the kiss betray Him. What else is it, to feign to love the truth, and in party spirit to betray it? or to say in words that we believe in Christ, and and in deeds to deny Him? or to use the name of Christ and of truth, in order, half consciously, to oppose the truth of Christ? or to come to the Holy Eucharist, meaning to return to deadly sin? or to wear a fair shew, in order to some worldly end? "O Lord Jesus," prays a holy man, in thought of this traitorous kiss,<sup>o</sup> "grant me that I may never betray Thee in my neighbours, or in myself, and that to those that are mine enemies, I may not refuse the office of brotherly love." Never shall we betray Him, if we pray Him, that we may not betray Him; if, not in boldness, but in mistrust of self, we say with the Apostles, "Lord, is it I?"

And yet Judas in a degree repented. He seems to do much, more than very many, or most, now. He uses the very word of penitent David, "I have sinned;" he seeks to undo what he had done, and bears witness to the innocence of Him Whom he had betrayed; he casts away (would that it were oftener done now!) the gains of his iniquity. What was wanting then to Judas' repentance? Everything. It was the body without the soul of repentance. Remorse, which hated what it had done, but without faith, or hope, or love, or humility, or return to his Master. Satan, who had blinded his eyes, now

<sup>a</sup> S. John xviii. 5.

<sup>o</sup> Ludolph. Vit. Christi. P. 2, c. 59, p. 582. 2.

opened them to his sin, to despair ; they still remained closed to his Master's love. He brooded over himself ; he cast aside with loathing that for which he had sold his soul ; he confessed his crime to his accomplices, he returned not to his Master, nor sought His pardon when it might be found ; else he too, with the penitent thief, might have been translated to Paradise. Repentance is not displeasure with self ; the devils hate themselves ; impenitent sinners hate their folly, when they feel its fruits. Repentance is to return humbly to God, with trust in God, and faith in God, and some trembling hope in God, and at least such love for God, that it would not be separated from Him. Judas had destroyed his faith and hope, by continual perseverance in sin against light. Man cannot sin wilfully and perseveringly, and believe. Every act of deadly sin is a wound to faith. Men cannot persevere in sin, and in belief. They first blind themselves to their sin, and then to God. There is no sin, however horrible, to which man cannot become inured, and does not, at length, justify, as right in him, because it is necessary to him, it is become his nature. But on prolonged sin, God, at length, leaves the soul, and then faith and hope and love die. For the soul itself, without God, is dead. Judas did not hope, else he would have returned ; he did not love, else he would have known that he might find love ; that "with the Lord is mercy ;" he did not believe, for he speaks only of the "innocent blood ;" the blood of a man of the same nature as himself. He knew not that he had sold his God. He knew not that Jesus was God, in Whom he might find mercy.

Alas! my brethren, there are many shadows of Judas; many who have the impress and mark of Judas upon them; many who have taken many steps along with him; many who have perished with him and like him. May there be none such among us! It is an awful thing to draw near to Jesus; awful to hear His Words; awful to receive His Body and Blood. He is "a savour of life unto life; or of death, unto death." But He is a savour of death, unto death, to those only, who will not receive life.

The warnings of Holy Scripture, as well as its examples, are warnings to us in several degrees. Every sin of anger has the character of murder. It is the sin which, if nourished, harboured, full-grown, becomes murder. Every wilful evil look, our Lord tells us, is an enacting of adultery in the heart. All "covetousness is idolatry." Every wilful lie in a Christian, is a shadow of taking God's Holy Name in vain. And so the awful pictures of Cain, Balaam, Esau, Saul, Judas, are pictures and shadows of sinners from the first lineaments of the sins of envy, covetousness, self-will, profaneness, until the outline be filled up, and the sin perfected. Judas was not a devil at once. Step by step, he was covetous, a hypocrite, a slanderer of those who hindered his covetousness, a betrayer, an infidel, a suicide. Step by step, through every fraud, he sold himself to Satan, until, at last, the purchase was completed, the price paid down, Jesus was wholly sold, and his own soul, parted from Jesus, became the possession and sport of the evil one. But all this was, in the germ, laid up in his first childish sin of covetousness. By God's grace, it might have been nipped. Judas

shut out that grace, and it ripened into the death-fruit which poisoned his soul. Yet, in each stage of his course, he was the type of those who should hereafter, in *that* degree, follow his sin.

But apart from Judas' own besetting sin, he is a type of another class ; nay, the special instructiveness of his sin, is more largely for all who, amid rich means of grace, and full streams of light, knowing what they do, yield habitually to a besetting, deadly, sin. The frightfulness of Judas' sin, is darkness over against the pure holy light of Christ. Christ, the Light, shone *upon* him, but not *into* him. He was encompassed with light, but it penetrated not his soul. It overstreamed him, but kindled him not. He went on with his sin, against the warnings, the holy words, the deeds, the light, the Divine love of Christ. Holy Scripture gives the perfected character. Judas may have had misgivings, pauses, lighter and darker shades of sin. Who well nigh of very monsters of sin, has not had them ? But Scripture speaks of none of these. It tells us not of one good deed, save that which helped on his own credit and gainfulness and hopes of aggrandisement, that when his Master sent out His Apostles to preach Him and work miracles in His Name, he too must have cast out devils from the body, who in the soul was himself a devil. When the other Judas asked our Lord a question, "How is it that Thou wilt manifest Thyself unto us, and not unto the world?" the Holy Ghost guards us against thinking that the words belonged to the traitor. "Then said Judas, *not* Iscariot."

Sin, then, against light, not only branches out, as

all sin does, into other sin, but it destroys gradually, and extinguishes hope, love, and faith. Judas had seen our Lord heal all who came to Him ; he had heard Him often say, " Whoso cometh unto Me, I will in no wise cast out ;" he had heard Him tell the " weary and heavy-laden," " come unto Me, and I will give you rest." He had seen Him forgive and release the woman taken in adultery. His very envy had been raised by the sight of her who, having been forgiven much, was now admitted to anoint Jesus' Head. He had never seen Him refuse any. Yet he thought not of Him, save as " innocent blood" which he had " betrayed." He had, with his sin, lost his belief. How could he believe on Him, Whose acceptance of the offering of the ointment, he, in blaming the holy woman's deed, criticised ?

All indulged sin deadens faith. Men cannot believe, who act contrary to their belief. They enact unbelief more energetically. They destroy their belief by their own deeds. They will to believe, and they will to sin. And these wills are contradictory. The one will must master the other. How can one believe in a judgment to come, who does what will be condemned in it ? or in life eternal, who lives only for this earth ? or in future glories, who, in act, barter them all for this world's praise ? or in the love of God our Father, who never thinks of Him ? or in the power of prayer, who never prays ? or in Christ's tender mercies, who is himself unmerciful ? or that he is or may be the temple of God the Holy Ghost, who defiles that temple, his own body, and makes it the habitation of devils ? " Ye cannot be partakers," says Holy Scripture, " of the table of the Lord and

the table of devils." What deep faith in the Holy Eucharist can one have, who uses amiss the hand which has received His Body, or the tongue which has been reddened by His Blood, or who sells to sin the body and soul in which he professes to have received the Body and Blood of Christ ?

Ye, my brethren, will flee the more diligently any of these things. If any of you have, in times past, or even of late, done any of these things, ye will, by God's grace, do them no more. Infirmities, shortcomings, surprises of wrong tempers, feelings of worldliness, or envy, or vanity, or ambition, ye may for the time have had. These are your warfare. But ye will not allow them to lodge in you. Ye will drive them away, as Abraham drove the birds from the sacrifice. Ye are not, any of you, as Judas, yet. Ye have, at the worst, faint hopes, a smoking, but not extinguished faith. Ye have the wish to love God; and to wish to love God, is to love Him. But beware of every deadly sin. Ye are alive now. Beware how ye destroy yourselves. Be watchful lest Easter undo what God has done for you in Lent. Every deadly sin poisons life, faith, love, hope. The last drop of poison destroys life. Ye know not which it would be. Only, but for God's grace, every deadly sin is the parent of other deadly sin, and that of another, and that of another; and the children's children of deadly sin, are a dreadful, fearful brood, each darker and uglier than its parent, each destroying life more fatally, until it at last ebb out.

Yes, my brethren, ye will flee these things. Remember the poor, and God will remember you.

Do what ye know to be pleasing to God, and avoid, by the grace of God, what ye know will displease Him, and God will enliven your repentance and enlarge your faith, and brighten your hopes, and kindle your love. Only be *very* diligent, not knowingly, to do anything which displeases God; be very diligent not to tamper with your conscience, and do what you doubt may displease God. Yield not to Him a stinted service, and the glorious everlasting Easter day will soon be here, when ye will find every sacrifice ye have made; every tear ye have shed; every deed of love which, by God's grace, ye have done; every petty self-denial; every coin which, whether out of your poverty ye have given little, or out of your abundance largely; all the love of Christ which ye have cherished, stored up to be repaid with usury in the love of the Ever-Blessed Trinity, Father, Son, and Holy Ghost, Who have compassed your redemption, that ye might be like Them in life and love everlasting, and made you for Themselves, that ye may be one with Them.



## SERMON XIII.

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### THE ASCENSION OUR GLORY AND JOY.

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ASCENSION-DAY.

ST. JOHN xii. 26.

*“If any man serve ME, let him follow ME: and where I am, there shall also My servant be.”*

TRULY, if we could ever live in this day, all were joy. It is the crown of all joys, the joy of all creation, the wonder of the blessed Angels, the union of all being, the finishing of the earthly course of the Son of God, His entrance into glory.

It was the joy of the Holy Angels. They joyed at the Birth of Christ. Then too the multitude of the Heavenly Hosts sang with joy. “Glory to God in the Highest, and on earth peace, good-will towards men.” They joyed that He Whom they adored, Whom they beheld, Whom they loved, was come down to dwell among us.

They envied us not the honour, that our nature, not theirs, should be for ever united with God, should be the link and bond between the Creator and the creature. They loved that the Will of God should be. They loved us, because God loved us, and He had come to us. They had sung for joy when this our world was created. And now they saw the end of the Creation. In the Birth of our Redeemer they saw what they had desired to look into, the wonderful plan of man's Redemption. They saw the end of all their ministries, and how their broken ranks would be filled up, and the voices wanting to their endless song of praise be supplied. They saw that He, their King, Who was to knit together all creation in one and with God, was become one of us. Full often had they, during His earthly ministry, "ascended and descended upon the Son of Man," eager to hear His Words, learn from His ministries to man, and watch every token of His Will. They longed for His return, desired to look into the course of His earthly being, and to gaze on His Divinity, now visible and gleaming through It. Doubtless, many were present at His Agony, although one only appeared. Many, together with the powers of darkness, hung in sorrow around His Crucifixion, although those only who were appointed, carried the soul of the repentant robber to Abraham's bosom. Many, doubtless, were present, joying at the Resurrection, although one only rolled away the stone after He was risen, and two in shining garments of joy, sat, the one at the Head, the other at the Feet, where the Body of Jesus had laid. But now, how must not only "a multitude of the Heavenly Host"

have poured themselves out to meet their Lord ; but all orders of the heavenly Hierarchy, Angels, Archangels, Cherubim, Seraphim, Thrones, Dominions, Powers, must, as if with one gaze, have wondered at, revered, adored their and our Lord, returning in His glory ! Since " there <sup>a</sup> is joy in Heaven, among the Angels of God over one sinner that repenteth," what must have been the joy over the completed Redemption, to see our Lord, " the First begotten from the dead," arrayed with the Majesty of the Father, " leading captivity captive," bringing the fathers who had waited for His Coming, to their appointed place, and Himself, above all created being, above the stars, above each rank of angels, at the Right Hand of God.

Forty-two days ago, He was mocked as a fool, a pretended king, a rebel against an earthly sovereign, a blasphemer. Then He was crucified. From the humiliation of the Cross He descended to the humiliation of the grave. He overcame death in the abode of death. And then from " the lower parts of the earth" He rose to this earth ; thence from earth to Heaven, and " the Heaven of heavens." The Cherubim who guarded paradise against our fallen nature, are His Throne, <sup>b</sup> as they are the throne of

<sup>a</sup> " That they [the Angels] joyed, is plain from what Christ saith, that there shall be joy in Heaven over one sinner that repenteth. But if the Angels rejoice seeing one sinner returning, how should they not have received the greatest joy seeing, through the First-fruits this day, our whole nature borne into Heaven." S. Chrys. in Ascens. § 4. tom. ii. p. 453.

<sup>b</sup> " The nature on account of which the Cherubim guarded Paradise, the Same sitteth this day above the Cherubim." S. Chrys. Ib. § 2. p. 449.

God. But He riseth not, as Elijah, through chariots of fire and horses of fire. By the inward Power of His Divinity, through which He rose from the grave, He riseth above all created being, until He reacheth His own Abode, the only Abode where *He* can dwell, Who, having become Man, is still God, the Right Hand of God, "the Bosom of the Father."

What can this mean, "the Right Hand of God," since God does not exist in place, but fills all space? What can it mean, but a special nearness in Majesty, and Power, and Bliss? God uses our earthly language to shadow forth what is beyond all words, the eternal and unspeakable glory of the Human Nature of our Divine Lord. We know not, what space is, except as a creature of God. We know not what nearness to Him is, Who is everywhere. But God, although everywhere, is, since so He wills, otherwise in Hell, otherwise on earth, otherwise in Heaven. In Hell, He is present in His Power; on earth, by His Grace, Wisdom, Power, Justice, Love; in Heaven, He is by the fullest presence of His Glory and His Love. The fulness of the brightness of His Glory and His Love, makes it to be Heaven. But our Lord willeth that His Human Body should still have the nature of a body, although All-glorious and in-oned with God. It is there in place. It is *there* in Heaven, where Heaven is farthest removed from this earth; yea, It is higher than the highest heavens, and the "Heaven of heavens." For "He is<sup>c</sup> higher than the Heavens." As was His descent, so is His Ascent. He descended "into<sup>d</sup> the lower parts of the earth," than which there was nothing

<sup>c</sup> Heb. vii. 26.

<sup>d</sup> Eph. iv. 10.

lower. He ascended not "above" only, but "far above;" not into the highest heavens, but "far above *all* heavens", than which there is nothing higher.<sup>e</sup> There, where no creature is, or can be; there, above all spirits, (for the Body of Christ, being united with His Godhead, is above all created spirits) there, in the noblest place which created being can have (for this is the meaning of "the Right Hand of God") encircled, embosomed, impenetrated with the Godhead, united with God, adored,<sup>f</sup> together with His Godhead, by all creation, is the Body of Christ, our God, our King, our Head, Who calls us "His Body," "calleth<sup>g</sup> us brethren."

Rise, in thought, as much as ye can. In a manner, it is *not* beyond all thought, although in a manner, it *is* above all thought. It is *not* beyond all thought; for God tells us here, not of infinity, not of eternity, not of His unbounded immensity, as God. He tells us of the Human Body of our Lord, which, all but our sinful imperfections, was once like ours; which rose, impassible, and a spiritual Body, from the grave, but was a Body still; to be handled, touched, felt, sustain the pressure of the Apostles' hands; in which He still vouchsafed to eat and drink; which rose from the earth the same Body still, in its wonted act of blessing His own.

It is *not* beyond all thought. For, although there are Heavens to which these our Heavens are as earth, and Heavens of Heavens, these are in space. They may but help us to ascend in thought with our

<sup>e</sup> S. Chrys. see pp. 221, 222.

<sup>f</sup> See letter to the Bishop of London, p. 155—159. ed. 8vo. p. 113—116. ed. 12mo.

<sup>g</sup> Heb. ii. 11.

ascending Lord. We know from Holy Scripture that the third of these, the abode of those who sleep in Jesus, is Paradise.<sup>b</sup> And doubtless the others too have their own inhabitants, some order of Angels. In all, to-day, from lowest to highest, the everlasting doors were opened. Throughout them all, there echoed, "The Lord of Hosts, He is the King of Glory," as He received, while passing, the worship of Angels, Archangels, and all the Heavenly Hosts; until His Human Nature sat down with His Father on His Throne, and all the eyes of all the blessed Spirits gazed, admired, worshipped and loved that Nature enthroned above them all, to which it was once said, "Dust thou art, and unto dust thou shalt return."<sup>1</sup> Follow on, and yet follow on. Gaze, and

<sup>b</sup> 2 Cor. xii. 2, 4.

<sup>1</sup> "To what nature did God say, 'Sit thou on My Right Hand?' To that which heard 'Dust thou art and unto dust shalt thou return.' For it sufficed not to overpass the Heavens. It sufficed not to stand with the Angels. Were not this too an unspeakable honor? But He went beyond the Angels, passed by the Archangels, went beyond the Cherubim, ascended higher than the Seraphim, sped past the Powers, and stayed not until He took the very Throne of the Lord. Seest thou not what a space there is 'twixt earth and Heaven? Yea let us begin from below. Seest thou not, how great a distance there is from hell to earth? from earth again to Heaven? from the Heaven again to the higher Heaven? from that to the Angels, to the Archangels, to the powers above, to the Royal Throne itself? Up this whole distance and height He upbore our nature. Look where it lay below, and whither it hath gone on high. For neither could any go down lower than man was gone down; nor ascend higher than He hath again upborne him. This Paul pointed to, saying, 'He Who descended, the Same is He Who also ascended.' And whither did He descend? 'To the lower parts of the earth.' And 'He ascended far above all Heavens.' Learn Who ascended and what

gaze, and gaze, higher, and higher yet, and yet beyond. There are, in the heavenly Hierarchy, many orders, each in its own nearness to the glory of the Godhead. Each is *one* step towards the Throne of God. Picture to yourself those stars, whose light, (it is thought,) travelling almost like spirit, has in near six thousand years but just reached this earth; think of them, sun beyond sun, sun beyond sun, at distances almost beyond the range of thought!<sup>k</sup> Each sun is but one step towards the

nature, and in what condition it was before. For gladly do I linger on the meanness of our race, that I may learn beyond all measure the honour which came from the Lord's love for man. We were 'dust and ashes.' But this is no blame as yet. For it was the weakness of our nature. We were more senseless than the brutes. 'For man is compared to the senseless beasts, and was made like unto them.' To *become* like the irrational, is to be worse than the irrational. For to be by nature irrational, and so to remain, is of nature. But, having received the distinction of reason, to fall into their senselessness, is the fault of the will. So, then, when thou hearest, that he was made like unto the irrational, think not that he said this, wishing to shew man to be equal to the irrational brutes, but to point out that man was worse than even they. For we had become worse, and more senseless than the irrational brutes; not that, being men, we fell to this, but that we drove on to yet greater senselessness." S. Chrys. l. c. § 3. pp. 451, 452.

<sup>k</sup> "As this [twenty billions of our miles] is an inferior limit, which it is already ascertained that even the brightest and therefore, (in the absence of all other indications) the nearest stars exceed, what are we to allow for the distance of those innumerable stars of the smaller magnitudes which the telescope discloses to us? What for the dimensions of the galaxy, in whose remoter regions, (as we have seen,) the united lustre of myriads of stars is perceptible only in powerful telescopes as a feeble nebulous gleam?"

"Among the infinite multitude of such stars [of the sixth magnitude] in the remoter regions of the galaxy, it is but fair to con-

Throne of God, to that Light of lights unspeakable, to which the sun's unsufferable light is darkness.

If at the almost breathless speed with which we can now be whirled along this earth, in which miles are counted for minutes, we could move upwards, at that speed it would require, day and night, unceasingly, forty thousand thousand years to reach the nearest of the fixed stars above our heads.<sup>1</sup> That star whose distance we can hardly measure in thought, about twenty-two thousands of thousands of thousands of thousands of our earthly miles, is but the very lowest step towards the Throne of God. In that ladder which Jacob saw, which reached from Heaven to earth, these thousands of thousands of

clude that innumerable individuals, equal in intrinsic brightness to those which immediately surround us, must exist. The light of such stars, then, must have occupied upwards of two thousand years in travelling over the distance which separates them from our own system. It follows then that when we observe the places and note the appearances of such stars, we are only reading their history of two thousand years' anterior date, thus wonderfully recorded." Herschell, *Outlines of Astronomy*, 802, 803. The magnitudes of stars are now classified, by the aid of the new telescopes, down to the sixteenth. If stars of the sixth magnitude have transmitted their light, only in two thousand years, those which, in the largest telescopes, are scarcely distinguishable as stars (see below, p. 224) may well have occupied the whole time since the Creation.

<sup>1</sup> The light from the nearest fixed star is calculated to reach this earth in three years and eighty-three days, at the rate of 192,000 miles in a second. This, according to Sir J. Herschell, (*Outlines of Astronomy*, n. 804), amounts to about twenty billions of miles, or more precisely to 19,788,239,040,000 miles. But taking into account the parallax of  $\alpha$  Centauri, "about  $0^{\circ}.9128$ , or about ten elevenths of a second," (*ib.* § 807); the result would be about that in the text, that is, 21.67861419



thousands of thousands of miles, must be told thousands of times over,<sup>m</sup> before we could reach the

<sup>m</sup> “— Every increase in the dimensions and power of instruments having brought into view multitudes of objects invisible before ; so that, for anything experience has hitherto taught us, the number of fixed stars may be really infinite, in the only sense in which we can assign a meaning to the word”, [that is, “to which we can assign no limit,” for “infinity” of material objects is a contradiction.] Sir J. Herschell, *Outlines of Astronomy*, n. 778. “The whole number of stars already registered down to the seventh magnitude, inclusive, amounting to from 12,000 to 15,000.” *Ib.* 779. “So crowded are the stars in some parts of the Milky Way, that by counting the stars in a single field of his telescope, Sir W. Herschell was led to conclude that 50,000 had passed under his review in a zone two degrees in breadth, during a single hour’s observation.” *Ib.* 786. “The light of Sirius is four times that of a Centauri, and its parallax only 0°.230. This, in effect, ascribes to it an intrinsic splendour equal to 63.02 times that of our sun.” *Ib.* 818. “The brighter portion [of the great nebula, surrounding the stars marked  $\theta$  1 in the sword-handle of Orion] is shewn with the eighteen-inch reflector broken up into masses, whose mottled and curdling light evidently indicates by a sort of granular texture its consisting of stars ; and when examined under the great light of Lord Rosse’s reflector, is evidently perceived to consist of clustering stars. There can therefore be little doubt as to the whole consisting of stars, too minute to be discerned individually, even with these powerful aids, but which become visible as points of light when closely adjacent in the more crowded parts, in the mode already more than once suggested.—The conclusion can hardly be avoided, that in looking at it we see through, and beyond the Milky Way, far out into space, through a starless region, disconnecting it altogether from our system.” *Ib.* 885, 887. “The sublimity of the spectacle afforded by Lord Rosse’s telescope of some of the larger globular and other clusters, is declared by all who have witnessed it to be such as no words can express.—Although nebulae do exist, which even in this powerful telescope appear as nebulae, it may very reasonably be doubted whether there be really any essential physical distinction between nebulae and clus-

highest step of the Heavens which we now see above us, towards the Throne of God.

Beyond, above all these, surveying all, governing all, "upholding all with the word of His power," judging all not by word, or motion, or command, but by His obeyed Will, on the Throne of God, abides in thy nature, thy Redeeming Lord. *Where* He is, we can imagine ; for the human mind can imagine space linked on to space, and space to space, although, to our bounded sense, each seems all but boundless. But *what* He is now, who can think ? We can think of material glory, material light, light purer, intenser, softer, brighter, than any, the fullest, softest radiance which we ever saw, all-piercing, all-pervading, all-dazzling. But what can we think of the Glory of God, wherein His Human Form lives, wherewith It is radiant, that light which lightens all that lives, fills all the Heavenly hosts with light transparent, yet which shrouds by its very brightness the depth of the invisible Glory of the Godhead ? Yet in that Divine Glory lives that very Human Form, which our Loving Lord took for us, unchanged, save that the Glory which, when He was for us on earth, was veiled, now issues forth, the Light and Joy of all throughout the spheres of Heaven. So in-oned is It with God, that as God, through taking our flesh, became Incarnate, the Manhood, being taken  
ters of stars, at least in the nature of the matter of which they consist, and whether the distinction between such nebulæ as are easily resolved, barely resolvable with excellent telescopes, and altogether irresolvable with the best, be anything else than one of degree, arising merely from the excessive minuteness and multitude of the stars, of which the latter, as compared with the former, consist." Ib. 870, 871.

into God, is deified.<sup>n</sup> “One° God is That which deifies, and that which is deified.” God became

<sup>n</sup> “He deified that which He put on.” S. Ath. c. Arian. i. § 42, p. 240, Oxf. Tr. “He received it, as far as man’s nature was exalted; which exaltation was its being deified.” Ib. § 45, p. 245. “Being God, He has taken to Him the flesh, and being in the flesh, makes the flesh, God.” Ib. iii. § 38, p. 455. “Now the flesh had risen and put off its mortality, and become God.” Ib. § 48, p. 469. “The manhood advanced in Wisdom, transcending by degrees human nature, and made God.” Ib. § 53, p. 475. “The Word of God did not receive by grace the title of God, but His Flesh with Him was accounted God (*ἰθεολογήθη*). For he said not, ‘the Word became God,’ but, ‘the Word was God.’ Ever, he saith, was the Word, God. And this same God became flesh; that His Flesh might become God Word.” De Incarnat. et c. Arian, § 3. p. 873, ed. Ben. “What could be greater for the lowliness of man, than to be united with God, and, from that blending, to become God, and to be so visited by the Day-spring from on high, that the Holy Thing born should be called the Son of the Most High, and there should be given Him a Name above every name. And what else is this than God?” S. Greg. Naz. Orat. 30, § 3, p. 541, ed. Ben. “God went forth with that which He had taken, [the Humanity] one (*ἓν*) of the two contraries, flesh and Spirit, of which the one deified, the other was deified.” Id. Or. 38, § 13, p. 671. “For both are, by the commingling, one; God taking the manhood, and the man being deified, or by what name soever any may call it.” Id. Ep. i. ad Cledon. Ep. 101, T. ii. p. 86, ed. Ben. “We say that the Body too, whereby He took upon Him the suffering, being contempered with the Divine Nature, was, through the contempering, made that which the Nature assuming it, is. So far are we from thinking anything poor of God, the Only-Begotten; for the lower nature, which was taken in that dispensation of love to man, this too we believe to have been transformed to the Divine and pure Nature.” S. Greg. Nyss. cont. Eunom. Orat. iv. T. ii. p. 581. “He (S. John) knew that the Word which was made Flesh, was the

° S. Greg. Naz. Carm. Iamb. x. 61, (cont. Apollin.) p. 256. ed. Ben.

Man, taking into Him, body, and soul, and mind ;  
and the body, soul, and mind of the Man, Christ

Same with the Word Who was with God. But the Flesh is not the Same with the Godhead, before it too is transformed to Deity." *Ib.* pp. 588, 589. "The Godhead is emptied (Philip. ii. 7,) that the human might be capable of receiving it ; the human is renewed, becoming, by its contempering with the Divine, Divine." *Ib.* p. 590. "The transelementing of man to Christ." *Ib.* fin. "He [the Son] received [of the Father] when the Temple which He took was deified ; and He was, by Nature, God, being the Word of the Father." S. Cyril Al. *Thes. L. 20. T. v. p. 196.* "The Word Himself became Flesh, conceived by the Virgin, but coming forth, God with the nature which He had taken, itself too already Deified by Him, as soon as it was brought into being, so that these three were simultaneous, the taking it, and its being, and its deifying by the Word." Joh. Damasc. *de fid. iii. 12. p. 224, ed. Ben.* "This interchange of the natures is twofold. The one equal and unlike, as in God made man, and man made God. For although the man taken was as much deified, as God taking him was humanate ; for both the humanizing and the Deifying were as to body, and soul, and mind ; yet not alike. For God by Nature became man, but Man by [Divine] appointment, God." (A father in Euthym. *Panopl. P. 1. tit. 7. vers. fin. Bibl. Pat. T. 19. p. 48, and Petav.*) "Then did the Virgin conceive in the womb, and the Word was made Flesh, that the Flesh might become God." S. Ambrose *de Virg. i. 3.* "Let not the opinion of some, not attentive enough to the rule of faith and the oracles of the Divine Scriptures, steal over you. For they say 'He Who is the Son of Man was made the Son of God ; but He Who is the Son of God was not made the Son of Man.' In so saying, they meant what was true, but were unable to express the truth. For what did they mean, save that the human nature could be changed for the better, but the Divine could not be changed for the worse ? This is true. Yet thus too, (that is, the Divinity being in no way changed for the worse,) still the Word was made Flesh. For the Evangelist does not say, 'Flesh was made the Word,' but 'the Word was made Flesh.' What Christian would deny, that the Son of Man was born of that woman ? But yet so that God was made Man, and so

Jesus, are, by union with the Godhead, God.<sup>p</sup> Yet, in that unutterable Glory, He is, and shall be, for ever, Man.

*There*, bright with uncreated Glory, are the Eyes which wept over His city, and which, on the Cross, though dimmed with His Precious Blood, beheld us, and had compassion on us. They are the Eyes of God, even as the Church is said to have been redeemed by the "very own Blood of God." *There* are the Hands, once pierced for us, once stretched out to embrace us, which, in parting from us, blessed us. In form they are the Hands of a man, but with the power, the might, the glory of God. They are the Hands of God. For His Human Nature is the Nature of the Son of God, and so each part of that Nature is part of the Nature of the Son of God, and with Him, God.

And yet, though glorified, God willeth not to change It wholly, so that It should cease to be. What was created, remains created together with His uncreated Godhead; what was bounded by His Human form, remains bounded, though in Glory. As when "He<sup>q</sup> hung aloft upon the Cross, His

Man was made God. For 'the Word was God,' and 'the Word was made Flesh.'" S. Aug. Serm. 187, de Nativ. [al. de Temp. 19]. "Why then should we blush to confess that God, for man, and in man, was born and suffered, when we do not deny that, by the gift of God, that Very Man was made God?" Capreolus Ep. ad Vital. Bibl. P. T. vii. p. 7. "God was so made man, and man made God, that yet neither was absorbed." Vig. c. Fut. L. 2. c. 8. B. P. viii. 727. [These instances, except those from S. Ath., are from Petav. de Incarn. iv. 9.]

<sup>p</sup> See a father ap. Euthym. not. n. p. 227.

<sup>q</sup> Eustath. Antioch. apud Theodoret Dial. 3, p. 236. ed. Schulz.

Divine Spirit was within" that marred Form, yet not bounded by It, but "walked on the heavens, and compassed the whole earth, and commanded the abyss, and searched through and judged every human soul, and governed all things at once, as God," so now, while It fills heaven and earth and is present everywhere, not by motion nor change of place, but by one simultaneous Presence, He willeth, in the Body, to abide in that unspeakable Glory, yet not giving to His Natural Body, ubiquity, or co-extension with His omnipresent Godhead.

All the mysteries of the "Word made Flesh" have their special comfort for us, and so has this. It were little for us, compared to this, that God the Son had taken our nature, if then, (as misbelievers said of old) it had been dissolved into the Majesty and Glory of God, and had ceased to be, although in God. These thought to do honour to God, by denying the boundlessness of His condescending Mercy. And so, our whole union with God would have been forfeited. Christ would have ceased to be ; and the Incarnation of God the Son would have come to nought. Not so, blessed be God ! "God and man are" still "One Christ." Our Redeeming Lord, Who took our nature upon Him, glorified the Flesh which He took, and made it Life-giving ; He deified, but retained it. In that very nature which was the lowest of His rational creation, sunk deeper by the fall, severed from God, the slave of Satan, the willing sport of the foul tempests of its passions, (which, if it *would*, it *could* not control, but more miserably lost in that it *would* not,) degraded below the brutes by its fall, (for a brutish and brutalized

nature is more frightful far than a brute's nature)—in that very nature, which in us was infected with every foulness, every cruelty, every hatefulness, every unnaturalness of sin, until what was against even its fallen nature, became nature to it,—in that very Nature, in Him sinless, pure, holy, and now glorious with the Indwelling Holiness, Purity, Truth, Beauty, Majesty, Wisdom, Love, Glory of the Only Begotten of the Father, one God and Co-equal with the Father, did Christ our Saviour begin, on this Day, to sit at the Right Hand of God.

It is a comfort to us, when those whom we love are away, if we can set before us their faces, imagine their looks, picture them in our souls, as when they were most loving, gentle, tender, good towards us. Who has not thought of those who have passed away out of our sight to Paradise, as the martyrs have been allowed to be seen of old, with the same countenance and look of pure holy love, which they once had here, yet now “surpassing<sup>r</sup> bright, so that their likeness could scarcely be recognized, because the eyes of the flesh gleamed with Angelic radiancy?” Yet, comfort and joy although it were, thus to dwell on them, they could not speak to us, do not, as far as we know, know our inmost hearts, and so knowing, love us. But it is our very own Lord, He, Who became one of us, Who walked to and fro among us, Who went about, healing all who were oppressed by the devil, comforting the broken-hearted, keeping company with sinners, admitting publicans and har-

<sup>r</sup> Acta Lucii, &c. about. A. 260, in Ruinart Acta Mart. p. 241, quoted in S. Cyprian's Ep. 80, p. 313, n. e. Oxf. Tr.

lots to come to Him, it is He, the sinners' Friend, Who is now at the Right Hand of God, for us.

What He was, He is ; save as to those infirmities which in Heaven cannot be. In Heaven, He cannot again be hungry, or weary, or athirst, or sorrowful, as neither shall we be, if, by His Grace, we attain thither. But He has, even now, *that* of our nature, which we, His members, shall not have in the Glory of the Resurrection. For, although nothing can cloud that serene brightness of peace of our Lord's in-worded<sup>4</sup> Soul, yet, Holy Scripture says, He still has a fellow-feeling with us, His members. It is the very ground of the boldness of our approach to His Throne of grace, that "we have not an High-Priest who cannot be touched with the feelings of," cannot sympathise<sup>5</sup> with, (so the word is) "our infirmities." Ill have they spoken, who have spoken of our Lord as "a severe Judge," as though there were easier ways<sup>6</sup> of coming to Him than by ascend-

<sup>4</sup> See Petav. de Incarn. iv. 9. 8. Joann. Damasc. de Fid. Orth. iv. 18. "When we speak with reference to the Superior nature, we speak of the Deifying of the Flesh, the Inwording, Superexaltation, and the like, forth shewing the richness which had accrued to the flesh from its union and conjunction with the Most High God, the Word." "For on account of the Hypostatic Union, the Flesh is said to be Deified, and to be made God, and equally God with the Word, (ὁμοθεος τῷ Λόγῳ), pp. 285, 286.

<sup>5</sup> Συμπαθεῖν, Heb. iv. 15. It is the same word as in Heb. x. 34. "Ye had a fellow-feeling, sympathy, with my bonds." It occurs only in these two places.

<sup>6</sup> "Now, when God is angry with a sinner whom Mary takes under her protection, *she restrains her son, that he may not inflict chastisement, and saves the sinner.*" "*She takes hold of her Son, that He may not strike sinners.*" Glories of Mary, c. 3, § 2. "The greater light is Christ, Who is over the just ; the lesser



ing in soul to His own Mercy-seat, or praying Him to look down thence, from the Highest Heaven, upon our misery and our sins. Mistrustful and unjust to His Goodness has any thought of any wanderer been, who thought that his misery was deeper than that Mercy, or that his cry could not reach that pitying Ear.

His Eyes, as the beloved Disciple saw them, were "as a flame of fire," beaming brightly on those who love or desire Him, consuming the impenitent. "His Countenance shone like the sun in his strength" with spiritual light, and the brightness of grace, and radiant mildness, and enlivening glow. Yet it is the same Countenance which looked upon Peter in his fall; the same look which melted the heart of the dying robber by His Side. The same Eyes which shone on Mary Magdalene at His Feet, live on, shine on, unchanged, except in their glory. The love must beam forth even more now; since the Divine Nature, veiled then, shines forth in Its strength now; and "God is love." His Feet seemed to St.

light is Mary, who is over sinners." Card. Hugo Ib. "The world has no such execrable sinner, that she should abominate and repel him, and whom she is not able, knows not, wills not, to reconcile to her Son, if he but ask her help." Ib. from Blos. "Therefore hast thou been chosen from eternity to be the Mother of God, that thy mercy might procure salvation for those whom the justice of thy Son could not save." Hom. de Præs. B. V. quoted as S. Joh. Chrysostom's. It need hardly be said that there is not a word of this sort in S. Chrysostom's real works. See further in Abp. Ussher, on the difference between ancient and modern invocation of Saints, Answer to a Jesuit, p. 445, sqq., extracted in Letter to Dr. Jelf, p. 196, sqq.; and further, p. 210, sqq. from the Glories of Mary, and Sermon on "The Rule of Faith," p. 60, note 8.

John, "like to fine brass, as if they burned in the furnace;" so transparent and translucent were His very Feet with the Divine Glory. Yet they are the same Feet which St. Mary Magdalene anointed, and "washed with her tears, and wiped with the hairs of her head." They are the same Feet which for us were pierced; and the prints of the nails, in everlasting glory, bespeak and plead silently the depth of His Love, the Merits of His Passion.

But since the very presence of His Glorified Body in Heaven is such an earnest of mercy stored up for us, what when that very Presence is for us! "Who ever liveth to make intercession for us." There He asketh as Man, what as God He giveth. His Human Nature is not, as it were, withdrawn into His Godhead. He Who shall be our Judge, is God; yet is He "that Man Whom God hath ordained." He shall come in the same Human Form in which He went. His Human Will was ever on earth the same as His Divine Will. Both willed together as one the same as the Father willed. Yet is He still akin to us, in that He hath a Human Will,<sup>x</sup> in union with the Divine. Perfect Man He is, as well as Perfect God. We cannot worship Him as God, without adoring Him as Man. When we sue, weep, pour out our griefs, tell of what weighs us down, complain of our

<sup>x</sup> "He" (S. Greg. Naz.) "in entire accordance with himself and with the other fathers, preached the Will (that is, the human will,) deified, as well as the Divine and Uncreated Nature in God, the Word Incarnate, and for us perfectly Humanate, in that He cleansed like by like, and, according to the true and merciful tradition of the mystery, healed all the natural powers of our nature by all His own." Maximus Aquil. Orat. fin. in Conc. Lateran. (A. 649) Act. 5. Conc. vii. 343, ed. Col.



darkness, dryness, distractions, unsteadfastness, or all the natural miseries of our human life, we cannot tell Him as God, without speaking to Him as Man. For "God and Man are One Christ." If we think of Him, His Human Form comes before our eyes. Not in displeasure, even when He chastens us, not as rebuking now, as He did His very disciples in the flesh, not as upbraiding us, does He there sit, thence look down and behold us. Much less in wrath! "The wrath of the Lamb" is not yet. The words which He spake on earth may well pierce us often through and through, "as a two-edged sword, piercing the very joints and marrow." His Words which He spake here, recall us to ourselves, as they shall judge in the Last Day those who disobey them. But *He* Himself "ever liveth to make intercession for us." He pours down graces upon us; He opens our hearts to receive them; He knocks at the door of our hearts that He may enter in; He, with the Father and the Holy Spirit, comes and dwells with those who love and obey Him. His Name, until the Judgment Day, is nowhere mentioned in Holy Scripture, save as to mercy and love. Through Him, and in Him, are predestination, redemption, reconciliation, cleansing from sin, life, light, grace, peace, faith, hope, love, righteousness, wisdom, sanctification, sonship of God, inheritance of Heaven, oneness through His in-dwelling Spirit, a new creation, perseverance, triumph over the enemy, victory, salvation.<sup>y</sup> These are the gifts, which "when He as-

<sup>y</sup> Col. i. 14; Heb. ii. 17; 1 John i. 7; Luke xxiv. 27; John i. 4; xx. 31; 2 Tim. i. 1; John xii. 46; Rom. iii. 24; Eph. ii. 5—7, 14; Heb. xii. 2; Acts xxvi. 18; Col. i. 27;

cended on High, He gave unto man." These He sheds abroad in every human heart which will receive them, in one continuous stream, from the Day of Pentecost until the end. Until the end, He standeth at God's Right Hand to succour us; He liveth, to intercede for us.

Yet, although in Body, for us at God's Right Hand, He is still, as God, as near to us, as when He was in the Flesh. Here, where we are gathered in His Name, could our eyes behold Him, He is in the midst of us. He is "with us unto the end of the world." Yea, He is with us in a nearer way, if we will, dwelling in us by His Spirit, and feeding us with His Body and Blood. He giveth us, say our Homilies from "the Ancient Catholic fathers," in the Holy Eucharist, "the<sup>2</sup> salve of immortality, and sovereign preservative against death, the pledge of eternal health, the defence of faith, the hope of the resurrection; the food of immortality, the healthful grace, and ghostly substance, the conservatory to everlasting life." As His Human Body by being united with the Eternal Word, is said to be deified, so is the Holy Eucharist called a "deifical"<sup>a</sup> Communion, in that in It, we, receiving Him, are united with Him, Who is, by Nature, God.

Such are the present joys and glories to us of this Great Day. Our own nature, as an earnest of God's

1 Tim. i. 1; Rom. v. 1; 2 Cor. v. 17—21; 1 Cor. i. 30; Eph. i. 2—11; Gal. iv. 5; iii. 26—28; Eph. i. 18, ii. 10; Col. ii. 7; 2 Cor. i. 2; ii. 14; Rom. viii. 37—39; 2 Tim. ii. 10; 1 Thess. v. 9, 10.

<sup>a</sup> Hom. xv. first part, "on the worthy receiving of the Sacrament."

<sup>a</sup> Ibid.

mercy, set down at God's Right Hand; our Lord, God and Man, there interceding for us, thence succouring us, thither drawing us. Oh! may we follow Him! For there He is entered in, not for Himself only, nor only to intercede for us, but to prepare a place for us; "that where He is, there," He saith, "may My servant be." Nay, there, in a manner, we are already. For where the Head is, there, in some sort, in token, and in earnest, and in virtue, are the members. Where He is, there are we who are "in Him." There "is our conversation;" there "our life is hid;" there are "the first-fruits of the Spirit;" there has He made us "to sit in heavenly places in Christ;" there is our home; there, if by God's grace, we persevere, above the stars, are the vacant seats prepared for us, that "as He overcame and is set down with the Father on His Throne," so we, by His strength overcoming, shall, He says, "sit down with Me on My Throne."

Oh! let us listen awhile then, in peace and recollection of mind, this day, if we may catch some sounds of that unutterable melody, which rang through every sphere of creation, "Glory to Him Who sitteth upon the Throne, and unto the Lamb." Well might our hearts die within us for joy, could we hear or picture to our souls the faintest echoes of that everlasting harmony, in which the Church of the First-born, men and angels, on this day first blended, each separate voice singing, with its own special sweetness of thanksgiving for His mercies to itself, some distinct notes of that unceasing, unwearying, undying, ever renewed, ever new, song, whose compass none can reach, for it is of the In-

finite Love and Mercy of our God, Whose love hath been, is and shall be, from everlasting to everlasting, without beginning and without end. For He loved us in Eternity, when we were not; and made us and redeemed us, because He loved us; and in all eternity will He love all, who shut not out from themselves His Love.

May we, through His love, but love Him Who first loved us! We cannot now serve Him, as those servants to whom He spake: "If any man serve ME, let him follow ME." For they, after His Resurrection, followed Him to prison and to death, and laid down their lives for His sake, and are now set on the twelve thrones appointed for them. Yet we can serve Him, if we "follow Him," walk in His ways, not in our own, "do all good works He giveth us to walk in," for His sake; do any, the poorest, meanest, humblest office of our daily life, as He wills. We can, each according to his several capacity, minister to Him in the poor, the hungry, the thirsty, the sick, the naked. Alas! that those, born to be members of Christ, are spiritually poor, naked, blind, sick, famished, as to the Food of Life. All around us, in this vast city, two millions of voices should sing on this day, thanksgiving unto our God; two millions should lift their faces to the skies. And now, what strange discordant song is sung in the Lord's land! and who, well-nigh, thinks more of our ascended Lord, than if He had died to redeem some other race of beings, or the very devils themselves, had placed some other nature at God's Right Hand, were interceding for the inhabitants of one of those remotest worlds? Yet as Christ has taken our

nature, so are they too of ours, purchased by the same Blood, heirs of the same bliss in Him. Let it not be our sin, that they perish. As we value our own salvation, let us value theirs. Let us, at least, think in what way we may, by self-denial, by alms, by prayer, by love of our neighbours, bring some out of this land of the shadow of death to the light of Christ. If the light of Christ have indeed shone into our hearts, let us see how it may so shine, that others may glorify our Father and Redeemer. Let those who can build such houses of God, as this newly-raised to His Name,<sup>b</sup> where all, rich and poor, one with another, may, in simple love, practise the endless song of praise. The very poorest of you has some child, friend, neighbour, whom ye may draw with you to follow Christ, to love Christ, to depart from evil, to choose Him, the everlasting Good. The very simplest, if by the grace of Christ he love Christ with all his soul, mind, strength, will preach Christ, not by words, but by a life, and with the power of His Spirit Who dwelleth in him.

Ascend we to Him, in thought, in faith, in hope, in love. Faith and prayer and love place us in one instant at the Throne of God. For faith, prayer, love, are the first-fruits of *His* Spirit within us, Who dwelleth at once in the Highest Heavens and in the humble heart. Thither let us ascend in heart, that we may ascend in body hereafter. There let us, in His Uncreated Glory, behold the End of our being; thence behold the nothingness and the shadowyness of all earthly things, save as they centre there and by God's grace lead us thither; there let us behold

<sup>b</sup> S. Mary Magdalene, in S. Pancras, London.

what eye cannot see and heart cannot contain, the boundless love of Him Who is Infinite, and act, day by day, as those whose endless home, by our Redeemer's mercy, is around, or beneath, the Throne of God.

“Blessed is that servant whom his Lord, when He cometh, shall find so doing!” For He saith: “Where I am, there shall My servant be.” Where, Lord? In My Joy, the Joy of thine own Lord, the Joy, after thy measure, of the Man Christ Jesus, Whose Joy is in the Ever-Blessed Trinity, in perfect knowledge, and blissful glory, and unvarying peace, and fulness of the soul, and transporting love, and participation of the Godhead, Father, Son, and Holy Ghost, for ever and ever. Amen.



## SERMON XIV.

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### THE TEACHING OF GOD WITHIN AND WITHOUT.

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WHIT-SUNDAY.

PSALM XXV. 15.

*“The secret of the Lord is with them that fear Him,  
and He will shew them His covenant.”*

GOD reveals Himself in two ways to man, within and without. Even when man had fallen from Him, and God left him for a time to walk in his own ways, He still, St. Paul says, “left not Himself without a witness, in that He did good, and gave us rain from Heaven and fruitful seasons, filling our hearts with food and gladness.” By His Providence, in the order and variety of the seasons, “by<sup>a</sup> the unspeakable beauty of the whole world, by the rich and ordered bounty of His unutterable Gifts,” by His dispensations of chastisement or of love, He revealed Him-

<sup>a</sup> De vocat omn. Gent. ii. 4. ap. S. Prosper.

self without, "gave to the heart of man the tables of an eternal law," and wrote His word "on the pages of the elements." "What," says a holy writer,<sup>b</sup> "is this exceeding variety of forms and countless beauty in things created, but rays of the Godhead, shewing that He from Whom they are, indeed IS, yet not explaining what HE IS, so that thou seest what is from Him, not Himself."

But even on the heathen He wrote a more inward law which answered to that outward, and interpreted its voice, the law of conscience. "These," says St. Paul of the heathen, "shew the work of the law written in their hearts, their conscience bearing witness, and their thoughts the meanwhile accusing or else excusing one another." "To all mankind," says a heathen,<sup>c</sup> "conscience is God." "Thinkest thou," saith another,<sup>d</sup> "that he hath escaped whom his mind, conscious of his fearful deed, holds stricken?" "Night and day, they bear their witness in their breast."

Each of these voices of God is made more distinct, as man is brought nearer to God. Without, together with God's voice in nature whereby He still speaks, when we forget His voice of Grace, He hath given us "the<sup>e</sup> writings of the law, the oracles of Prophets, the melody of the Psalms, the instruction of Pro-

<sup>b</sup> S. Bern. in Cant. Serm. 31.

<sup>c</sup> Menander. I am not certain whether this be the same verse as is quoted from the Adelphi in S. Justin de Monarchia, p. 41. ed. Bened. "The mind is to the good ever God, as the wisest deem." S. Justin also quotes from the Tibic. "For all things are a temple to right reason. For the mind is the God which will speak."

<sup>d</sup> Juven. 13. 192.

<sup>e</sup> Bp. Andrewes' Devotions.

verbs, the experience of Histories," the words of the Son made Flesh by Himself or by His Apostles. Within, together with the voice of conscience, He speaks too by the Spirit.

These two voices must ever be heard together. The outward voice falls dead and cold when the inward is not awakened; the inward is not given, to take the place of the outward; and all who would so use it, have mistaken suggestions of their own mind or of the evil one, for the still Voice of God. God's outward Voice reveals, His inward applies what It has revealed. His outward Voice declares what we are to believe and do; His inward Voice opens our ears and our heart, that we may believe and love and do it. Without His inward Voice, we should be like an instrument unattuned, which can give forth none but harsh and discordant sounds. Without the outward, we should be like the same instrument, attuned, yet none to play upon it.

The Jews heard our Lord with the outward ear and saw His miracles, and could not deny them, yet in vain. "Hearing, they heard, but understood not; seeing, they saw, but perceived not; for their heart was waxed gross, and their ears were dull of hearing, their eyes have they closed; 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."

God had opened the inward ear of Cornelius and of the Ethiopian eunuch, and He wrought a miracle that they should not lack his outward teaching, sending St. Peter and St. Philip to instruct them. He opened the jailor's heart by the terrors of the

earthquake, and gave him St. Paul to teach him whereby he and his house might be saved. Lydia's heart and the three or five thousand He opened at once through the ministry of His preacher and the inward teaching of the Spirit.

And so it is now. St. Augustine's heart God opened<sup>f</sup> at last by the voice of his conscience and by the word of the Apostle, "Put ye on the Lord Jesus Christ, and make not provision for the flesh to fulfil the lusts thereof;" St. Anthony's<sup>g</sup> He opened by the words of His Son, "If<sup>h</sup> thou wilt be perfect, go and sell all that thou hast, and give to the poor, and thou shalt have treasure in Heaven; and come and follow Me." Towards us too He often speaks with power through some words of Holy Scripture which we have often half heard and neglected, and He draws water out of the flinty rock. He prepares our hearts to fear Him, and so He speaks to them in mingled sounds of terror and of hope.

Yet not in man's first conversion only or chiefly does God thus speak. He is ever teaching us more and higher truth, as we are obedient to His earlier voice. The same Holy Scripture is at once "milk to babes, and strong meat to men whose minds are exercised." "As the manna suited every man's taste,<sup>i</sup> so the same Holy Scripture is to each, such as he himself is. It nourishes the child; it hath hidden depths for the soul whose "life is hid with Christ in God."

God speaketh ever to the heart, *as* He speaketh

<sup>f</sup> Conf. L. 8. c. 12, § 29. p. 153, Oxf. Tr.

<sup>g</sup> S. Ath. Vit. S. Anton. § 2. p. 796. ed. Ben.

<sup>h</sup> S. Matt. xix. 21.

<sup>i</sup> Wisdom. xvi. 20.

through His word. For He cannot contradict Himself. But He speaketh to the soul mostly through it, at times even without it. A voice which is contrary to it, cannot be from Him ; and so it hath ever been a rule in the Church, that were an Angel from Heaven to seem to bid anything really contrary to it, it must be the evil angel, “transformed into an Angel of light.” Yet at all seasons in the Church, God does speak to the conscience, often without voice of words, or audible sound, by His Spirit. He guides the soul, or calls it, or reproves it, or upholds it, or comforts it, or directs it, or bathes it with His consolations in a way conformable to His word ; yet so, that it is a secret voice to the hidden ear of the heart which hears it. And “His sheep hear His Voice,” and know that it is He Who speaketh.

This is the very promise of the Gospel. “Thine<sup>k</sup> ears shall hear a word behind thee saying, this is the way, walk ye in it, when ye turn to the right hand, and when ye turn to the left ;” that is, walk ye on, not stand still ; in the straight way, not out of it ; however ye be tempted to turn to seeming good or real evil. Yet this inner voice is not without the outer voice of the ministers of Christ. For the Prophet had just said<sup>l</sup> “yet shall not thy teachers be removed into a corner any more, but thine eyes shall see thy teachers.” Yet He Who truly teacheth, is within. “He,”<sup>m</sup> saith our Lord, “shall teach you all things.” “For,” saith a father,<sup>n</sup> “unless the same Spirit be present with the heart of the hearer, fruitless is the discourse of the teacher.

<sup>k</sup> Is. xxx. 21.<sup>l</sup> Ib. 20.<sup>m</sup> S. John xiv. 26.<sup>n</sup> S. Greg. Hom. 30, in Evangel. § 3.

Let no one then ascribe to the *man* who teacheth, what he understandeth out of the mouth of our teaching; for unless there be One within Who teacheth, the tongue of the teacher toileth in vain without."

The Apostles, "filled with the Holy Ghost," as on this day, taught, wrote epistles with the finger of God, even the Holy Spirit; they built, they planted, they watered, they "warned with many tears night and day." Yet, says the beloved Apostle, "Ye<sup>o</sup> have an unction from the Holy One, and ye know all things", which it concerneth the faithful to know, through the anointing Spirit and the seven-fold gift which He imparts. Yea, while the Apostle teacheth, he telleth them "Ye<sup>p</sup> need not that any one should teach you; but as the same anointing teacheth you all things and is Truth, and even as it hath taught you, ye shall abide in Him." He would say against false teachers, "who," he says, "seduce"<sup>q</sup> you; ye need no new teaching; for ye have learnt all things, the whole breadth and depth of Divine truth and love, but from whom? Through the ministry indeed of man, but all of God; as St. Paul says "God giveth the increase." One only "baptizeth with the Holy Ghost and with fire," although through the hands of man. One only forgiveth sins, "God alone," although He willeth to reach the soul through the outer ear and the voice of words, "Thy sins be forgiven thee." One only is the High Priest; One only consecrates, feeds with Angels' food, although He hallows the elements without, by His Own Words spoken by man. One only converts the soul, enlightens the mind, strengthens the heart, kindles the

<sup>o</sup> 1 S. John ii. 20.

<sup>p</sup> Ib. 27.

<sup>q</sup> Ib. 26.

soul with the fire of love, breathes into it the breath of life, although fiery tongues sat, as on this day, upon Apostles' heads, and with hearts and tongues of flame, they spake with burning words the "fiery law" of love, wherewith their souls were kindled. "Think not," says a father,<sup>1</sup> "that any learn anything from man. The Master is within. We may warn you through the sound of words. Unless there be within, Who teacheth, empty is our sound. How many will go hence untaught. As for me, I have spoken to all, but whom that anointing teacheth not within, they return untaught. The ministries without come in aid, as it were, and warn. He hath His seat in Heaven, Who teacheth the heart. Wherefore Himself also saith in the Gospel, 'Call no man master upon earth, for one is your Master, even Christ.' May He then speak within, since none among men is there. Be there one by thy side; none is in thy heart. And yet may there not be no one in thy heart. May Christ be in thy heart; His anointing be in thy heart; lest the heart be athirst in a dry land, and have no fountain where to be slaked. The Master within, then, is He Who teacheth. Christ teacheth; His inspiration teacheth. For where His inspiration and teaching are not, the words, without, noise by in vain."

What then? Because God must prepare the heart and open the ear, and Himself speak to it, doth nothing depend on us? Doth He teach us, "whether we will hear or whether we will forbear?" Not so.

<sup>1</sup> Deut. xxxiii. 2.

<sup>2</sup> S. Aug. in 1 Ep. S. Joh. Tr. iii. § 13, [p. 1136.] Oxf. Tr.

<sup>3</sup> Ezek. ii. 7.

*He* only speaketh ; but it is with us to hearken or no. It is much, yea, it is everything, not to turn away the ear, to be willing to hearken, not to drown His Voice. "The secret of the Lord is with them that fear Him." It is a secret, hushed voice, a gentle intercourse of heart to heart, a still small voice, whispering to the inner ear. How should we hear it, if we fill our ears and our hearts with the din of this world, its empty tumult, its excitement, its fretting vanities, or cares, or passions, or anxieties, or shew, its rivalries, and its whirl of emptinesses? A loud voice will often not reach an occupied heart. The voice of the Son of God in the flesh, though it waked Lazarus from the dead, reached not those whose ears and minds were filled with the love of the praise of men."

Would you then hear the inward voice which shall lead you on a safe way, and shall speak to your hearts, soothe you, still you, make your hearts burn within you, yea, melt them as it speaketh, until ye hear that other blissful voice, "Come, ye blessed of My Father." There are two conditions, as there are degrees of that inward hearing. First, ye must fear God ; secondly, ye must be hushed yourselves.

"The secret of the Lord is with them that fear Him." They then, who do not fear Him cannot hear it. And this both on God's part, and on man's. Man will not hear, unless he fears ; and in the end, God doth not speak. But, whereas in grace, God forecomes man, and man follows grace given ; in sin, on the contrary, man begins ; he casts out grace, deadens his own ear, until God's voice sounds fainter

<sup>a</sup> S. John xii. 43.



and fainter, and comes seldomer, and at last there follows the stillness of death. It is heard no more. God leaves the soul and it is dead. Every wilful sin is part of this deadening of the soul. Ye cannot wilfully refuse to hear in one way or at one time, and hear at another. Ye cannot stop your ears to part of God's message, hear and not hear what ye will. The soul is a beautiful instrument, attuned by the Hand of God, and breathed in by His Holy Spirit. It cannot be attuned and untuned at once. It cannot yield at once the harmony of heaven and the jarring discords of the world.

The very heathens saw that virtues were linked together by a golden band, so that they said, whoso hath one, hath all, and no one can have one perfectly who hath not all. "Dead flies," saith the wise man,<sup>x</sup> "cause the ointment of the apothecary to send forth a stinking savour;" that is, the sweet anointing of the Holy Spirit is, by but a few dead works or evil thoughts wilfully harboured, corrupted and destroyed.

The subdual of, or the yielding to, a man's one chief sin, is commonly the change of the whole man. For it is the question, whether a man will hearken or no. To hearken is to hear. And if he hearken not in this one point, in vain will he desire to hear in all besides. Hence they who have turned to God find, that whereas they hoped things were in the main well with them, notwithstanding this or that outstanding fault, everything in their whole lives was, through that outstanding fault, tainted. It only overshadowed the rest, so they saw them not. Any sin, tampered with, or wilfully entertained or

<sup>x</sup> Eccles. x. 1.

harboured and allowed, spreads along every nerve of the moral frame. For it is the question on which all hangs, is God or self man's end? is the flesh subdued to the Spirit, or the Spirit stifled by the flesh? is God or Satan the master whom man obeys?

This then is the first condition of knowing the will of God, to will to know it wholly. In vain is heaven opened to eyes fixed on earth. Love sees God. As is our love, such are we. But the love of the world and the love of God are contraries. The one must cast out the other. "The holy spirit of discipline," says the book of Wisdom,<sup>y</sup> "flees deceit, and will not dwell in a body subject to sin." God will not dwell in the soul which harbours wilfully His enemy. Light and darkness, fire and water, life and death, cannot co-exist; nor God and sin in the soul. Man must "cease to do evil," ere he can "learn to do well." To them that "*fear*<sup>z</sup> the Lord" "the Sun of Righteousness will arise with healing in His wings," but not to those who shroud themselves in darkness, and "hate the light lest their deeds should be reproved." He will arise and shine on our darkness, and will order the chaos of our souls. No chill of *past* unlovingness is too great to be melted by the heat of that Sun. No thickets<sup>a</sup> too tangled to be penetrated by His Light. But one retained unlovingness has changed a martyr into an apostate; <sup>b</sup> one spot of darkness will blind the whole soul.

<sup>y</sup> Wisdom i. 5.

<sup>z</sup> Mal. iv. 2.

<sup>a</sup> Ps. xxix. 9.

<sup>b</sup> See in Ruinart *Acta Martyrum*. "In martyrium S. Nicephori et contra injuriarum memoriam," pp. 243—251. Nicephorus, a layman, suffered martyrdom under Valerian and Gallienus, about A.D. 260. The touching story, briefly, is:—Sapricius, a

This is needful for all who would be saved. Yet ye would not be saved only, that is, ye would not wish to gain Heaven, merely to be saved from hell. Ye would not, on this Great Day, when God the Holy Ghost came down to shed abroad the love of God in your hearts, love with a poor selfish love, which would be brought near to God Who is Love, only because "without, is weeping and gnashing of teeth." Ye would, if ye dared, long, like the Apostle of this day<sup>c</sup> and all the Apostles, to be "filled with the Holy Ghost," that ye might be kindled with the fire of His Love, and all be burnt up, which doth not agree with His Holy Love. How then must this be?

The Psalmist speaks not of "the secret of the Lord" only, but of a "secret converse"<sup>d</sup> with the soul, as of a Friend with his friend. To enter then

priest, and Nicephorus, a layman, having loved exceedingly, quarrelled, and would not speak, if they met. Nicephorus, coming to himself, sought to be reconciled. Sapricius refused. On the breaking out of the persecution, Sapricius was apprehended, answered nobly, endured long the severest tortures, and was led out to the light execution of being beheaded. Just then, Nicephorus met him, sought his forgiveness humbly and repeatedly. Sapricius was obstinate, did not forgive, and at the moment of martyrdom, forsaken by God, apostatized. Nicephorus having in vain exhorted him, himself confessed Christ, was executed and "crowned, ascended into Heaven, through faith in Christ, and love and humility."

<sup>c</sup> Preached A.D. 1848, when Whit-Sunday fell on June 11th, the Feast of S. Barnabas.

<sup>d</sup> רֵץ (probably from רֵץ;) is both "secret converse of friends", Ps. lv. 16; Job xix. 19; and "a secret," Prov. xi. 13; xx. 19; xxv. 9. It is used of the favour and friendship of God, Job xxix. 4; and of a "secret" revealed by God, Am. iii. 7. It means both, here, and Prov. iii. 32. (It even enters into proper names, רֵץ "friendship of God" Num. xxi. 10, רֵץ רֵץ "in the friendship of

His secret Presence, we must not be taken up with things which are not He. To have the love of this Great Friend, we must desire no love out of Him. To be capable of the fulness of His Love, we must long to love Him ardently. Desire to love God Alone, and all things else in Him, to love Him for Himself, love Him ardently, and no measure of His Love will He withhold from thee.

We must not be taken up with things out of Him, if we would have His secret Presence. Not man's manifold labours, but his manifold cares, hinder the Presence of God. Labour, ordained by God and wrought for and in God, invites God's fuller Presence; for God is in the heart of him who, in the very sweat of his brow, toils as God appoints him. Cares, whereof man himself is the end, so far shut out that fuller Presence, because they enter into, and take up the heart. God Who chose the fishermen, and the tax-gatherer, and the tent-maker, to confound the wisdom and the greatness of the world; yea, He Who framed the worlds, but Himself became the Carpenter's Son and the Carpenter,<sup>e</sup> will fill and in-God" Neh. iii. 6.) "Symmachus and Theodotion render this more clearly [than the seventy]. 'The mystery of the Lord is with them that fear Him, and He shall shew them His covenant.' For He revealeth them, not to all, but to them that fear Him, and sheweth them secretly the scope of His Divine Oracles." Theodoret ad loc. "Aquila, 'the secret of the Lord'; Symmachus, 'the converse of the Lord'; Theodotion and the fifth edition, 'the mystery of the Lord'. For thence did he who was above spoken of, fearing the Lord, advance to so great blessedness, in that the converse of the Lord, and His secret and His mystery became known to him, and the mysteries contained in His covenant, that is, in the Divine Scripture." Euseb. ad loc.

<sup>e</sup> S. Mark vi. 3.

undate with the sweetness of His Love, and enlighten with His Wisdom, and enrich with His consolations, the poorest and most unlettered, who plies his daily task for Him. The very things of God Himself, if sought for themselves, not for Him, may shut out God. Nay, there is this very danger in the most sacred things, in holy thoughts, or fervent words, or transporting feelings, or labours of love, or heart-uplifting sounds,<sup>f</sup> or Divine knowledge, that they may take up the soul the more readily in themselves, and the soul stop short in them, because it fears no danger, being, as it were, on "holy ground." But if even in these things, so nigh to God and shadowing out His Very Presence, men may forget God, what should we think of those manifold cares and thoughts of this world wherewith men encompass themselves? How can God speak to the soul, when the eye is ever roving with curiosity, the ear ever listening for some new thing, the mind ever musing on things of this world. "If," says a holy man,<sup>g</sup> "thou preparest the inward ear for this Voice of thy God, sweeter than honey and the honey-comb, flee outward cares. So shall thy inner sense be clear and free, and thou mayest say with Samuel, 'Speak, Lord, for thy servant heareth.' This voice soundeth not in the market-place; nay, nor is heard in public. A secret counsel calleth for a secret hearing. He will assuredly make thee hear of joy and gladness, if thou receivest Him with a sober ear." "They who would behold God," says St. Gregory,

<sup>f</sup> Preached in Margaret Chapel. See S. Augustine's touching account of himself, Conf. x. 33. § 50. pp. 210, 211, Oxf. Tr.

<sup>g</sup> S. Bernard Ep. 107. n. 13. ed. Ben.

“dwell in a loneliness of soul, and free from the tumults of worldly cares, thirst for God. But<sup>h</sup> what availeth to be alone in body, if loneliness of heart be lacking? For whoso liveth apart in body, but, by thoughts of worldly desires, mingles himself in the tumults of human life, is not in loneliness. Again, if any, in body, be thronged by the crowds of people, and yet in heart feel no tumults of worldly cares, he is not in the city. So then to those who live well, there is first given a loneliness of mind, so that they keep down the din of earthly desires rising within, and through the grace of heavenly love restrain the cares of the heart which bubble up from below; and with the hand of gravity drive away from the eyes of the mind, like flies buzzing around, all the motions of light thoughts, which obtrude themselves, and they seek for themselves within themselves some secret place with the Lord; where, freed from that outward din, they may, through inward longings, in silence speak with Him.”

And now, if thou wishest to live more with and to God, and that God should dwell more in thee, and be thy God, these few brief rules may help you.

Be with God in thy outward works, refer them to Him, offer them to Him, seek to do them in Him and for Him, and He will be with thee in them, and they shall not hinder, but rather invite His Presence into thy soul.

Collect thyself from time to time in God, whatever thou doest, and thou shalt feel Him to be with thee in all.

<sup>h</sup> In Job. L. 30. c. 16. § 52. ed. Ben.

Seek to see Him in all things, and in all things He will come nigh to thee.

Look to Him and not to man, and thou shalt see His Good Hand in all evil, His Healing Hand in all things painful, His Love in all man's unkindness, Himself over-ruling all evil, giving all good.

Then thou must seek His Love for His Love's sake. Not for the praise of man, not for boastfulness, not to be satisfied with ourselves, not to have high places in His Kingdom, not to be above others, or thought well of, not even for inward consolations in themselves, must we desire the secret love of God. Self, not God, is our end, if we seek God for anything except Himself. He loveth not God purely, who loveth God for anything but God. Yet only the humble can so love God. The humble only abase themselves the more, the more good God is to them.

Empty thyself of thyself if thou wouldest that God should fill thee.

Seek the glory of God Alone ; desire to be indwelt by God, because He is Love and the Object of all love, and in His Love is all.

Be very jealous then how thou speakest of the love of God to thee, or of the love which He giveth. It is "the secret of the Lord." "Thy secret to thyself," it was said of old. God *can* (so to speak) only give Himself to the lowly, because His very gifts would injure one, who was lifted up by His gifts. Even St. Paul had "a messenger from Satan to buffet him," lest he should be exalted by the revelations given him. "Let the servant of Christ," says a holy inward man,<sup>1</sup> "who loveth virtues and fol-

<sup>1</sup> S. Laur. Justin. De Orat. Perorat.

loweth prayer, have humility ; let him show humility in acts, in life, above all, in prayers. When this virtue shall have filled, cast down, melted his soul, then shall the heart begin to be enlarged by love, irradiated by truth, filled with light, bedewed with exultation, gladdened by sweetness, fed with devotion, upraised by the Spirit, borne out of itself<sup>k</sup> with transports, enfolded in love, gleam with contemplation, encompassed with brightness, enriched with joys ineffable. Hence ariseth the revelation of secrets, the unfolding of Scriptures, the knowledge of things to come, freedom from the senses, inward partaking of heavenly goods, cleaving to the Divine Goodness, and the blessed fruition of oneness of Spirit.<sup>1</sup>”

<sup>k</sup> Lit. “inebriated.”

<sup>1</sup> This glowing, fervent writer continues :—“ All this is drawn from the exercise of prayer, and the leisure of contemplation, and the aid of the Divine mercy, affecting the heart of each, and dividing gifts, as He wills. For these are not studies of learning, nor of pleasure, not gained by strength of body, but spiritual, peaceable, humble, in harmony with the humble, shewn to the devoted, given to the pure in heart, granted to those who neglect not the Divine Commandments. They are not practised without, but are acted within, in the spirit of the mind, in fervor of spirit, in the cleansing of the heart, where the man is renewed, putting on the new man, which after God is created in righteousness and true holiness. But before these Divine things are laid open, these heavenly things infused, the mind must be practised in works of mercy, in the obedience of piety, in much patience, in many tribulations, in various temptations, in frequent infirmities, in continual watchings, in many necessities, in injuries not infrequent, in unjust persecutions, in hard reproaches, sometimes also in perils of death (2 Cor. xi. 26, 27 ; xii. 10). But when the soul shall be cleansed by these and the like, then it is brightened by new light, consumed \*

\* Depascitur, if it be not for pascitur “is fed.”



Then, (to say no more) thou must desire His Love with an ardent longing. How should we hope that so great a good as God should be given to careless unloving hearts who desired Him not? Yet He Who, out of His boundless love, longeth that we should love Him, hath given us, on this Great Day, the pledge, that He will give us, if we will it, the longing for Himself, and Himself to our longings. "If<sup>m</sup> ye, being evil, know how to give good gifts unto your children, how much more shall your Father Which is in Heaven give good things to them that ask Him?" He gave not, only; He [or fed] by unwonted affection, and enriched by the gift of contemplation. For neither is the crown given without the labor of conflict, nor the good of virtue without the attack and victory over vices, nor the height of contemplation without some sort of perfection of virtues. Wherefore whoso longeth for the taste of devotion, let him not shrink from entering upon the conflict of virtues, but with glad mind, glad desire, determined will, love unfeigned, large greatness of soul, strenuous heart, prudent discretion, wise understanding, humble mind, assiduous prayer, unsloughful anxiety, and persevering study, set himself, do violence to himself, in the acquisition of virtues. For he will not be deprived of the taste of God, nor be without heavenly rewards, whoso, for the love of Christ Jesus, shall be an earnest assailant of vices, and no listless lover of virtues. 'Blessed' says the prophet to the Lord, 'whose help of inworking grace is from Thee,' who in his heart hath fixed to ascend in the valley of tears, plucking up, scattering, dispersing, destroying the habits and desires of vices, that he may mount up to the perfections of virtues, because the Lawgiver will give him blessing, and abundance of exultation, foretaste of spiritual goods, through which, after this pilgrimage, after the conquest and triumph over the world, and laying aside the burden of the flesh, he will attain, face to face, with clear and joyous vision to behold the God of gods in Sion, Who is of all who love Him, the salvation, life, bliss, and peace for ever and ever. Amen."

<sup>m</sup> S. Matt. vii. 11.

poured forth, poured out the Holy Spirit, that His love might through Him be poured out, in an overflowing stream, into our hearts. We should of ourselves, have beheld, cold and unmoved, our Saviour's love. Shame were it and confusion of face, that He died for love of us, and we should with ungrateful eyes, behold His Death! But that this might not be, He giveth us His Spirit. "Christ," saith one<sup>n</sup> who loved much, "dieth and deserveth to be loved. The Spirit toucheth the heart and causeth Him to be loved. Christ doth that, for which He should be loved; the Spirit that, whereby He should be loved. Christ 'commendeth His exceeding love' in us; the Spirit giveth it also. In Christ we see what we should love; from the Spirit we receive whence we should love. From Christ then is the occasion of love; from the Spirit, the affection. What confusion were it to behold with ungrateful eyes the Son of God dying! Which yet might readily be, were the Spirit wanting. But now since 'the love of God is shed abroad in our hearts by the Holy Ghost Which is given us'; being loved, we love; loving, are fitted to be yet more loved. 'For° if, when we were yet enemies, we were reconciled to God by the Death of His Son, much more, being reconciled, we shall be saved by His Life.' For why? 'He Who spared not His Own Son, but freely gave Him up for us all, how shall He not with Him freely give us all things?'"

Faint we not then, though we have choked our hearts with vanities, or dulled them with the things of sense, or chilled them by unlovingness, or dis-

<sup>n</sup> S. Bernard Ep. 107. n. 8.

<sup>o</sup> Rom. v. 10.

tracted them with cares, or swollen them with pride, nay, or steeped them in the defilements of sin. Mightier is the Blood of Christ to cleanse, than our past sins to defile. Mightier the Good Physician to heal than we to wound ourselves. Only yield we ourselves to Him now. The windows of Heaven are open; close we up our hearts no more. Empty we our hearts before Him, and He will cleanse them anew with His Spirit, and fill them with the Wine of His Love. The pledges of His Love are before you, and now, by His Providence, to you who daily worship here, He would give a two-fold<sup>p</sup> measure of His gifts and of His Love. What should hinder your having Angels' love, who have, in such fulness, Angels' Food?

God so loveth us, that He would make all things channels to us and messengers of His love. Do for His sake, deeds of love, and He will give thee His love. Still thyself, thy own cares, thy own thoughts for Him, and He will speak to thy heart. Cast out love of self, and He will give thee Himself. Ask for Himself, and He will take thee into Himself. Cease to do evil, and He will give thee of His Good. "The secret of the Lord is with them that fear Him." Truly a secret, hidden thing is the Love of God, known only to them who seek it, and to them also secret; for what man can have of it here, is, how slight a foretaste of that endless ocean of His Love! For "eye hath not seen, nor ear heard, nor heart of man conceived the good things which God hath prepared for them that love Him," Himself Who Alone IS, and is Love and Bliss. Be thou His, and He Who maketh thee His, is Himself thine.

<sup>p</sup> The Thursday Communion had just been added.

## SERMON XV.

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### THE REST OF LOVE AND PRAISE.

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TRINITY SUNDAY.

REVELATIONS iv. 8.

*“They rest not day and night saying, Holy, holy, holy, Lord God Almighty, which was, and is, and is to come.”*

God resteth everlastingly, and yet worketh in time. His work hindereth not His everlasting rest. His resting from His works hindereth not His working. It is said, after the six days of Creation, “He rested on the seventh day from all His work which He had made.” And yet our Blessed Lord saith, “My Father worketh hitherto and I work.” He rested, in that He ceased to create; He worketh, in that He upholdeth what He created. He created thenceforth nothing outwardly new. All this fair harmony of nature, sun, moon, and those thousand thousand suns in almost infinite space, were created and made. And this our earth was provided, once for all, with

its herbs, trees, and all which walketh through earth and sea, and above all, man, as God's Vice-gerent, in the image and likeness of God. God worketh, in in that He bringeth into life all which lives, and retains it in life by His Will. But God is not like us, that He should with effort create or uphold. He has no limbs of flesh, which can be wearied; nor in Him do His thoughts come and go, so that it should cost Him attention of mind, as it were, to behold all things which are in Heaven and earth. What He IS, *that* He ever was. What He sees, He ever saw. In His Infinite, Unchanging, Mind, He beholdeth all things which were, or are, or shall be, changing while He remaineth. He beholdeth them, not one by one, nor by motion, nor one less and the other more; but all alike, as we should say, spread forth before Him as in a waveless mirror. Before the worlds were made, He dwelt in the everlasting bliss and rest of His love. When according to His Eternal purpose, He made them, He rested within Himself, although He made, by His Will, things out of Himself, reflecting Himself in some measure, yet subject to labour and change. And in this world He worketh, in that, in that unchanging rest, He still, by His Will maketh anew and giveth life and motion to things which come into being, grow, change, and pass away. When this fleeting world shall come to an end through that same unchanging Will of God, God will in that same everlasting rest, uphold unchangeably all who have abode in, or returned to, His Love, in His own bliss, imparted to them.

How then doth the Apostle say, "They *rest* not, day or night?" There is an unrest of pain, and

there is a "rest not" of joy. It is the sweetest rest, to rest, and not to rest. For what is it but an unceasing, unwearying, unwearied rest, a river of joy which flows on in one peaceful fulness of bliss, without bound and without end? God giveth to the blessed, in their measure, to be like Himself. *Here*, to continue on in anything has weariness; because here is not our rest. *There*, upheld by God, the blessed behold the Eternal Truth without toil of thought; they, in spiritual bodies, move swiftly as the lightning without weariness; they love God above all things, with everlasting love and all besides, with undivided love. They, in their degree, like Him, love none the less, because they love the others more. They love with a full undistracted soul, as God loves, at once, all whom He loves, with the fulness of His Infinite Love. And as our love, so will our praise be. What is praise, but to say, how worthy of love is He Whom we love? But then we shall see without effort, praise without toil of seeking words in which to praise, with the whole unstrained power of our soul; unstrained, because sustained by God. Do we not find here, that if we would praise whom we deeply love, our words fail us? Is not our deepest praise to dwell in silent thought, gazing and feeling what is beyond our power to utter? And it is our deepest rest, so, entranced in love, to love without thought, or word, or motion, but in our inmost souls, to go forth out of ourselves, and dwell, without rest, on and in that which we love. We cease to rest, not by pausing to love, but if ever there is a pause in our love, or if what we love is out of sight.

But it has, doubtless, seemed to many of us, at some time, as if we could not hold on thus throughout eternity in praising God. *Here*, after a few minutes, we become weary. Well, if in a few minutes, some thought dart not in, which is not of God! Here we love variety. We love varied pleasures, or thoughts, or refreshment of the body, or knowledge, or sights, or hearing or speaking words or thoughts of love. How can we be occupied throughout eternity in praising God? How can God be the One Object of our thoughts or of our love?

First, Holy Scripture hath not said, that we should so love God, as to shut out any other love, or any other joy, which does not shut Him out. God has said in this life, "He that loveth God, let him love his brother also." Heaven will not be a lonely place, that we should not there have any beside God, to love. Love of our brethren increases, it does not shut out, the love of God. The more we love rightly God or man, the more power we have to love both. There all will love all. There we shall love all in God, and God in all. We shall, in the love of others, love God the more, because it is God whom we shall love in them. They will not be separated from God, that we could love them apart from God. God will dwell in all there. All will be transparent with His Glory and His Love. His Beauty (as it does here in a manner) shall make all beautiful. His Love shall make all lovely. His Joy will beam in every countenance. His Wisdom will fill all their thoughts. All shall be full of Him; all shall joy in Him; the joy in Him shall vibrate from soul to soul. All shall love Him the more, because He is so good

to those whom He gave to love them and to be loved by them.

*There*, in that abode of love, shall no special holy love be lost. God has not formed us, yea, bidden us, in this our nursery for the heavenly life, to love one another, in all our several relations, that all this, after this life, should cease. He has not bound us in those varied sweet bands of love, fathers, mothers, children, brothers, sisters, husbands, wives, friends, or those wider circles through which love radiates here, that the love which is from Himself, and which He has made part of the undying soul, shall die. We could not think as to the very Human Nature of our Lord, that in the full glory of God He does not love still, with that same special love, with which on earth He loved the disciple whom He loved. He cannot change. For *then* too He was "Very God" as well as "Very Man." His Human soul loved then with the Unchangeable Love of the Godhead with which It was united. Again, how could He, as Man, not have fulfilled His own command, and not have loved with the love of a son, the Mother who bare Him after the flesh? And how can that have ceased now? He Himself says of the twelve Apostles, that they should "sit down on twelve thrones with" Him. And since that holy love of His Manhood abides in Him, in Whom our Nature is restored and united with God, how should it not be, that all holy love, which is His gift in us, should abide, if, by His deep Mercy, we enter into His Joy? Rather it shall be part of our joy, to love all which we loved here; only how much more, because every infirmity which in ourselves or in others, ever checked for an instant



the flow of love, shall then have been absorbed into the love of God, and God shall fill all with Himself.

Shall we not then find enough in God, to content our souls? What in God shall come to an end, what shall we search out to the end, of what in God shall we come to the utmost bound, that there will be no more to satisfy our souls, and we shall need this variety of outward things and employments to fill up our joy? His Wisdom? But it is Infinite, containing in itself, not only all things which are or shall be, but all which is possible though it shall never be. Or shall we come to the bound of His Love, that there shall be no more for us? But love is His own Infinite Being. Tell me, what in God is not Infinite, Beauty, or Glory, or Majesty, or Holiness, or Wisdom, or Goodness, or Love; and then you may think that you will be weary, because there will be no Perfection of Love, for you to love. What is Infinity? It is *not* that which has no bounds to *us*, to which *we* can see or imagine no bounds. It is that which has no bounds in Itself. If it could have bounds, there would be something beyond it, which was not God. As Holy Scripture saith, "It was impossible for God to lie," because it is contrary to His All-Holy Being; or we may say for the same reason, "God cannot contradict Himself," so, since it would be contrary to the Being and Unity of God, we may say, without presuming, "God could not create that which should perfectly comprehend Himself."\* For

\* "That which comprehendeth itself, is bounded to itself,' (S. Aug. 83. quæstt. q. 14.) So then what comprehendeth another, that other is finite to it. But God cannot be finite to any created intellect. So then no created intellect can comprehend God."

none can comprehend the Infinite, save that which is Infinite, His Co-eternal Son and Holy Spirit.

Truly it would be Infinite Bliss to know and love Him Infinitely. It would be the Bliss of God Himself. Yet some think, that they could not be happy in the Love of God Alone. Not happy in that which is the bliss of God Himself? Whence are Angels and Archangels, Seraphim and Cherubim blessed? In that they behold and love what they cannot reach to; they search, what they cannot search out; they gaze on what they cannot gaze through; they apprehend what fills their thoughts, yet passeth knowledge. They behold for ever, and are satisfied with the riches of the glory of God which they behold, which yet, behold it as they may through the Light of God within them, is yet beyond them in its Infinity.

But whence then is this fair variety of things beautiful on earth, or whence are things, without which men suppose, they cannot be happy there? Whence have things pleasant their pleasurableness, or great things their greatness, or things beautiful their beauty, or the wise their wisdom? Whence but from Him Who made them? Who would be satisfied with the light in a dark cave, if he might be bathed in the full, warm, genial glow of the sun? Who shall so take up with any of these things, which, at best, are but faint rays of the exhaustless Source

“That the substance of God is incomprehensible, there is no doubt to those who believe the Divine Scriptures.” (Damasc. de Fid. Orth. i. 4. et ult.)

“Whatsoever comprehendeth another, is either greater or equal to it. But created intellect cannot be greater than, nor equal to God. So then it cannot comprehend Himself.” Aq. in Sent. iv. d. 49. q. 2. art. 3. See also Petav. de Deo. vii. 3. 10, 11, et 9. 6.

of all perfection, all Glory, and Beauty, and Majesty, and Bliss, and Love, as to think that God could not satisfy his soul for ever, if his soul become but fitted to behold and joy in God ?

To those, who, by God's mercy, attain to that bliss, nothing shall be lacking to its perfection. All, as it is most perfect here, is but a shadow of perfection there. Youth is but an image of everlasting freshness ; beauty of form, is but a faint picture of the brightness of immortal glory ; the harmony of music, the most unearthly sound upon this earth, is but an echo of those angel choirs in which the redeemed shall fill up the perfect unison of the new heaven, and the new earth. No joy of any sense shall be wanting there, but all shall be purified, heightened, glorified. Blessed, eternally blessed, they, who bear their part in the songs of heavenly melody, in which countless voices of the glorified, with wondrous and inconceivable sweetness, shall, from end to end of the realms of the redeemed, blend in one Alleluia, "to Him Who sitteth upon the throne, and to the Lamb." "Blessed are they that dwell in Thy house ; they shall still<sup>b</sup> be praising Thee." Not as though, in the new song, we shall evermore praise God in the use of the selfsame human words. Angels and men shall then have one tongue wherewith to praise God. But we shall "still be praising Thee." In the praise of Eternity, we shall evermore "still" be praising Thee. Evermore in the Eternity of praise, there will be an Eternity of praise beyond. There will be no end of praise, because there is no end of His Glory and

Greatness and Goodness which we shall praise ; nor will there be any end of our love, wherewith He will uphold us in the eternal longing gaze on His exhaustless Beauty, and Glory, and Love.

Yet here too, we do not always praise Him in words. Our whole heavenly life will be praise, because our whole heavenly life will be love. With our inmost souls we shall love Him, thank Him, admire Him, adore Him. In whatever way we shall then utter what is above utterance, or think what is above thought, or love what no heart of man can contain, or whatever the rest of our life in God shall be, we shall ever be enwapt with the love of Him, ever be filled with His love, and from that fountain of His love within us, shall return to Him love for love.

“ To Thee,” says the Psalmist, “ is the silence of praise.”<sup>c</sup> Then do we most praise God, when, con-

<sup>c</sup> לֵב רַחֵם וְיִתְּנָה תְּהִלָּה. Ps. lxx. 1. The two Hebrew words seem to form one thought, in which the two qualities are blended into one another. So in Ps. xlv. 5, עֲנִיּוּת־צְדָקָה “ meekness-righteousness,” a meek righteousness, and a righteous meekness ; a meekness which hath righteousness in it, and a righteousness which hath meekness in it. In like way here, silence enters into all deep praise of God ; and praise of the most deeply moved soul expresses itself to God in silence. This thought is expanded in that magnificent passage of Hooker, (E. P. 1. 2. 2.) “ Dangerous it were for the feeble brain of man to wade far into the doings of the Most High ; Whom although to know be life, and joy to make mention of His Name ; yet our soundest knowledge is to know that we know Him not as indeed He is, neither can know Him ; and our safest eloquence concerning Him is our silence, when we confess without confession that His glory is inexplicable, His greatness above our capacity and reach. He is above, and we upon earth ; therefore it behoveth our words to be wary and few.” With this Mr. Davison and

fessing that He is above all praise, we dumbly admire His Infinite Majesty, and speak as speaking what is unspeakable, and cease not to stretch on because we cannot reach, seek in order to find, but find as those who have yet to seek, utter what we may, of the mercies of our redemption, and rejoice that we cannot attain to the Infinity of His Mercy.

And Who or What is God, Who is thus to occupy our souls for ever, of Whom men doubt whether He *can* fill their souls for ever, so that they shall need nothing but His love, and the love of those whom in Him we love? He is, "He Who Alone IS," the Source of all being, which is. This is true; but this tells us not why we should be eternally happy in Him. "God is Love," saith Holy Scripture. Here there is contentment, that God is Infinite, and Infinite Love.

But how (we have, some of us, thought and asked) did God in all Eternity love? He did not create in all Eternity. Time itself is His creature, We are but of yesterday. When time was not, when Angels and Archangels, and all the Heavenly Host were not, what did God love? Love communicates itself, imparts itself, is not pent up within itself. What was, or is the Infinite, Eternal Bliss of God? It seemed a cold answer, when it was said to us, "The Bliss of God is to contemplate His Own Infinite

Mr. Keble compare the eloquent words of Arnobius, "O Most High, of Whom nothing can be said and expressed by the significance of human words; Whom that we may understand, we must be silent; and, in order that a trembling conjecture may track His footsteps in the dark shadow, not a word must we mutter." See the Latin as quoted by Mr. Davison on Prophecy, end, and Mr. Keble's Hooker, l. c.

Perfections, His Own Goodness, and Wisdom, and Glory." He has made it a part of the very instinct of our nature, that our love, our bliss, is not to stop short in ourselves. Self is not the object of our love and bliss. Is it so in the Infinite Love and Bliss of Almighty God ?

A great thing it is, that we, earth-worms, who of ourselves know only what creeps along this earth, and that there are other worlds which we know not, should ask about the love and bliss of the Infinite God. What it is, we could not understand wholly, unless we were ourselves God. For what is bounded cannot comprehend the Unbounded, the Infinite. We can know only what He has told us. Yet the very mystery of this Holy Day tells us how and whom God loves, in whom is His eternal rest of love. It meets our thoughts, even while (as it must) it goes beyond them. It gives us a way in which we may think worthily of God, although we cannot reach its compass. We cannot conceive bliss without love, and that, love which shall be met with love like and equal to its own. Even of man God said, "It is not good that man should be alone, let us make an help meet for him." Man had the bliss of the garden of Eden, flowers, fruits, trees, birds, singing their Maker's praise ; he had all the beauty of the works of God, which were very good, to behold ; he heard the Voice of God, and he loved Him. But God saw good, that, besides God Himself, Adam should have some one like himself, to be with and to love. Can then God, although One, be lonely ? Men and Angels and Archangels once were not. But men, Angels, and Archangels could not take away the

loneliness of God, any more than beasts or birds, flowers or trees, could take away the loneliness of man. Like must love like. We should be not less lonely, if we had the whole world and its glories at our command, every comfort of the body, every delight of the eyes, but had none like ourselves with whom to share it in love. Perfect, supreme love is the highest of all goodness, the fulness of all bliss. Love, mutual love, cannot be wanting to Almighty God.

Yes! Scripture tells us, that God had, in all Eternity, within Himself, the Infinite Object of His love, of love like His Own, the same as His Own. We cannot tell *how* it is, but the bliss of our own imperfect love, out of ourselves, yet of beings like ourselves, is a shadow of the Infinite love of God, Father, Son, and Holy Ghost, within Himself.

Observe, too, how the very words, which speak of the Godhead of the Son, often tell us, also, of the Eternal Love of the Father and the Son. "In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. The Same was in the beginning with God." See how St. John twice dwells on the thought, that "the Word was *with* God." He tells us, first, that, in all eternity, He *was*; that He "was with God; and was God." Then, since he had to tell us, how "all things were created by Him," he repeats once more, what was His Being, what He was, in all eternity. "The Same was in the beginning *with* God." He had told us Who He was; he was going to tell us what He did for us; and now he gives us a glimpse into the very mode of His Eternal Being. "He, being God,

was with God." In all eternity, God was with God ; the Son with the Father ; dwelling in equal, eternal Love.

Again, Scripture says, " the Only-Begotten Son, Who is in the Bosom of the Father." We must not imagine to ourselves, that God has a human form or bodily shape. This would be against the Faith itself. " God is a Spirit." Yet God speaks to us of the things which we know, in order to shadow out to us what we cannot now know, His own Being. What then denotes, among us, to be " in His Bosom ?" What did it in St. John himself? To be enfolded in Jesus' love. So then St. John tells us, that the Only-Begotten Son, He Who Alone is, by Nature, the Son of the Father, is, eternally,<sup>d</sup> in the Secret Presence<sup>e</sup> of the Father, is there where no creature can be, where He only can be, Who is Co-equal with the Father,—not as we, in these bodily frames, must be without one another, but,—within His Inmost Essence, One God with Him.

This our Lord sets forth yet more strongly in the words, " I am in the Father, and the Father in Me." " I and the Father are One" [Substance.] The Father and the Son are not like created beings, who, however near to one another, are yet outward to one another. Not only is the Word *with* God, but the Word, or the Son, saith, " I am *in* the Father." He is " with the Father," not as without, but as within, the Father. God filleth all space ; nothing

<sup>d</sup> 'Ο ὄν. " I am, is significative of Being ever, and Being without beginning of Being, really and absolutely." S. Chrys. Hom. 15. in S. Joh. i. 18. p. 124, Oxf. Tr.

<sup>e</sup> S. Aug. Hom. 3. in S. Joh. § 18.



is without God. The Son then, being begotten of the Father, is not without, but within the Father ; and the Son, not being less than the Father, contains equally the Father. " I am in the Father, and the Father in Me." O wondrous glimpse into the Being of the Eternal God ; how in Eternal Love the Father in His whole Substance, and in the fulness of the Godhead, is wholly in the Son ; and the Son wholly repositeth in the Father, not as things material, " a<sup>r</sup> body in a body, or a vessel in a vessel, but in the unvarying sameness of substance, and the Oneness and likeness of Nature."

" All things," He saith, " which the Father hath are Mine." The whole Substance, Life, Power, Wisdom, Essence of the Father, are the whole Substance, Life, Power, Wisdom, Essence of the Son. The Father is the Father, and not the Son ; and the Son is the Son, and not the Father ; but the Nature is One. There is nothing of the Father's, which is not in the Son, save to be the Father ; and nothing of the Son's, which is not in the Father, save that He is the Son ; whence He saith, " he that hath seen Me, hath seen the Father," because the whole Godhead of the Father is in the Son.

Again, the Son is " the Brightness or Radiance of the Father's glory." That is (as we say in our Creeds) " Light of Light," Eternal Light from Eternal Light, and " the express Image of His Person or Substance," co-existing, complete, indivisible ; the natural and unvarying and living Image of the Father ; in all things expressing Him. If anything were lacking, He would not be " the express Image."

<sup>r</sup> S. Cyril, Al. in S. Joh. L. 1. c. 3. p. 28.

He is "One<sup>8</sup> from One, True from True, Living from Living, Perfect from Perfect, Power of Power, Wisdom of Wisdom, Glory of Glory," "Life<sup>h</sup> from Life, Good from Good, Eternal from Eternal."

Nothing is wanting to the full oneness of the Father and the Son. The Only Begotten Son, Who is in the Bosom of the Father, He evermore beholdeth the Father, and seeth in His All-Perfect Being, All which He Himself has and is. The Father beholds in the Co-eternal Son, as His All-Perfect Image, all which He is; and "in Him," He saith, "I am well pleased." In Him, perfectly, in all things, supremely, infinitely, rests the full contentment and joy of the Father.

God the Son was, and is, everlastingly, "in the Form of God;" "Equal with God;" "Alpha and Omega, the Beginning and the Ending, Which is, and Which was, and Which is to come, the Almighty." In all Eternity, then, in the Divine Essence and Substance, which is, in number, One, there was, and is, the relation of Father and Son, in full and entire oneness of Being. The Father, everlastingly, is the Eternal, Unchangeable, Source of the Being of the Co-eternal, Co-equal Son. The Son hath in Himself, as His own, the self-same Essence, Wisdom and Life,<sup>1</sup> as the Father.

So also God the Holy Ghost is called God,<sup>2</sup> and the Lord,<sup>1</sup> and the Spirit of God, "the Spirit of

<sup>8</sup> S. Hil. de Trin. ii. 8.

<sup>h</sup> S. Greg. Nyss. c. Eunom. i. fin. T. ii. p. 428.

<sup>1</sup> See S. Anselm. Monolog. c. 43.

<sup>2</sup> Acts v. 3, 4.

<sup>1</sup> 2 Cor. iii. 18.

Jesus Christ,"<sup>m</sup> "the Spirit<sup>n</sup> of truth, Who proceedeth from the Father," or "the Spirit<sup>o</sup> of the Father," "the Spirit<sup>p</sup> of His Son;" "sent by the Father,"<sup>q</sup> in the Son's Name," and "sent<sup>r</sup> by the Son, from the Father;" "the<sup>s</sup> Eternal Spirit," "the Spirit<sup>t</sup> of life," "the Spirit, Who<sup>u</sup> is life;" Who "quickeneth,"<sup>x</sup> "maketh<sup>y</sup> intercession for us," maketh us, by dwelling in us, "the temples<sup>z</sup> of God," "by Whom<sup>a</sup> we have access to the Father;" "through Whom, God revealeth<sup>b</sup> to us," what He has prepared for them who love Him; Who, as the spirit of man, which is in him, searcheth the things of a man, so "He searcheth the things of God," and "none but the Spirit of God, knoweth the things of God;" Who "divideth<sup>c</sup> to every man severally, as He wills, the gifts of God;" to blaspheme<sup>d</sup> against Whom, is the one unpardonable sin.

What a glimpse into His own Ineffable Nature<sup>e</sup> God again vouchsafes to open to us, in that He tells us, that as the spirit of man is *in* man, his own proper spirit, and knoweth what is in himself, undisclosed by any other, so the Spirit of God is of God, and in God, of His own Divine Nature, with a knowledge as Infinite as the knowledge of God the Father. For the Spirit of God is God.

What a deep mystery, again, it leads us to, that,

<sup>m</sup> Rom. viii. 9; Philip. i. 19; 1 S. Pet. i. 11. "Of Jesus." Acts xvi. 7, in the best authorities.

<sup>n</sup> S. John xv. 26.

<sup>o</sup> S. Matt. x. 20.

<sup>p</sup> Gal. iv. 6.

<sup>q</sup> S. John xiv. 26.

<sup>r</sup> Ib. xv. 26.

<sup>s</sup> Heb. ix. 13.

<sup>t</sup> Rev. xi. 11.

<sup>u</sup> Rom. iii. 10.

<sup>x</sup> 2 Cor. iii. 6.

<sup>y</sup> Rom. viii. 26.

<sup>z</sup> 1 Cor. iii. 16.

<sup>a</sup> Eph. ii. 18.

<sup>b</sup> 1 Cor. ii. 10, 11.

<sup>c</sup> Ib. xii. 11.

<sup>d</sup> S. Matt. xii. 31.

<sup>e</sup> S. Cyr. Alex. Thes. L. 33. p. 334.

whereas the Father is a Spirit, and the Son a Spirit ; and the Father also is Holy, and the Son is Holy ; the Holy Spirit Alone is so called by both titles together ; and that as His own especial Name. The Seraphim continually do cry, " Holy, Holy, Holy," to the three Persons of the All-Holy Trinity. So One are They, that Each is called God, and the whole Holy Trinity is equally called God. Yet' while the Father is Holy, the Son is Holy, there must be some ground why Holy Scripture gives specially to God the Holy Ghost, the title " the Holy Spirit." The Co-eternal Spirit, proceeding from Both, " common to Both, is called especially that which Both are in common." And what He is called that He specially imparts, holiness ; in that Himself, " the Spirit of Holiness," really and truly, not in a figure, dwelleth in us.

All this we, plainly, have no thoughts to grasp. For it relates to the Infinite Nature of God. If we could grasp it, we should ourselves be God. But even in ourselves, we may see some sort of likeness, although indeed unlike to it. We have in us, something which may shadow out this mystery ; an impress which the Holy Trinity imparted to us, as the work of Their hands ; like, because we are *Their* workmanship ; unlike, because *we* are creatures, finite, material, and " God is a Spirit."

We ourselves, then, are one, yet we have two natures, a spiritual nature, and a bodily nature. Our two natures do not hinder our being one. Again, we have in our spiritual nature, memory, and understanding, and will ; our memory is not our understanding, nor is our understanding, our will. Yet

' S. Aug. de Trin. xv. 19. See also de Civ. Dei xi. 24.

these three co-exist in us. Again, the whole mind<sup>s</sup> by thought, produceth the counsel, or the word, within it; and containeth it within itself. It is of the very substance of the mind, and filleth the whole mind, and is co-extensive with it. Yet the thought is not the mind. Again, point<sup>h</sup> upon point, line upon line, surface upon surface, are but one point, one line, one surface. So Eternity in Eternity, is but one; or light in light; or God in God. Again, how is the lighted air in a room where different lights mingle, filled with the light. All the lights together are blended<sup>i</sup> in all; all shine with one undistinguished lustre, yet unconfused. For if you withdraw the light of one, the light of the rest remains. Again, in the sun's ray, light and warmth are; light is not warmth, nor warmth, light; yet they are in one ray, and the ray cannot be without them. We and the Angels are many, each in our several oneness of nature; yet the nature, whether of Angels or of men, is one, although our human nature is compounded.

Again, God's attributes are infinite. They exist where God does. God is Love, God is Wisdom. God is wholly love; yet not so as to cease to be wise. We may speak of God, as Wisdom, or Goodness, or Holiness. He is all these, and everything besides, perfectly. Yet His Love is not His Wisdom, nor is His Wisdom, His Love. But both are inseparable and Indivisible, Eternal, Unchangeable, Uncreate, Infinite, as God Himself is. Wisdom and Love co-

<sup>s</sup> Fulg. ad Monim. iii. 7. ap. Petav. de Trin. 4. 16. 15.

<sup>h</sup> S. Anselm de Proc. Spir. S. Ib. § 16.

<sup>i</sup> Dionys. de Div. Nom. c. 2. Ib. § 9.

exist in Him eternally. He has no parts: so they are one in Him, and yet, in some sense, distinct, because Wisdom, although All-loving and impregnated with Love, is not Love; and Love, although All-wise, and inseparable from Wisdom, through the whole range of its Infinity, whereby it comprehends all which is, or shall be, before it comes into being, and enfoldeth all which doth not finally shut out the Love of God, still is not wisdom.

In God too, one, and the same Divine Nature is everywhere, throughout all space, wholly; for It is Indivisible. It is wholly in Heaven, and wholly in the Heaven of Heavens, wholly in earth, and in every part of the earth. For if It were not wholly everywhere, God would consist of parts. It is wholly everywhere, throughout all space, and all the almost infinite distance of the fixed stars, and yet the whole is nowhere. For it contains all things, all time and space, and is contained by none.

These images from things which we see, or from our own nature, are but the very faintest shadows, whereby we may be helped to think how that can be, which is beyond all thought. We see that things on earth, being manifold, are yet so one, that we cannot distinguish them. It is then easy to faith, that God the Father, Son, and Holy Ghost, Whom we worship, are One God, and One Divine Substance. We must not press these likenesses unduly. Else we should fall into deadly error. They have enough of likeness to shadow out some portion of the truth; they are unlike, because nothing can be wholly like the Divine Nature, except Itself. In God, as a Spirit, all is spiritual, His very attributes, Wisdom,

Goodness, and Holiness, cannot explain His simple Nature. For it is Ineffable. In Him all is perfect Oneness. As we shall, in Eternity, when there is no more conflict between flesh and spirit, be perfectly one, although made of two unlike natures, so, (to use this only as an imperfect likeness,) is God perfectly One, although in His one Godhead, there are the Three, Co-eternal, Co-equal, Persons, the Father, Son, and Holy Ghost. "The Father is God, the Son is God, and the Holy Ghost is God. And yet they are not three Gods, but one God."

This then was and is the Eternal Bliss of God. None could love God in a way corresponding to Himself, save that which was Infinite as Himself. Infinite Love can alone return love infinitely. Infinite Love can alone content infinite Love. We know in ourselves, how unsatisfactory is unequal love. The Mystery of the Trinity (which Holy Scripture reveals) shows how God in all eternity can act, impart Himself, produce, not be (as the heathen thought) inactive, contemplating Himself, and brooding in Himself. It is no more hard to conceive this, I mean it no more contradicts our reason, than that God is Eternal. We cannot conceive Eternity, looking backwards. We can conceive time lengthened out, longer and longer and longer. We can think of continuance. We cannot think of Eternity, without beginning. Let any one tell us how, without all beginning, God is ; how He IS, without beginning to be ; and then he may ask us to explain how the Father can be God, and the Son God, and the Holy Ghost God, and yet One God. But although we see not yet, how it can be, yet we do see

that the thought of God which Holy Scripture gives, supplies what our own thoughts could not reach, how God in all Eternity was blessed, because the Father loved the Son, and the Son the Father, and Both the Holy Ghost, Who is the Bond of Both. God in all Eternity produced. Creatures He produced in time. But when time and creation were not, God the Eternal Father, as the Source of all Being, produced unchangeably and Co-eternally the Co-equal Son, and Father and Son the Holy Spirit.

Such then is the Being in Whose love is to be our eternal bliss. Such is the love which we are to behold. For we are to see Him as He is; to know Him, even as we are known by Him. Such is the fulness of Eternity to adore and behold and love Him. It is not as our Creator only, nor our Redeemer, nor our Sanctifier, that we are to behold Him. He has been infinitely good, infinitely loving to us; eternal thanks be to His Goodness! But we are to behold and love, not Him only Who is good *to us*, and Who loves us; but Him Who has in Himself love of which ours is a tiny spark. We are to love Him, Who in all Eternity loved infinitely and is infinitely loved, Who is all Goodness and all Wisdom, and all Might, and all Holiness, and all Beauty, and all Perfection, and all Love, and Whose love is all good and all wise, and all mighty, and all holy and all beautiful and all perfect, and Whose very Being has been and is and shall be Eternal, Equal, Unchangeable, Infinite love in Himself, the Father and the Son and the Holy Ghost.

Into this love we are, in our degree, entered. We were baptized in the Name of the Father and of



the Son and of the Holy Ghost. "All<sup>x</sup> things are full," say the ancient Fathers of the Church, "as from Him Who is Fulness, and perfect as from Perfection." "He<sup>1</sup> unites us with Himself and the Father, not in one created, but in the Holy Spirit." "What<sup>m</sup> says the Lord? 'Baptizing them in the Name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Ghost.' How into the Name of the Father? Because He is the Beginning of all things. How into the Name of the Son? Because He is the Author of Creation. How into the Holy Ghost? Because He perfecteth all things. We immerse them to the Father that we may be sanctified; we immerse them to the Son also for the same end; we immerse also to the Holy Ghost that we may be that which He is and is called."

"Last of all, and above all," exhorts another,<sup>n</sup> "keep, I beseech thee, that good deposit for which I live and act, and which may I take with me, when parting from this world; wherewith also I bear all sorrows, despise all pleasures, the Confession of the Father and the Son and the Holy Ghost. With this I entrust thee this day. With this I shall immerse thee and bring thee up. This I give thee as the partner and presider over thy whole life, the One Godhead and Power, existing in Unity in the Three, comprehending the THREE severally; every way equal, the same every way, as there is one beauty and greatness of the Heavens." This union was

<sup>x</sup> S. Hil. de Trin. L. ii. init.

<sup>1</sup> S. Ath. Ep. i. ad Serapion. c. 11. p. 660.

<sup>m</sup> S. Greg. Nyss. in Bapt. Christi. T. iii. p. 372.

<sup>n</sup> S. Greg. Naz. Orat. 40 de S. Bapt. § 41.

begun in us, when, baptized into the Father, Son and Holy Ghost, we had, though knowing it not, the first seed of spiritual life imparted to us. This union is increased, whenever we pray to God, for we call Him into Himself; It is increased in us in the Holy Communion; for then, our Church teaches you, "we spiritually eat the Flesh of Christ and drink His Blood; we dwell in Christ and Christ in us; we are one with Christ and Christ with us."

This union was begun in love. Out of love, God imparts Himself. To love, God imparts Himself. He imparts Himself Who is Love. This Divine Grace is the first-fruit of the Spirit, because He, Father, Son, and Holy Ghost, One God, is Love. Every growth in love is growth of *His* Presence Who is Love. Every growth in love, is growth of everlasting bliss, which is love.

"The world passeth away and the things thereof, but the Word of God," and he who doeth the Will of God, abideth for ever. When ye were gathered here on the last Lord's Day, one<sup>o</sup> whom ye must, many of you, have known, and whom to know ever so little was to love, was passing away out of this fleeting world and entering into that eternal love. Ever was he full, from childhood, to that very hour, of self-forgetting love. His very being was pure, gentle, tender love. He had those things in this world which many of you have not and cannot have, understanding, rank, and this world's goods. These,

<sup>o</sup> The Hon. E. Herbert, who was well known to the little congregation at Pusey, and was loved in proportion as any knew him. His soul had passed away in peace and faith and love, during the time of morning service on Whit-Sunday.

which some of you would have been glad to have, are passed away. Understanding is changed into knowledge; faith into sight; hope into the things hoped for; but love abides. In boyhood, youth, middle age, whether those whom he loved were here, or whether they were where he now is, one deep full well-spring of love ever dwelt with him, ever, when it had opportunity, flowed forth in deeds and words of love. For nearly forty years I knew him, and have seen in him a love such as is seldom found in man, but never heard one word or beheld one deed, at variance with pure, holy love. I have often known his inward soul, yet never heard him so speak, as one unprepared for death. "Whose faith follow, beholding the end of his conversation, Jesus Christ."

For now what abides? That love wherewith he ever loved, how must it now be brightened, purified, glorified, spiritualized in the love of God! Love then, my brethren; love the Lord your God with all your minds and hearts and soul and strength; love all whom you love *in* Him; love those who love you not, *for* Him; love nothing *out of* Him; so shall ye, in the end, be gathered into His everlasting love. For "he who dwelleth in love, dwelleth in God. For God is Love."

## SERMON XVI.

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### FAITH IN ONE LORD, GOD AND MAN.

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FESTIVAL OF ST. PETER, 1845.

ST. MATTHEW xvi. 15—17.

*“He saith unto them, But whom say ye that I am?  
And Simon Peter answered, and said, Thou art  
Christ, the Son of the Living God. And Jesus an-  
swered and said, Blessed art thou, Simon Barjona,  
for flesh and blood hath not revealed it unto thee,  
but My Father, Which is in Heaven.”*

TO-DAY is indeed a Festival of Faith. To-day was that confession of the Faith, which ye have heard, “Thou, the Son of Man, art the Christ, the Son of the Living God,” sealed by the blood of those twin leaders of the Apostolic band, chiefs of the choirs of saints,\* lights of the world, in whom Christ lived, through whom Christ spake, wrote, worked, drew all men to Himself by the virtue of His Passion, and

\* See S. Chrysostom's magnificent burst of feeling, Hom. 32. on the Ep. to the Romans fin. p. 504—510, Oxf. Tr.

the might of His Resurrection. In one day, one hour, both sealed it; he who first made it, and to whom the Father from Heaven revealed it, and he, not "a whit behind the chief of the Apostles," to whom our Lord appeared in His ineffable glory to reveal it. "Who art Thou, Lord?" "I am Jesus, Whom thou persecutest;" "I, thy Lord and God in Heaven, Whom thou knowest not, am Jesus, the Son of Man, Whom in My members on the earth, thou persecutest."

To both St. Peter and St. Paul was the same truth revealed, although far differently. In both, it wrought the same fruit. Both bore it throughout the world. Both, as on this day, confessed it to the end, and "in their death they were not divided." By death, they spread it more than by their life, chiefs in the noble army of martyrs.

Doubtless, to-day, the powers of hell triumphed, when these seemed to be laid low, the chief columns of the rising Church; they, at whose united prayer, the first heretic had lately been struck dead,<sup>b</sup> and the powers of evil had publicly been foiled, them-

<sup>b</sup> The death of Simon Magus in an attempt to fly through magic, is mentioned by Arnobius (A.D. 303) in a work addressed to the heathen (adv. Gent. ii. 12). His death through S. Peter is owned even by Eusebius (H. E. ii. 15.) It is related in the Constt. Apost. (ii. 44) and was believed by Lucifer writing from Rome, A.D. 355. (in Baron. A.D. 355. n. 8.) S. Cyril Jerus. (vi. 15.) S. Ambrose (Hexaem. iv. 8. fin.) S. Augustine (de Hær. 1.) Sulpitius Severus (Hist. ii. 28.) Theodoret (Hæret. Fab. i. 1.) The fact of such an attempt seems to be alluded to by Dio Chrys. (Orat. 21.) and Suetonius (Nero c. 12.) S. Augustine (Ep. 36 ad Casulam. § 21) says that "most Romans" thought the opinion of many unfounded, that the Saturday fast, (which was peculiar to Rome) was instituted by S. Peter in preparation for the conflict.

selves, "in the sight of the unwise,<sup>c</sup> seemed," in their turn, "to perish." *Their* tongues were silenced, by which Christ had spoken, which had borne the Name of Christ and His Salvation throughout the world. They, at whose rebuke the devils had trembled, and hasted in fear from the bodies and souls which they had possessed and held captive; they, who had broken the empire of Satan, put his instruments to shame, led, in their Master's steps, countless myriads, in themselves poor, and ignorant, weak, and unstable, and enslaved, to "wrestle against principalities and powers," to "triumph and have victory over Satan, the world, and the flesh," followers<sup>d</sup> of them as they of Christ, themselves, were laid, as it seemed, in the dust of death. The eyes which had seen Christ in His Glory, which watched for His Coming, and in the daily care of all the Churches, were dimmed. The hands which gave the Spirit,<sup>e</sup> and power over the enemy, were stiff. The feet, "beautiful on the mountains, shod with the preparation of the Gospel of peace," which had carried "the good tidings unto all lands, and His Words unto the end of the world," were motionless. The "two bright luminaries of Heaven," the golden candlesticks which shed abroad the light of the glorious Gospel, seemed to be put out. The bodies, in which the Holy Ghost so dwelt, that the very raiment which had touched them, had power over diseases,<sup>f</sup> and to cast out devils, seemed like a desolate dwelling-place, left of its inhabitant. They whom Christ had sent in His own stead, "As My Father

<sup>c</sup> Wisd. iii. 2.

<sup>e</sup> Acts vi. 6; viii. 17.

<sup>d</sup> 1 Cor. xi. 1.

<sup>f</sup> Acts xix. 12.

sent ME, even so send I you," the two very chief of these,<sup>g</sup> the Apostle of the Circumcision, and the Apostle of the Gentiles, the bearers of Heaven's keys, the stewards of the kingdom, the shepherds of the sheep, he to whom, on his faith, Christ had vouchsafed to give His own Name, and as He Himself is the rock, (petra) entitled him, "stone,<sup>h</sup> a piece from the Rock," (Petros) giving him His own strength, to be a foundation, in Himself, the Foundation of all; to steady others, being steadied and steadfast in Himself; and he, to whom He had given to be a wise master-builder, to "fill up the measure of His Sufferings," to "bear His marks," in whom He Himself lived,—what a triumph must it have seemed to Satan, to have cut off these in one day! How desolate anew was the widowed Church, from whose head the representatives of her Lord were taken; no more to hear the voice through which the Holy Ghost spake, but to feed only, as we, on the writings whereby they would, that she "should<sup>i</sup> have these things always in remembrance." So sore a trial had not the Church had, since, in the Ascension of her Lord, she exchanged sight for faith, His visible for His unseen Presence; as now when her two principal shepherds were withdrawn, who possessed the fulness of His Spirit, and in whom He, her Saviour, her Head, her Lord, spake, rebuked, warned, strengthened, comforted.

<sup>g</sup> See quotations in Barrow "on the Popish supremacy," Supp. i. vi. 7. 8. p. 123. S. Chrys. l. c. p. 504. and n. c. Oxf. Tr.

<sup>h</sup> See S. Augustine and S. Jerome in note Q. on Tertullian, p. 494. ed. 1.

<sup>i</sup> 2 Pet. i. 15.

Yet the triumphing of the wicked is but for a moment; for a moment only, the "light affliction" of the Church. "Precious in the sight of the Lord is the death of His Saints." Their prayers for the Church, which here "had power with God and prevailed," were not the less availing, when they were freed from this body of death, and, having overcome, sat down on the throne of their Lord, even as He "also overcame and sat down with the Father on His throne," and "followed the Lamb whithersoever He goeth." The Church grew, not diminished, as her martyrs were transferred from earth to Heaven, and her numbers in Heaven were multiplied above those which were yet upon the earth. The seed-corn again fell to the earth, not to die, but to yield fruit. The faith, which they anew confessed, stood unshaken. The Church, founded on its Rock, trembled not. Persecution's breath but kindled the glow of faith. The grace of God was not extinguished. Present tears were the earnest of future joy. "Happy<sup>t</sup> Church," said one after a century, "on which the Apostles poured out all their doctrine with their blood; where Peter had a like Passion with the Lord, where Paul hath for his crown the same death as John." On the confession of the faith was the Church founded. By it, not by any outward lot, is her prosperity or adversity attested. *Then* is she secure, when she speaks it boldly; then she fails, if she speaks it feebly; then is her strength renewed, when she anew confesses it, her faith in Him, the Rock on Whom she stands.

What, then, is this Apostolic faith, on the confes-

<sup>t</sup> Tert. de Præser. c. 36. p. 470. Oxf. Tr.



sion of which the existence of the Church hangs, "against which the gates of Hell shall not prevail," planted by death, watered by the blood of the martyrs; speaking the louder, when they seem to die; conquering, by being destroyed; rising up the more Heavenwards, the more it is oppressed?<sup>1</sup>

To both St. Peter and St. Paul was it alike revealed, though in a very different way, yet to both the same summary of the Faith, as the very condition of their office, and the ground of their commission. To St. Peter, who saw our Lord as Man, not through eyes of flesh and blood, (for these would have shewn him only "the form of a servant," the "despised and rejected of men,") but through the revelation of the Father, was it made known, that He was "the Christ, the Son of the Living God," the Ever-living Son of the Ever-living Father. To St. Paul, while yet a persecutor, was His Godhead revealed; and when, by the Light of the Glorious Majesty which shone from our Lord's Human Body, he was stricken down to the earth, Saul was taught that Jesus, Whom he now owned as Lord and God, was, although God, still God and Man. "I am JESUS Whom thou persecutest."

To both was it of grace. Both were allowed to fall. Peter, by His confession founded on the Rock, and to be, in Him, a rock and pillar of the Church, trembled at the breath of a little maid, and denied that he knew Him, Whom he loved, Whom the Father had revealed to him. Paul, in the midst of his phrenzy was healed, was made, for a wolf, a shepherd; for a blasphemer, a confessor of the faith;

<sup>1</sup> See Tertull. Apol. c. 50. p. 105. n. a. Oxf. Tr.

for a persecutor, an Apostle. Himself re-made, he undid what he had done, preached the faith which he had wasted, that it might be seen that the whole was of God, requiting evil for good, making of the evil, good. "Great deserts had Paul," says a father,<sup>m</sup> "but evil."

To both, the blessing and their Apostolic commission were given upon this faith. To St. Peter, our Lord graciously echoes, as it were, his words, in blessing. "And *I* say unto thee;"—that is, thou hast avouched Me to be thy Lord and thy God, and I, the very Son of God, Whom thou hast confessed, say to thee, "thou art Peter," or as a father<sup>n</sup> explains it, "I am the unshaken Rock; I, the Corner Stone, Who made both one; I, the Foundation, other than which can no man lay. Yet thou also art a rock, because thou art stablished by My strength, so that what are of right My own, shall, by My imparting, be common to thee with ME. On this might, will I build an everlasting temple, and on the firmness of this faith, shall arise the majestic height of My Church, which shall reach to Heaven. This confession the gates of hell shall not restrain; the bonds of death shall not bind; for this voice is the voice of life."

Of St. Paul, on receiving the same faith, He said, "he is a chosen vessel unto Me, to bear My Name before the Gentiles, and kings, and the children of Israel." This he had received; this, like a stream of life, gushing forth unto life everlasting, he was to pour forth in the rich and enriching flow of Divine truth, until the dry land should become like the

<sup>m</sup> S. Aug. de grat. et lib. arbit. c. v. § 12.

<sup>n</sup> S. Leo Serm. iv. de anniv. suo c. 2, 3.

garden of the Lord. Blessed, precious vessel, flowing on until now, ever full and filling all, unstayed so long as there be other vessels to receive through him, the oil of Divine illumining.

The substance of the faith, then, on which the Church is founded, "against which the gates of hell shall not prevail," is in us, not of us; not obtained by ourselves, but the gift of God; no reflection upon ourselves; no confession of what we are; no thought of self; it is the belief in our Lord, as God and Man in one. This must be the sign of a "standing or falling Church," since He Himself, the Foundation of the Church, the Way, and the Truth, has said it; the belief in Himself, as what He is. "Revolving," says a great defender of the faith,<sup>o</sup> "all the opinions of those who believe untruly, those even who rush headlong to deny the Holy Ghost, we know that scarce any one ever left the right path, save one who believed not the truth of the two Natures of Christ, with the confession of His one Person."

This is the confession of St. Peter. His Human Being our Lord had declared, "Whom say men that I the Son of Man, am?" Men had owned Him as man, as more than ordinary man, as if alive from the dead; as John the Baptist, or Jeremiah. "But whom say ye that I am?" What more than man, though being man? "Thou art the Christ, the Son of the Living God." Our Lord had declared His Birth of our flesh, of our nature; His Birth in humility; what He had, for love of man, become. His Birth, by Nature, of God, He graciously leaves to His Apostle to declare; what He Is and Was from

<sup>o</sup> S. Leo Serm. xxviii. (de Nativ. Dom. 8.)

the Beginning, His Unchangeable Being, "the same yesterday, to-day, and for ever," His Divine Personality. "Whom say ye that I, the Son of Man, *am*?" "The Son of the Living God;" Very God of Very God; Life of Life; having life in Himself as the Father hath life in Himself; of the Father, not *after* the Father; without beginning of time; not created, not made, not succeeding, but the Only-Begotten; abiding ever, the Co-eternal Son of the Eternal Father. It had been no great thing, nor entitled to so great blessing, to have owned as more than man, or as greater than any created being, Him Who shewed Himself to be the Ruler of the elements, Whom "wind and sea obeyed," Who "treadeth<sup>p</sup> on the waves of the sea," the "Searcher of hearts," Who "knew what was in man," Who "cast out the spirits with a word," Whom devils owned, against their will, to be "the Son of God." But now, the Apostle knew, not by human reasoning; he saw beyond human sight. Heaven, yea, He Who filleth the Heavens, was present with him. The Everlasting Father opened his eyes, and in His light he beheld the Co-equal Son; not in space, not with the bodily eyes, but with that inward and ineffable light, whereby "the pure in heart shall see God," and he saw, and confessed, "Thou art the Christ, the Son of the Living God."

This then was the full confession, that as He was Son of Man, so He was Son of God; Son of God in eternity, Co-eternal, and Co-equal with the Father, (since had not the Son ever been, the Father had not ever been the Father, and there had been change

<sup>p</sup> Job. xix. 8; S. Matt. xiv. 26.

in the Unchangeable,) and that He, God of God, had for our salvation become Man, of our very flesh, for us emptied of His own Glory, and a partaker of our shame. Blessed confession, thenceforth the bulwark of the Church, the food of childlike minds, the contemplation of Angel-souls, the comfort of the penitent, the stay of the broken-hearted, the foretaste of Heaven, to see, and confess, and adore, God made Man for our redemption; Man taken into God for our endless, unspeakable glory in bliss! Blessed Apostle, who had already the bliss of Heaven, to see under the veil of mortality, Him, Whom "to know is everlasting life," the Fountain of holiness, the Fullness of bliss!

Instructive, further, and mysterious is it, that this saving truth was revealed not by our Lord Himself, but by the Father. So our Lord said elsewhere "No man can come unto ME, except the Father Who hath sent Me, draw him." The very teaching of the Eternal Son fell on dull ears and stony hearts, unless the Father unsealed the ears, and melted the heart. And so, to shew the oneness of operation of the Father and the Son, the Son revealed the Father, and the Father inwardly drew to the Son, by the sweet vehemence of grace. "The form of a Servant" was beheld by all; by Judas, who betrayed Him, and Caiaphas, who said, "We have heard His blasphemy," and the Council, who condemned Him as guilty of death, and those who crucified Him. "He was in the world, and the world knew Him not." "But to as many as received Him, to them gave He power to become the sons of God, who were born not of the will of the flesh, but of God;" even as our

Lord here says, "Flesh and blood hath not revealed it unto thee, but My Father Which is in Heaven."

*Then*, visibly, He was in the world, as now invisibly in the Church; yet then as now, He was seen only of those whose eyes were opened, seen in different degrees, even by those who saw Him truly. For even Apostles had before this confessed, "Thou<sup>a</sup> art the Christ," "Thou art the Son of the Living God," yet did not at once receive the blessing; and to Philip, who said "shew us the Father," He said, "Have I been so long time with you, and hast thou not known Me, Philip?" He was in the world, not to declare Himself, but to do His Father's Will and His Father's works, to be rejected and blasphemed, or believed in and loved, as each was repelled by His outward humiliation, or drawn to Him by His inward Majesty.

What then was the character of St. Peter to which the Father revealed Him? For such must we too be, if we would that, in our measure, He should reveal Him to us, draw us unto Him, and that He should dwell in our hearts by love, and we, lying, as it were with His beloved Disciple, upon His Breast, may drink of the depth and sweetness of His truth.

What should we say, as is fitting, of him, the fisher of men, who enclosed within the nets of the Gospel, "the<sup>r</sup> dispersed of Pontus, Galatia, Cappadocia, Asia, Bithynia," and converted Rome; him who first confessed the Divinity of our Lord, and saw the mystery which Angels desire to look into; on whose confession our Lord founded His Church, giving her in his per-

<sup>a</sup> S. Matt. xiv. 33; S. John i. 49; vi. 69.

<sup>r</sup> 1 Pet. i. 1.

son, as a type of her, the keys of Heaven, loosing what he loosed, and binding what he bound ; who gathered into the Church the first-fruits of Jews and Gentiles ; the ardent lover of his Lord ; conformed to His death, crucified with Him by the death, long foretold ; yet, in humility, dreading too near an approach to its outward likeness ? Yet little as we can say, one may, out of the manifold graces which his Lord imparted to him, name his deep humility, ardent love, devotion to his Master's honour, prompt, self-denying obedience. And these we see when they were as yet half-unformed, before the Holy Ghost had come down in the fulness of His Presence upon the Church. What reverent awe at the Presence of our Lord, which would even forego that Presence from very humility, "Depart from me, for I am a sinful man, O Lord." What instant love, when he who refused to see Him, His Lord and God, prostrate to wash his feet, yet, when threatened with the loss of Him, said, "Lord, not my feet only, but my hands, and my head !" What ready obedience, ere yet he had been called to give up all, and follow Him, "We have toiled all night and taken nothing, nevertheless at Thy word, (at one word of Christ,) I will let down the net." Even his very falls were in love for his Lord. Out of human feeling he would not that his Lord should die, and so drew on himself the rebuke, "get thee behind Me, Satan." A rebuke still full of mildness, bidding him "follow after," not "go before," follow His Lord to death, not refuse that He should die for him. In ardent, though as yet, uninstructed zeal of love, he drew the sword on

\* S. Luke v. 5.

the high priest's servant. Love drew him within the high priest's palace, and that one grievous fall was not only washed away by those bitter tears, but when he had been forgiven, restored, loving and beloved, it was avenged by the austerity of a whole life ;<sup>t</sup> and the aged confessor, the undaunted witness of the truth, arose, it is related, night by night, at cock-crowing, to weep that once he fell.

Such then being some of those graces in St. Peter, to which the Father revealed the faith, against which the gates of hell should not prevail, ardent love, devotion, humility, ready self-denying obedience, how is it with us ? For faith must be kept alive through the same means whereby it is produced. We cannot maintain it ourselves ; we cannot keep it alive ; we cannot directly act upon it ; we cannot re-kindle it, as neither could we give it to ourselves. Too many of us must have felt this. There are times when to many, faith has grown dim. They can remember, as it may be, purer or simpler or more unworldly days, or their childhood, as yet unimpaired by very grievous sin, when faith was stronger, clearer, brighter. It faded, perhaps ; they felt they had less hold of it. They would recall it, but they could not. Its grounds were as strong as before. The mind seemed to hold it in its inmost recesses, but to the heart it seemed gone.

Faith in holy doctrine will gradually expire amid the study of its proofs, or (more miserable still) amid the very reading of Holy Scripture which should

<sup>t</sup> S. Greg. Naz. joins him, in this respect, with Elijah and S. John Baptist ; and says that he was " supported with lupines for three farthings." [an as] Orat. 14, de amor. paup. n. 4.



keep it alive. To worldly persons a deadly heresy<sup>a</sup> has, in the very study of the Bible, seemed the most natural. The sense of the higher, transporting, blessed truths died out. Losing in themselves what was akin to it, they lost it.

Unhappy men bear witness to this, while they even dare to blame God, and cast off all conscience from themselves, and say, "Man is not the master of his own faith, and so is not responsible for it. God will never judge men for their opinions." They say truly "man is not in certain cases master of his faith," as in certain cases he is not master of his acts; it may be he often is not, of the last crowning act of any sin. Judas, it may be, was not master of himself, when he "went out," or when he "went and hanged himself." In his downward course, man may, at last, be unable to check himself; but the outset of that course was from himself. Being what he is, he may be unable to believe aright, but what he is, he made himself. And what he is, God can unmake him, and unmaking him and restoring him, will give him back, when re-made, the faith now grown dim or lost. Man *is* responsible for his faith, because he is responsible for the acts, whereby he loses it, and without which acts, one by one, he would not have lost it. More blessedly responsible is he for it, in that he may recover it, not by forming his faith, but by reforming his life. He cannot make his own faith, but he can use the grace of God to remove what hinders faith.

But besides this loss of faith which is from sin, there is a seeming loss of faith which is not of sin.

<sup>a</sup> Socinianism. Such cases have been known to the writer.

This is what people often mean by saying that they do not "realize" eternal truths. To realize eternal truths, is to act, as knowing that they alone *are* realities, that all besides is but a vain shadow, except as it bears upon eternity. That only *is*, which abides. The *effect* of what we do, abides; its effect on our own eternal souls throughout eternity abides; the things themselves, what we had, did, thought, said, suffered, enjoyed, hoped, feared; how we were thought of, dealt with, loved, hated, despised, have already, up to this moment, passed away. One thing only remains, what its effect has been upon our own souls, or what we have done or neglected to do to the souls of others. All the rest will soon pass away; it too will only live in our souls.

He then "realizes" things to come, who, in all things of choice, chooses as one to whom things eternal are "real," whose chief aim in all he does, is, not the fleeting end which will soon have passed away, but that which abides, the Good Pleasure of his God. *He* "realizes" what Prayer is, who knows that of himself he is nothing; that he can do nothing, but that God can do all things for him; and prays. *He* "realizes" what Holy Communion is, who meditates upon the greatness of God's Gift beforehand, prepares his soul for It, prays his Lord to come under his roof, and lives afterwards, as knowing whereof he has been a partaker. He "realizes" what repentance is, who forsakes his sin, and sorrows that he ever offended his God. He "realizes" what humility is, who is humble; he, what charity is, who is loving in act and tender in word, and denies himself for Christ's poor.

"Reality" is in life, not in vivid imagining. Hum-

ble and earnest souls often disquiet themselves in vain, because they mistake this, and seek to estimate their own state before God, instead of acting simply as far as they can, as God wills, and then casting themselves on the Mercy of Jesus, the All-Merciful. They wish not only to love, but to know they love; not only really to pray, but to *feel* that they are praying devoutly; not only to long for their Saviour's Presence, but to have sensible tokens of His Presence. They long for sensible devotion. But by this very longing they often hinder what they long for. For their eyes are not to Him, the Object of their faith, their hope, their longing, but upon themselves. And so they lose the fervor of devotion, and dry up their emotions, and chill themselves, because, instead of going out of themselves and going forth to Jesus, Who would kindle their love, and draw up their souls, and gather them up into Himself, they are ever sinking back into themselves, to see whether they feel, or picture holy truth vividly to themselves, or are conscious of it. They pace round and round themselves, instead of forgetting themselves, and thinking only of Jesus.

This is very common. A cloud seems brought over the soul. "Thou hast covered Thyself with a cloud, that our prayer should not pass through."\* The soul prays, but the prayer seems lost; it is, as though it would not rise up; it falls back upon the soul, and the soul is heavy and weary; the soul would feel after God, but it finds Him not; it would lift up itself, but all is void to it; God is to it, as though He were not. "There is no voice, nor Any

\* Lam. iii. 44.

that answereth." It turns to its Lord, and even His blessed Death touches it not. All seems as though floating in the mind only, images and shadows of a Substance which is gone. There is no bound to this. Even at Holy Communion, it will seem to people as though they received nothing. They prepare for It; pray for grace; pray our Lord to give Himself to them; but know nothing of His sweetness, have no token of His Blessed Presence, no joy, no consolation. They seem to go empty away. Perhaps they work themselves up to feel, and then sink back more weary and dead than before.

What should the soul do in such sickness as this? What should the sick do, but go to the Physician? What did the Canaanitish woman, when our Lord answered her not a word, but cry the more loudly? What, when even disciples would have sent her away, but cry after Him, "Have mercy upon me, O Lord, Thou Son of David." She makes the same confession as St. Peter, "Thou art my Lord and my God, and Thou canst help me; Thou art the Son of David, for our sake become Man, and Thou wilt help me; for Thou art touched with a feeling of our infirmities." What did she, when He still treats her as unfit to have the children's bread, but humble herself, (as we from her, have learned to do at the Holy Communion,) and pray, although unfit to receive, that He would give her what was fit for Him to give. What did the blind Bartimæus, when "many charged him that he should hold his peace?" "He cried out the more a great deal, Thou Son of David, have mercy on me."

Do thou the same. Cry on, looking to Him

Alone, "Good Jesu, have mercy on me;" and whatever be thy blindness, Jesus will, at the fitting time, touch thine eyes, and thou shalt see; whatever thy coldness, He will kindle thy soul. Though it were dead and buried, He would raise it up. Mourn not, and fret not, whatever grace, or faith, or token of God's love, or hope that thou lovest Him, thou seemest not to have. Let every aching of thy heart be a cry for mercy, and He will give thee more than thou darest ask or think. Seek not to gain it for thyself; but ask of Him, the Fountain of all goodness, Who giveth to every man liberally and upbraideth not, and He will give it thee. He will give thee light for darkness; life for deadness of soul; faith for blinded sight; for coldness of heart, love. He will set thee free from the bonds of sin and sense, and wing thy soul, that, through faith and love, it may mount up, yea, be caught up, even to Himself.

Faith is, from first to last, the gift of God. Whatever precedes, accompanies, follows faith, is of Him. For "what hast thou, which thou hast not received?" "Peace be to the brethren," says Holy Scripture, "and love with faith, from God the Father and from our Lord Jesus Christ." Faith, living by love, and ending in everlasting peace, is from God the Father and our Lord Jesus Christ. Its first beginnings are in His fore-coming mercy and grace. Its growth, through His Love which "He hath shed abroad in our hearts, through the Holy Ghost which He hath given us." Perseverance to the end in faith, is His crowning gift. "I have prayed for thee, that thy faith fail not." Faith rests not on reasoning or proof, although it uses them; it sees the Unseen, the In-

visible. It sees, because it believes ; it believes, because it loves. It goes a directer way. It lives in Heaven. It sees, where it lives and loves. Earth-born clouds hide not its Object from it. It lives above the mists of worldly passions, cares, distractions, in the serene light of love. The heart's deep fervent gaze strengthens its vision, clears what was confused ; penetrates what afore was hidden. Love cleanseth its eye, and it beholdeth God. It believes, loves, sees, because He, the Object of its belief and love, reveals Himself unto it, yea, comes, as He has promised, unto it and makes His abode in it.

Love then is the life of faith ; obedience, the life of love. Yea, rather, Christ Himself is the life of the soul. " I live, yet not I, but Christ liveth in me." Christ liveth in our hearts by faith ; and that Presence He promiseth to those that love Him and keep His commandments. Wouldest thou have faith and love ? wouldest thou that they should revive, grow, be perfected ? Obey. For to obedience Christ has promised His Presence ; and His Presence is " comfort, life, and fire of love ;" the fountain of holiness ; the death of sin and self-love ; wisdom, righteousness, sanctification, and redemption ; for it is the fulness of Him in Whom dwelt all the Fulness of the Godhead bodily.

Men would now fain take a shorter course, they would excite their own faith, arouse their own love. It seems to them a strange, circuitous way, to bid them fast, give alms, deny themselves, forego the world and its distractions, be less absorbed in outward things, less careful as to comforts, humble themselves, rise betimes for prayer, that they may grow in

faith and love. Yet it is the way of God ; ye yourselves, as many as once had a stronger, loving faith, know too well how ye lost it. Ye lost it, as your knowledge, and taste and love of the world grew ; your faith was buried in the things of time and sense ; exaltation of self, the love of man's praise, self-indulgence, blunted it ; things of sense became more real, solid, tangible ; things unseen grew fainter, more distant, and shadowy ; life, which is a dream, became real ; God, the only reality, like a dream. Would ye recover what ye have lost, would ye have again childhood's fine sense, implicit faith, simple love, ye must, step by step, return. Step by step, ye have lost your way amid the vanities of the world ; step by step, ye must retrace it. Take but the first in the Name of God and in His strength. Take but the first, in real, earnest, longing for the sight of His blissful Countenance in love. Faint, slight, hesitating, wavering though it be, yet do it, for the love of God. Break off some one evil, seek to uproot some one sin, cut off some one self-indulgence, deny yourself some one vanity, give, for the love of God, some larger alms ; do it, I say, as an offering to God, for the love of God, in hope once to see God ; and some gleam of faith, and life, and love will stream down upon thy soul from the everlasting Fount of love. Follow on, and thou shalt never lose that track of light. Step by step, it shall be a light to thy feet, and a lantern to thy paths. Through darkness, it shall gleam upon thee ; in distress, it shall brighten to thee ; hid for a time, it shall flash again more vividly, keenly, piercingly upon thee. Forsake it not, and it will not forsake thee. For it

is a ray from His undying love ; light from the Unvarying, Unchanging Father of lights ; an earnest, (if thou pray to persevere), of His beatific Vision in eternal light, when faith, and sight, and hope, shall be absorbed in love.



## SERMON XVII.

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### GROANS OF UNRENEWED AND RENEWED NATURE.

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FOURTH SUNDAY AFTER TRINITY.

ROM. viii. 22, 23.

*“ We know that the whole creation groaneth and travaileth in pain together until now ; and not only they, but ourselves also, which have the first-fruits of the Spirit, even we ourselves groan within ourselves, waiting for the adoption, to wit, the redemption of our body.”*

HIGHEST and lowest are bound in one in Christ. God is One ; One in Nature, although in the Blessed Persons of that Nature, Father, Son and Holy Ghost, distinct ; and that oneness He impressed on His creation. Before the Angels' fall, all things in Heaven were one. Before man's fall, things on earth were one ; uniform though multiform. They were one, by reflecting His Image Who is One ; one, by

fulfilling His will. And when disunion was brought in by the fall of Angels and men, since all things are held in one, only as they are in Him, the One only God, He willed to knit all things which are in Heaven and which are in earth again in one, in His Co-equal Son.

Passing by the fallen Angels, but taking the nature of man, and uniting our human nature with His Divine, He bestowed on us, of all the last, that ineffable closeness of union with Himself. Through us, the fallen from God, lost and far removed by sin, did He will to bring His rational creation into a nearness past all thought, the creature with the Creator, the finite with the Infinite, man with God. Thus willed He to seek out the one lost sheep in this our wilderness, and to bring it on His shoulders to the Heavenly courts. Thus willed He, that His elect, being made like unto the Angels, should with the holy Angels form one Church, to the eternal glory of His Holy Name; one, as being filled by Him Who is One; His Body, "the fulness of Him Who filleth all in all."

Elsewhere, Holy Scripture teacheth us, that the highest of the Heavenly hosts are interested in the mysteries of man's redemption, and "desire to look into the things" which relate thereto. It tells us, that "unto<sup>a</sup> principalities and powers in Heavenly places is known by the Church the manifold wisdom of God." Here, on the other hand, it reveals to us, that the very lowest have in some way suffered by man's fall; that they, too, shall in his restoration, gain in glory. Mysterious power of sin, that it

<sup>a</sup> Eph. iii. 10.

should so defile, not the sinner only, but the very creation which itself partakes not of it! Heaven and earth are spoiled by man's sin; and, as defiled, must pass away, and be changed into "a new Heaven and new earth," fit for righteousness to dwell therein. Through our Lord's holy Presence must the Heavenly places be purified<sup>b</sup> from our sin; and this earth and all that is therein must be burnt up.

Mysterious efficacy of our Blessed Lord's Atonement, that all things which shut not out God; all, but they who, at the last, shall be found to have rejected Him, shall partake of the glory, which He hath purchased, and which floweth forth from Him!

For man's sake the earth was cursed. "God made not death." "He<sup>c</sup> created all things that they might have their being, and the generations of the world were healthful; and there is no poison of destruction *in them*, nor the kingdom of death upon the earth. For righteousness is immortal. But ungodly men with their works and words called it to them." "The creature was made subject to vanity, not willingly."

"Vanity of vanities," saith the Preacher, "vanity of vanities, all is vanity." Nothing comes to any perfection; nothing continues at one stay; things subsist but by renewal and decay: all things, by change, foretell their own destruction, whereto they are hastening. "The<sup>d</sup> sun ariseth, and the sun goeth down and hasteth to his place whence he arose." He seemeth to rise, but to set; no sooner doth he reach his full glory in the height of Heaven, than he seemeth to sink towards his end. He shineth not in

<sup>b</sup> Heb. ix. 23.

<sup>c</sup> Wisdom i. 13—16.

<sup>d</sup> Eccles. i. 5.

his full glory, but he thereby draws clouds around him ; when he putteth forth his fullest heat, then we mostly feel that a change cometh ; or, if it cometh not, his very brightness becomes the decay of that, for which he shineth. “The wind,”<sup>o</sup> says the Preacher again, “goeth toward the south, and turneth about unto the north ; it whirleth about continually.” It does, as it were, and undoes its own work, going and returning ; and when it resteth, it ceases, as it were, to be. “The<sup>r</sup> rivers run into the sea, yet the sea is not full. Unto the place whence the rivers come, thither they return again. All things are full of labour, man cannot utter it.” All things bear about them strange tokens of good and evil. Each pictures to us some part of the glory of their Maker ; each, of our vanity. They minister to us, only by their corruption ; they live, only to die. Day dieth unto night, and night vanisheth into day. Summer seems to give way unwillingly to winter, and winter unto summer. Seeds grow not, but by perishing ; when grown, they are our food through their destruction. Flowers turn not to fruit, but by the fading of their glory. All seems to toil ; all changes ; all decays ; all, in one weary and restless round, seem to say “we abide not for ever ; here is not thy rest.” “The creature” then “is subject to vanity” through outward decay ; itself perishable and serving to perishable ends.

But more ! It was all formed “very good,” to its Maker’s praise ; and now, through which hath not He been dishonoured ?<sup>s</sup> If beautiful, man loves and

<sup>o</sup> Eccles. i. 6.

<sup>r</sup> Ib. i. 7, 8.

<sup>s</sup> “The enemy of God hath corrupted, together with man him-

admires it, without or more than God, or worships it instead of Him. If any brings outward evil, man, on occasion of it, murmurs against its Maker. All were made to His glory; all, through man's sin, turn to His dishonour. Such was the condemnation of the heathen. "They<sup>b</sup> changed the truth of God into a lie, and worshipped and served the creature more than the Creator Who is Blessed for ever." By love of them or displeasure at them, men alike forget God. When through them, God chastens them, they in fact upbraid Him. When He blesses them, they forget Him, or sin against Him, through His gifts. How is every object of every sense abused to vanity! Who, well nigh, escapes something amiss in his very daily food? how does it minister to excess and luxury, to self-satisfaction, and fullness, or undue pleasure, not to speak of gross and carnal sins!

"Jeshurun<sup>i</sup> waxed fat and kicked." "She<sup>k</sup> did not know that I gave her corn and wine and oil, and multiplied her silver and gold, which they prepared for Baal." What, even now, is not, even by Christians, offered to some Baal of pride, or luxury, or "covetousness, which is idolatry?" Of what thousand thousand sins are the daily supplies of our daily food, the occasion! "Whose god is their belly." In unthankfulness or luxury, or daintiness, or hard-self, the whole creation put in subjection to man for certain uses; whence also the Apostle saith that it was made subject to vanity, not willingly, being subverted first through vain uses, and then through such as were vile, and unrighteous, and ungodly." Tert. de Cor. c. vi. p. 168, and not. p. [Oxf. Tr.] where the interpretations on this text in the fathers are collected.

<sup>b</sup> Rom. i. 25.

<sup>i</sup> Deut. xxxii. 15.

<sup>k</sup> Hos. ii. 8.

ness of heart, if we have much ; if little, through sin in procuring it.

How do all things beautiful minister to vanity ; all things soft to luxuriousness ! The very outward beauties of God's creation, men gaze on with mere sensual delight. All "good things of this life" serve to pride, when men have them ; to covetousness, if they have them not. The more manifold their use, the more manifold their abuse. Things of sense or of spirit, the commonest supplies of our needs, or the most refined objects, which employ our understanding, all were alike made for good ; all are turned, through sin, to evil. "The<sup>1</sup> invisible things of God from the creation of the world are clearly seen, being understood by the things that are made, even His eternal power and Godhead, so that men are without excuse." And yet even on occasion of the very knowledge of the visible creation, men exalt themselves, or deny God, or His Truth. The very sounds, which seem to float down as from another world, and to echo the Angels' harps ; the very voice of praise, the language of heaven, we scarcely know whether it is spiritual or material ; how, in our very Churches, does it often steal away men's hearts to love itself, not the praise of God, which by its speechless voice it utters ! how, in the world, is it profaned to feverish excitement and sensual pleasure, and vanity, and sin ! Alas ! why multiply instances, when every sin is committed through misuse of some creature of God, which He made for good ; when every spot of God's creation, every work of His Hands, all, highest and lowest, are in turn stained,

<sup>1</sup> Rom. i. 20.

and defiled, and marred by man's sin! And therefore, as God elsewhere saith, that "the whole earth is oppressed and loatheth and vomiteth forth her inhabitants,<sup>m</sup> through whom she is defiled," so, now that regenerate man panteth after his heavenly home, "all creation groaneth and travaileth together"<sup>n</sup> with him, that having, with him and for his sake, been "made subject to vanity" and corruption, it may, with him, be made partaker of incorruption and of glory.

Such then, is the first sense of this great and mysterious passage, that all nature, having suffered together, shall be restored together. Things animate and inanimate, as being the works of God, (as we see in the use of Holy Scripture and even in the very works themselves,) bear in themselves some likeness to their Maker, and traces of His Hands. Things seen speak of things unseen. How does the bright gladdening glow of light speaks of the purity of Light inapproachable; that one may not scan it with too bold a gaze, how it warms, heals, lightens, directs, penetrates, transfigures into itself, gladdens our inmost souls. And yet all around us and in us bear also sad tokens of the fall. As then to us death is to be the gate of immortality and glory, so in some way to them. Whence Holy Scripture says elsewhere, "the earth shall wax old like a garment, and

<sup>m</sup> Lev. xviii. 25.

<sup>n</sup> "To grieve *with*, and groan *with*, is to grieve and groan with another who groaneth or grieveth, that is, whereas he himself hath no ground for groaning or grieving, yet he grieveth or groaneth for him who hath such ground." Origen, in Ep. ad Rom. L. 7. § 4. p. 596. Ed. de la Rue.

they that dwell therein shall die in like manner.”<sup>o</sup> We are to die “in like manner” with the earth. As then we, so many as are in Christ, perish not utterly, but put off only corruption, to be, by a new and immortal birth, clothed with incorruption, so also they.

Again, as Holy Scripture says of us, “the dead shall be raised incorruptible, and we shall be *changed*,”<sup>p</sup> so in their measure, of them; “as a vesture shalt Thou change them, and they shall be changed.”<sup>q</sup> It says not only “shall perish,” but be “changed,” and renewed to good.<sup>r</sup> “The heavens being on fire

<sup>o</sup> Is. li. 6. “All creation groaneth and travaileth together, waiting for the revelation of the sons of God, that it may be changed for the better; and not only the souls of men, which are immortal, but the bodies too be changed into a glorified substance. ‘For this corruption must put on incorruption, and this mortal put on immortality.’ Since then heaven and earth wax old, consequently both the things which are contained in the circle of the heavens, and men who are inhabitants of this earth shall ‘die like these,’ not to their destruction, but to the ending of their ancient vileness, and the renewal of glory to come, when the righteous shall shine as the sun, and the old and past things being gone, all things shall be made new. But if heaven and earth shall perish, how can its inhabitants be consistently said to die and perish ‘in like manner’ with them, whereas we know that the souls are immortal, and that the bodies will rise again? Whence it is clear that heaven and earth do not perish, nor are reduced to nothing, but are changed for the better.” S. Jerome, *ad loc.*

<sup>p</sup> 1 Cor. xv. 52.

<sup>q</sup> Ps. cii. 26.

<sup>r</sup> See on Tertullian, quoted in pp. 307, 308. The writer said there, The Apostle is understood to speak of a restoration of the natural creation, by S. Irenæus, S. Hilary, S. Ambrose, S. Greg. Naz., S. Chrysostom, Theodoret, Proclus in S. Epiphanius, Gaudentius, S. Jerome, Maximus Taur. and others. This liberation



shall be dissolved, and the elements shall melt with fervent heat." Yet<sup>t</sup> the fire which burns up Heaven and earth shall but free them from the wrongs which they endure at our hands, the bondage in which they have been held to corruption and vanity ; and, cleansing them from the stains and defilements of our sins, shall yield them pure, "a new Heaven and a new earth," new for us renewed," incorrupt for us undefiled ; so that as our dwelling-place has, as yet, been marred by our sin, then should the love of God for us overflow upon it, and the glory of His Presence, which shall be our joy, shall array it too with a glad brightness, in harmonious sympathy with our joy. "As<sup>t</sup> our human body shall be endued with a certain supernatural form of glory, so the whole creation of sense, in that glory of the sons of God, shall obtain a newness of glory, and the<sup>u</sup> former things passing away, and the oldness of decay, He shall make all things new."

Elsewhere, too, Holy Scripture lends a voice to mute and inanimate nature, saying, "all<sup>x</sup> the trees of the creature, they state, will take place through its destruction. This is said by S. Ambrose, S. Jerome, S. Augustine, S. Chrysostom, S. Methodius, S. Cyril Jerus. S. Athanasius, Eusebius, Prosper, Cassiodorus, Proclus, Gaudentius, S. Gregory the Great, and others.

<sup>a</sup> "In that conflagration of the world, the qualities of the corruptible elements which suited our corruptible bodies, shall, by burning, utterly perish ; and the substance itself shall have those qualities, which, by a wondrous change, shall suit immortal bodies, that the world renewed for the better, may fitly be suited to men, in the flesh also renewed for the better." S. Aug. de Civ. Dei 20, 16, add c. 14. 17. 24.

<sup>t</sup> S. Thom. Aq. ad loc.

<sup>u</sup> Quoted by S. Jer. ad Is. lx.

<sup>x</sup> Ps. xcvi. 12, 13.

of the wood shall rejoice before the Lord, for He cometh, He cometh to judge the earth." "Break<sup>y</sup> forth into singing, ye mountains, O forest and every tree therein." Wherein it speaks doubtless in part in a spiritual sense, how *they* shall abound and overflow with joy in God, whom He hath planted in His courts, filled with the life-giving, ever-flowing sap of His Spirit, and made fruit-bearing trees; or those again, eminent in light and holiness, who like mountains, are rooted deep in humility, pierce the clouds through faith, and catch the first beams of the Sun of Righteousness. But it seems to picture too how heaven and earth shall, when He cometh, wear a dress of joy. So the Prophet says again that our earth shall glow with a fuller light from heaven, in that "the<sup>z</sup> light of the moon shall be as the light of the sun, and the light of the sun sevenfold, as the light of seven days."

Such glorious tokens of our immortal state, such wonderful signs of oneness and love, such touching lessons of our passing away and our abiding, does God shed all around us, that the very creation which we misuse, should mind us of our end; earth, sea and sky, should bid us love not them, but Him Who made them; should, by its very state and being, its beauty and its decay, tell us to long for Him for Whom itself seemeth to yearn, the perfection of Beauty, Infinite in perfection, Who Alone abideth for ever.

Yet since Holy Scripture saith "the *whole* creation

<sup>y</sup> Is. xlv. 23.

<sup>z</sup> Is. xxx. 26. So interpreted by S. Jerome ad loc. and on Is. lxxv. 17, 18.

groaneth and travaileth in birth-pain together with" us, it, in some sense, includes all created being, and tells us that all, from highest to lowest, have an interest in our redemption; all are made subject, as it were, to some imperfection; all, with long and longing expectations, look "for the revelation of the sons of God," when our life, now "hidden with Christ in God," shall be disclosed, when "Christ, Who is our Life, appearing, we also shall appear with Him in glory."

Not as though the holy Angels, blessed in the burning love of God, over-streamed with the boundless river of delight from the Divine Presence, ever beholding the very Face of God, can be thought to have pain and grief! Yet, as Almighty God is in Holy Scripture said to "grieve and repent of the evil," when in His unchangeable love He doth that, which we should do out of our imperfect feelings, much more may the holy Angels be said to groan and travail in birth-pain together with us, while they long for our immortal birth, which is yet delayed by our sins. They long that the number of the elect should be perfected, the full mystery of the love of God in Christ which they desire to look into, be revealed, when all, freed from time, and change, and chance, and toil, shall, in unvaried, unsetting blessedness, that Morning that knows no evening, that Light that knows no darkness, joy without fear of losing Him, wherein it joys; when, no fighting within, no fears without, no corruption in any part resisting, no disquiet any more harassing, our whole inferior self subdued to our spirit, and we ourselves, wholly subdued to God, shall breathe again and live wholly

in our God, in the glad repose, and peace, and rest of perfect, everlasting love. "They," says a father,<sup>a</sup> "who rejoice over one sinner that repenteth, must in a manner mourn over the sorrows of so many sinners."

Yet not the world below, or the world above alone are said in a manner to groan and sympathize with us, but *all* creation must include our nature too in that one common groan and pang, our whole nature, whether that which "having lost through sin the seal of the image of God, remaineth," (a father<sup>b</sup> saith,) "a mere creature," or that which having "the first-fruits of the Spirit," is no longer called a creature only, but "the sons of God." For in some sense, all are "made subject to vanity, not willingly." "Willingly<sup>c</sup> man sinned, against his will is he punished." Willingly he binds himself with the cords of his sins; unwillingly often does he remain in them, galled by the bondage which he cannot break, or, with a maimed will, wishing that he could, in earnest, will. And so, the heathen world, as of old it longed indistinctly for the return of the glad bright days of its early innocence, and now too, as it loathes the very wickedness wherein it lies, sees and approves what is best, while it follows the worst, yearns, at times to be

<sup>a</sup> S. Ambrose Ep. 34, ad Horont. § 10. "They who rejoice over the redemption," &c. Theodoret also, of a different school, "Here he includes also the invisible creation. For he says, the whole creation. But for its more accurate understanding, I will recall the words of the Gospel. For the Lord hath said, that the angels too in heaven rejoice over one sinner who repenteth. But if they rejoice over repenting sinners, it is plain that they are saddened, seeing our transgressions."

<sup>b</sup> S. Aug. de quæst. 83. q. 67. § 4.

<sup>c</sup> S. Aug. l. c. § 3.

freed, is "subject to vanity, not willingly," and even by its mute wretchedness, utters a speechless groan that it is an outcast from its God. And this, as now of late in India,<sup>d</sup> bursts forth from time to time, into a louder cry, "Come and help us." And think you not, my brethren, that here at your very doors, are many, not willingly subject to their daily habits of neglect of God, who might yet be gathered into the fold of Christ? Think ye not that in the heart-sickening desolation of this wilderness of souls, there are those sick at heart at their estrangement from their God? and will ye be for ever deaf to the common cry? Will ye by petty ineffectual efforts, and cold prayers or heartless apathy, still, year by year, delay the time of their redemption? Will the cry of the "six score thousand, who know not their right hand from their left," for whose sakes God spared Nineveh, and perhaps spares us, never reach your ears? Shall they, bone of your bone, flesh of your flesh, fresh from your Maker's Hands, bought by the same precious Blood, never move your pity? Shall they be born but to perish, unless God take them away from the evil to come? Shall they be for ever allowed to drop into that black suffocating pool, defiled, loathsome, whence few emerge, where those, born with you into a redeemed world, float down, unless God have pity, to the pit of Hell? Church-going makes the sinful indifference to the salvation of your brethren a sin against the light. How can ye love Christ whom ye have not seen, if ye prize not your brother's soul whom ye have seen? How

<sup>d</sup> Preached soon after the application from the heathen at Tin-nivelly to us to convert them.

can ye think that ye prize that, which ye leave to the care of the great shepherd of this metropolis? The shepherd of this metropolis is not our Lord. Few are taught to know Him. *We* are not its shepherds. Shepherds of a few we are; but *we* are but a handful, who if we find a few stray sheep, can find mostly no fold to bring them in. No other shepherds of Christ are the shepherds of most of these two million souls. Who then is their shepherd? who his under-shepherds? Who but he who cares most watchfully for those whom no one cares for,—the devil with his angels. They prize *their* companionship in hell, whose society in Heaven ye despise. May ye not be *their* companions! But if ye would not be, ye must take more pains, that they be your companions, *there* where ye profess to wish to be. “Take heed that ye despise not one of these little ones.” Are not some of us weary of the vanity, wherein we are yet in part held, and shall we not, by some more devoted service, larger alms, more fervent prayers, seek to burst both our bonds and theirs? Will ye not by some more self-denying efforts hasten the time?

Yet not alone, nor chiefly, doth inanimate nature mutely long to be freed from the contagion of our sin. Nor do Angels only, grieve that “the heirs of salvation” to whom “they minister,” *will* not be redeemed, and attend mournfully the wayward souls, given to their care, as heirs with them of glory, but themselves, for themselves, choosing shame and death. Not only does unregenerate nature, in feverish tossings, by its very misery, or by the inward cry of the earth-bound soul, put forth its as-

pirations after its lost estate, and complain, that it too is "subject to vanity, not willingly," "for to will," says the Apostle, of unregenerate nature, "is present with me, but how to perform that which is good I find not." More than all, "we ourselves," the Apostle saith, "who have the first-fruits of the Spirit, groan within ourselves, waiting for the adoption, to wit, the redemption of the body." More do God's faithful ones mourn than all things around, because that for which they mourn, their remaining imperfect state, the strife of flesh and spirit, is their own. They mourn more than they who have not as yet "the first-fruits of the Spirit," because they know in some degree the blessedness for which they pant, God, for Whom they long. Angels know, in part at least, the bliss reserved for us, to be like<sup>o</sup> them, when God shall be in All in all; yet they know not the weariness of our strife. Some who, fighting, are yet overcome, know the misery of strife and defeat; but they know not the object of *their* longing, who have "the first-fruits of the Spirit," and so have left their souls hanging upon God, by Whom they have been drawn, to Whom they have cleaved, Whom they love.

Weary, indeed, were life in itself, were the things of this life our heart's inward employ. Weary indeed were an eternity of such a life as this! Imagine the fulness of all outward things, "the kingdoms of the world and the glory of them," all delights of body, all intellect, all knowledge, all power, strength, activity, ability to compass all ends, all praise and honour, all possessed for ever; what weariness were

<sup>o</sup> S. Matt. xxii. 30.

it all, with our imperfections! how dreary, what a void, what an eternity of wretchedness, without the Face of God! What a living death were this life at best! Its very refreshments are but a delay of death, themselves, if continued, a source of death. All things by turn fatigue, as if to teach us that none of all is our rest. The more we would find rest in any, the more they weary. What so wearisome as continued amusement, or lengthened rest, or too long refreshment? Less painful are watchings and fastings, though these too lengthened would wear out the frame. Yet, in itself, what vanity is this very variety with which God has tempered our weariness! To fill the body,<sup>†</sup> lest it fail: to make it hunger, lest it be oppressed with food: to rest it, lest it be exhausted by labour: to labour, lest it be weary through repose: to sleep, lest it be worn with watching: to wake, lest it be listless through rest: what were life, so lengthened out, but a long disease? What is all which the world covets, for which men sell their souls, but, at its very best, an enduring "bondage of corruption?" So, even thereby that we are in the body, are we "subject to vanity." Yet, how dark seems a prison when a ray from Heaven has illumined it! how weary the bondage, when the fetters have for a moment been removed! how dreary to be cast back on things of sense and time, when the soul hath gone forth of itself, and tasted of the sweetness of God!

But much more weary, even if victorious, our strife, sweetened though it be, in so far as we are

<sup>†</sup> See S. Gregory on Job L. xii. c. 13. n. 17. tom. ii. p. 56, Oxf. Tr.



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“subject to God, and not to vanity;” if we are subjected “in hope,” that we shall one day cleave, not with “the first-fruits of the Spirit” only, but with our whole selves, to Him the Eternal Verity. What to saints as St. Paul, that the flesh, though crucified to the Cross of Christ, should still rebel against the Spirit! What to the beloved disciple to “have<sup>s</sup> sin”! What to have that within, still rising, though still subdued, at variance with the perfect law of God! And such as we, who know not the keenness of *their* sense of sin, what at best is our own burden of continual frailty, our daily succession of defeat and victory! This, then, is chiefly the groaning whereof St. Paul speaks, a groaning which he himself knew, “having the first-fruits of the Spirit,” of which he was himself the first-fruits. The taste of heavenly things kindles but the more burning thirst. If such be the first-fruits, what the whole? If such it be, that the first-fruits be offered as a sacrifice unto God, what when the whole burnt-offering is kindled by the fire of Divine love! If such it be, to “have tasted the good word of life, and the powers of the world to come;” if such, but for a time to see Heaven opened, and hear the unspeakable words, and, hushed<sup>h</sup> to itself and all created things, to forget itself, and be absorbed in God, to receive but one gleam of the heavenly light, be melted by its warmth, cleave but with the extremity of its spirit to the everlasting Blessedness, what must it be, to be for ever blessed through the Bliss of God, to become

<sup>s</sup> 1 S. John i. 8.

<sup>h</sup> See S. Aug. Confessions, ix. 10. § 24, 25, p. 173—175, Oxf. Tr.

light in His Light, love in His Love, "for<sup>1</sup> ever gazing on the Unchangeable Trinity, to be changed into Their Unchangeableness"!

And then what "bondage of corruption" again to sink down to earth! "With toil," says St. Gregory, "the soul conquering herself, hath beheld the things of Heaven, but dazzled, shrinks back from the light, whose rays had overflowed it; the kindled spirit, drawn with full longings close to the bosom of that inward peace, is again disturbed by the strife of the flesh; or if subdued, it yet murmurs against the mind, as a captive, from behind." What weariness to those who love, to be absent from Him they love; to dwell in banishment by the streams of Babylon, while they remember the Heavenly Jerusalem; to have their dwelling in Kedar, afar from their everlasting peace! Yet, weary as it is, how sweeter far, "to be an abject at the threshold of the house of God," although as yet unadmitted to gaze on its inward beauty, or be satisfied with its richness, than "to dwell in the tents of ungodliness;" yea, sweeter far to "remember Jerusalem," the eternal long-delayed House of God, "above man's chief joy!"<sup>k</sup> Sweeter far to long for God, nay to long that we could long for Him, sweeter the very faintest thought of the returning penitent that he may one day see Whom now he darkly feeleth after, than all the unsatisfying fullness of all which is not God.

How is it then, my brethren, that we have so little

<sup>1</sup> S. Laur. Justin. de Incend. Div. Am. c. 17. "How by cleaving to the Supreme Bliss are they blessed; how, joined to the True Light, are they made light; how, ever beholding, &c."

<sup>k</sup> Ps. cxxxvii. 7.

of these Heavenly longings? Why have we so little of the Apostle's desire to be loosed from his bonds, to be dissolved, and be with Christ? how may we obtain it? Weary we all must be, sooner or later, of this world's vanities, nothingnesses, disappointments. Weary and heart-broken we must be, again and again, by perplexities, failure of our hopes, the decay of good, the ripeness of evil, darkness following on light, dreariness perhaps on the brightness of God's Presence. How can we exchange mere weariness of the world for hopes of future rest and repose in God? For ye know, who love, how sweet it is to love, though that ye love is not attained.

In two ways is this longing for God attained, and neither will avail without the other. First, unlearn the love of self and of the world, and of its distractions; secondly, contemplate God, His loving-kindness and His promised Rewards. The eye of the soul must be made clean; else it cannot have the blessing of the "pure in heart" and "see God." It must not wander unsteadily among the things of this world; else it cannot with eager gaze, look for, long for, behold, God. We cannot long for things unseen, while we are so taken up with things of time and sense. We cannot love God, while we love the world. We cannot but love the world, if, for its own sake, we be occupied about it. That is our end, for which we do what we do. To do the meanest things out of the love of God, wins the love of God, increases in us His love. To do the highest things, if it were possible, to win souls, convert sinners, having self in view, reposing in self, extinguishes the love of God. With this then we must

begin. Break off things which displease God, and whatever ye do, do it to please Him. Dedicate, morning by morning, the actions of the day to God; live in His Presence; do things or leave them undone, not simply because it is right or kind, much less according to mere natural temper, but to God. Offer to Him your acts beforehand; recall yourself, if the case admits, into His Presence, in the midst of them; give Him the glory with thy whole heart, if they be well done, since nothing good is our own; if they be amiss, grieve to Him. If we make God our End, He Who gave us the grace thus to seek Him, will give us His love; He will increase our longing desire for Him; and Whom in all we seek, Whom in all we would please, Whom in all we would love, Him shall we find, Him possess, here in grace and veiled, hereafter, in glory.

Yet were it mere self-deceit, to think to offer all our acts to God, while we retain, as before, all the things of the world; to offer intently with one hand to our Lord half our heart, while with the other behind our back, we stealthily give the other half to the world. "All for All." We cannot think that in purpose of heart we offer all to God, if we retain all. Happiest they who, bared of all, can follow Him, Who for us bared Himself of all; bared, not of outward good alone, but of self, to love Him Whom they have chosen for Himself. Yet in some way to deny self, to diminish our luxuries and softnesses, out of love for Him in His poor, to deny our senses, our ease, our curiosity about outward things, our words, is the very condition of His love. Bear hardness for Him, and He will be thy Rest. In fasting,

He will be thy Food. In silence for His sake, He will speak unto thee. In weariness, He will be thy Refreshment. Make thyself poorer for His sake, and He will be thy Wealth. Withdraw thy thoughts from the pomps and vanities and distractions of the world, and He will gather them to Himself. Forego the praise of men, and thou shalt feel the sweetness of the praise of God.

But to sweeten the foregoing of things present, meditate on Him in Whom thou hast all, in Whom are laid up all which for Him thou foregoest. Thou canst not love, unless thou think on Him Whom thou wouldest love. Think then, as thou art drawn, one while on thy Lord, beholding thee with love, upon the Cross, bury thyself and thy sins in His Wounds, enfold thyself reverently, with the penitent, around His Cross ; or gaze on Him bound, that He might free thee ; wearing the thorns of thy sins, that they no more might pierce thee ; bruised, to heal thee ; dying, to be thy Life ; and pray Him to bind thee fast unto His Cross and to Himself, that so thou mayest be motionless with Him to all which would draw thee from Him. Or gaze on thy future blissful home, arrayed with unfading light, which needeth not sun nor moon, for the Lamb is the light thereof ; where is no toil to endure, no loss to sustain ; where no evil entereth, nor is any cast out whom the Lord has bid enter into His Joy ; where is the blessed and glorious society of Angels, Thrones, Dominions, Powers, to whose life thou shalt be equalled. There all, in unclouded joy and the overflowing fulness of eternal bliss, shall joy in the sight of God ; each shall be full of bliss, according to his measure, each enjoy

in others the glory he has not in himself. There, in His light, we shall see light; and we ourselves, bedewed and filled with the Light wherein we are immersed, even of Him Who is the Brightness of the Eternal Light, the Sun of Righteousness, the Splendour of the Divine Majesty, shall become light, and by His Love shall love Himself, and in Him love all beside in everlasting peace and indissoluble love, since He shall be All in All, and all one in Him. Then God shall rest in His works, and our everlasting rest shall be in God; "God<sup>1</sup> shall rejoice in His works," and His works joy in Him. Him, of Whom now one thought filleth the whole soul with joy, shall we ever behold in His Beauty with unveiled Face. Eye to Eye shall we behold God, even the Everlasting Father, and His Co-equal Son, and the Holy Ghost, from Both proceeding, of Both the Bond in love. Him our eyes shall behold and not another, yet cleansed by the light of truth and upheld by Him to behold His Majesty. Our hearts shall be by Him enlarged to contain His Love; our souls entering into that sea of joy, shall be filled, yet overflowing, encompassed, penetrated, transfigured, containing, absorbed in, His all-containing Love.

So shall the joys eternal, while we gaze, be present to our souls, and this world's fleeting vanities, be dull and faded by their heavenly lustre; and His grace, to Whom we look, shall, one by one, loose our bonds whereby we have been held captive to vanity, and set our hearts at liberty. He shall loose us, link by link, from the bondage of corruption, and draw us by the band of His all-uniting Spirit,

<sup>1</sup> Ps. civ. 31.

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from the first-fruits and the earnest, to enter upon our inheritance and the full possession. Thither shall He draw us, whence He hath sent down His Promise into our hearts, to knit our hearts to Him. He shall give us sorrow that we were ever held, and strength to run the way of His commandments, draw us by His love unto His love, that tasting one drop of His ineffable sweetness, we may henceforth find nought sweet, save in Thee, our Redeemer and our God.

“O Good Jesu,” is the prayer of an ancient saint,<sup>m</sup> “Word of the Father, Brightness of the Father’s Glory, into Whom the Angels desire to look, teach us to do Thy Will, that led by Thy Good Spirit, we may attain to that blessed City, where is eternal day, and the spirit of all is one ; where is certain security, and secure eternity, and eternal tranquillity, and tranquil blessedness, and blessed sweetness, and sweet joyousness, where Thou, God, with the Father and the Holy Spirit, livest and reignest to endless ages. Amen.”

<sup>m</sup> S. Gregory at the close of the exposition of the Penitential Psalms, T. iii. § 2. p. 559.

## SERMON XVIII.

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### VICTORY AMID STRIFE.

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ROM. vii. 22, 23.

*“ I delight in the law of God after the inward man ;  
but I see another law in my members warring  
against the law of my mind.”*

SUCH is the weary conflict, which Adam's fall entailed on all born into the world in the way of nature, on all save Him Who, born not after the way of nature, came to redeem, renew, regenerate, sanctify, transform our nature into the likeness of His own. In Paradise there was no momentary disturbance to that inward peace of the soul, which is wholly united with its God. God had made them for Himself, and nothing had come between them and God. They had no fear, no pain, no longing for what they had not. They knew not sin, and so knew not what it was to sin; they could not even fear sin which they knew not. The forbidden fruit



hung before them ; but in calm faith and trust in their Maker's word, they passed it by unheeded, as the only thing to be shunned in His whole Paradise, because forbidden them by Him Who loved them, and Whom they loved. They *could* not covet it, because they had in them nothing sinful ; and to covet is sinful. They did not even look at it. For not until after Eve had listened to Satan's words, did she see that it " was good for food, and pleasant to the eyes, and to be desired to make one wise." Sinning not, they could not have any other evil, since death and every other evil came into the world by sin. Peacefully they enjoyed each other's love, loving in it God who had made them for each other, and nothing ever clouded the bliss of their unceasing love. All God's works spoke to them of God, and they loved Him, as the blessed shall ; and, after the day's peaceful labour, they heard His Voice in the evening, as a friend discoursing with his friend. Man lived in Paradise as he willed, since he willed what God commanded ; he lived enjoying God, and from Him, Who is Good, himself was good. He lived without any want, and might so have lived, until God should translate him peacefully, toilless, painless, deathless, to those joys, to which we hope to pass, as the end of weariness, toil, and pain, and through death to be freed from death, where death and sin shall be at an end for ever, and all shall be full contentment of perfect bliss.

To fall from God altered the whole face of man. Easy was the command to keep. The heavier was the disobedience which kept not a command so easy. They mistrusted Him, from Whom, with no shadow

of evil, they had all good ; they disobeyed Him Who, by a condition which cost them nothing, taught them obedience, and the great bliss freely to serve their God ; they rebelled against Him Who had set nothing over them, save Himself, the Author of all good.

And so, because man rebelled against God, he lost the command over himself. He *would* not obey his God, and so he *could* not obey himself. By obedience to his flesh, his soul became carnal. He would be free from God and independent of God ; and he fell into a slavery to his corrupted and debased self. He would not what he could ; and so he could not what he would. He would not have the free, loving, blissful service of God ; and so he was subjected to the hateful, restless service of his lower self. Every faculty became disordered. The poison of the forbidden fruit ran, like fire, through the whole frame of his mind and body. Pleasure or pain became alike sources of sin. He longed for what he had not ; he became angered with those who thwarted his will ; he envied those who had what he had not ; he murmured against God, if He gave him not what he willed, when he willed.

Yet is there, even in unregenerate man, some trace of his Maker's Hands ; and so he is in conflict with himself. By corruption of nature, he cannot, without God's re-creating grace, truly serve God. Through the remains of God's image in him, he cannot, until he has wholly destroyed his soul's life, tranquilly serve sin. Yet, in himself, "lust of the flesh, lust of the eyes, and pride of life" are the more powerful. He obeys, though unwillingly, "the law

of sin," which he had taken on himself; not wholly lost, because not willingly.

Such was our state by nature, to heal which our Redeemer came. He willed to restore us; but He willed not to restore us, without cost and trial of our's. He wills that in that eternal, unchangeable bliss we and, in us, His whole rational creation, should know how sore a thing is rebellion against God. He willeth to restore to us the freedom of our will, and the mastery over ourselves, and to make us again of one mind with Him. But He wills to do this for us, *through* ourselves. He willeth to give us the victory, but by overcoming *in* us.

The strife then remains. To have no strife with ourselves, against ourselves, subduing our rebellious selves, would be a sign not of victory, but of slavery, not of life, but of death. The strife is, although different in degrees, the same now as before our Redeemer came. The grace is not the same. The issue of the conflict ought not to be the same. As far as S. Paul pictures a conflict, the conflict must be one and the same, whether it be between the flesh and the law of God still written on the table of the heart, or that same flesh against the outward law given by God, or that same flesh still, against the regenerate, renewed mind, and the power of Divine Grace. But, although "in many things we all offend," still in the main the issue of the conflict should not be the same. The conflict which S. Paul so pictures to the life, belongs to all. The issue of which he speaks is that in which it mostly ended, in himself too, but in his unconverted state, as a Pharisee, proud, self-righteous, self-confident, before he believed in Christ, be-

fore Christ worked in him mightily, and he fought the good fight, and could "do all things through Christ instrengthening" him.

Plainly, the abiding state whereof he speaks cannot be that in which a Christian ought to be. "To be sold under sin," (which is only said of the most wicked of the wicked kings of Israel,) to be "carnal," to "serve with the flesh the law of sin," to be "brought under captivity to the law of sin which is in my members,"—this cannot be our state under the Gospel. This cannot be our condition as sons of God and members of Christ. If this were so, where were "the liberty of the Gospel, wherewith Christ has made us free?" where "the bruising of Satan under our feet?" where our Lord's promise to "him that overcometh?" where His "strength made perfect in our weakness?" where "the good fight of faith," if it ever ended in defeat? where "the victory of our faith, which overcometh the world?" whence come those armies of the saints who follow the Lamb, as He goeth forth conquering and to conquer? to what end would be the gifts of the Holy Ghost, the power of Christ within us, His Good Hand upon us, His armour of righteousness, faith, peace, salvation, wherewith, from head to foot, He compasses us?

No! the end of the Christian's conflict must be, not defeat, but victory. There are, says an ancient father,<sup>a</sup> four states of man. In the first, man struggles not, but is subdued; in the second, he struggles, and is still subdued; in the third, he struggles, and subdues; in the fourth, he has to struggle no more. The first state of heavy sluggish acquiescence in sin

<sup>a</sup> See note B at the end.

is man's condition, when not under the law of God. The second, of a fruitless, ineffectual struggle, is his state under the law, but not with the fulness of Divine grace. The third, wherein he is in the main victorious, is under the full grace of the Gospel. The fourth, of tranquil freedom from all struggle, is in the blessed and everlasting peace.

Three of these states there are now. Some are asleep in sin. Their consciences are deadened. They struggle not, but are Satan's bondslaves. Others make ineffectual struggles from time to time; but they have weakened their wills, perhaps they are hopeless about themselves; evil habits betray them from within; temptation is clamorous without; they are not masters of themselves, and they fall.

But however any be under the power of grace, they, while in the flesh, must have conflict still. It would not be a state of trial, without conflict. And this conflict is within, as well as without. It was reserved to our Lord's sinless nature to be tempted from without only; to have all Satan's temptations pass before Him, as they do before the sight of God, abhorrent and abhorred, as a putrid loathsome carcase, from which we turn away in loathing. In us, although reborn of God, and cherishing that new birth within us, living by the life of God and growing in His life, there yet remains that "infection of nature" of which the Article speaks,<sup>b</sup> "whereby the desire of the flesh is not subject to the law of God."

This very condition of our being must be good for us, since God, after He has redeemed, regene-

<sup>b</sup> Article 9.

rated, renewed us, has given us of His Spirit and made us members of His Son, united us with Christ, and made us temples of the Holy Ghost, still leaves, more or less, in it, those who are heirs of glory, and left in it those whom He willed to sit on His Right Hand and His left in His kingdom. For even the beloved Apostle says "If we say that we have no sin, we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us."

Yet through this very truth some deceive themselves, some distress themselves, wrongly. They argue in opposite ways. The truth is, we *have* an infected nature, a nature prone to evil, ready to burst out into sin, unless it be kept down by grace. But by grace it *may* be kept down; although not wholly, yet increasingly; so that the will should be more and more conformed to the Will of God, the imagination wander less from God, the desire thirst more for God, and for nothing out of God, or contrary to or beside His Holy Will. What is evil ought to be continually lessened; what is good, if not sensibly, yet imperceptibly, ought to be strengthened, increase and grow; as the corn groweth, thou knowest not how, but the growth is, after a time, seen. Yet this infection within us, although of "the nature of sin," still, unless our will consent to its suggestions, is not sin. So long as, by God's grace, we master it, it is not sin, but the occasion of the victories of His grace.

People distress themselves, by not owning this; they deceive themselves, if they make it the occasion of carelessness. The one says "My nature is sinful, and therefore I am the object of God's displeasure, and all is ill with me." The other says "My nature is sinful, and therefore I cannot help it, and am not

the object of God's displeasure, although I do what is wrong." The one mistakes sinfulness of nature for actual sin, and accuses himself of actual sin, on account of that sinfulness of nature. The other excuses actual sin, as though it were unavoidable, because his nature is sinful.

Each is untrue. A man is not the object of God's displeasure, on account of the remains of his inborn corruption, if he in earnest strive with it. If he strive not in earnest with it, he is the object of God's displeasure, not on account of the sinfulness of his nature, but on account of his own negligence as to that sinfulness of nature, or his sinful concurrence with it.

Nothing is sin to us, which has not some consent of the will. What is done without, or against, our will, rather takes place *in* us, than is done *by* us. Even although it be the result of past actual sin, it is not sin to us now, unless our will in some way go along with it.

It is an evil thing and bitter to have forsaken the Lord thy God. Sin must have an evil, bitter, fruit. It is an evil to have that within thee, which is hateful, which thou hatest, although, while thou hatest it, it does not make thee hateful. It is misery to be beset, assaulted by, tempted to, thronged by, thoughts and feelings of sin; but although misery, it is not sin. It is miserable to have allowed sinful tempers, which might have been nipped in the bud, to grow and be full-blown. Thou canst not nip them in that easy way now. Still they are suffering, not sin; nay, so long as they are suffering, they are not sin; because what thou willest not, so that thou steadfastly resistest, is not sin.

Thus, if two persons came into this world with exactly the same natural tempers, and the one were, by God's grace, steadily to resist the evil, the other were carelessly, on all or on most occasions, to give way to it, their trials would, after some years, be wholly different. The one, who by God's grace had resisted, would have weakened the power of this sinfulness of his nature upon him; the other would have increased its hold over him, its power within him. Their nearness to Almighty God, their capacity for future glory and love and bliss, their spiritual condition, the hardness of their remaining trials, would be different. This is the penalty of sin, and the reward of obedience. But past sin involves present trial, not present sin. When a man has once turned to God, his past sin will not be imputed to him, either in itself or in its effects. One who had given way would, by God's just appointment, visiting for sin, have trials from which the other would be freed. He need not, if he wills not, by God's grace, have sin. Whatever the sinful temper might be, which he had thus allowed to grow upon him, the mere rising of the sinful emotion or temper would not be sin to him. He would have more need to guard his will, his thoughts, his acts, lest the emotion which he could not help, should gain even a moment's consent of his will, lest his thoughts should for a moment, with full consent, go along with that which is against the holy Will of God, or the soul take willing pleasure in remembered sin. But while by God's grace he keeps himself from these, the wicked one toucheth him not. Sin is around him; he is in an evil and tainted atmosphere; if he do do not wilfully draw his breath



and draw it into himself, it will not hurt him. Nothing past, nothing present, can hurt the soul, if the will hold firm to God by Whom it is held firm. No storm of passion boiling within the soul, no fever of the soul itself, no violence of temptation without, no fierce assaults of Satan, though he shake the soul through and through, no fears, or dizziness, or bewilderment of the soul itself, no powerlessness to get rid of the thought which the soul hates, no thoughts of sin darted through the soul, nay though they seem to be the very offspring of the inmost soul itself, can hurt the soul, so that it give not a moment's free consent to sin, nor, of its own will, entertain or harbour the thought of sin.

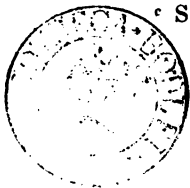
Not, plainly, that we should be careless about such a state. To be careless as to our sinful inclinations is itself sinful. If we were careless, we should consent to sin. Sins of thought come very quickly. It is a state contrary to the Will of God, a state which He did not make, but which man drew upon himself by sin, and which we have increased by our own actual sins. It is a bondage of corruption weighing down the soul, which we should long to have lessened in us by the grace of God, from which we should the more long to be freed, when we shall be loosed from the body of this death, corruption changed into incorruption, sickness into health, weakness into strength, our fleshly body into a spiritual body, death into life everlasting. Still it is a state which God permits, from which He wills not to free us at once, with which He wills us to strive, in which He willeth to give us the victory, through Jesus Christ our Lord.

We are then to have this conflict; we ought not,

by God's grace, in any of the more grievous sins, to be defeated in it. Weakness<sup>c</sup> is the guardian of our strength. Through weakness we are kept humble, that we fall not through pride; through faith and love we are raised toward God, not uplifted. In our advance, we see what God gives; in our weakness, what we ourselves are. Since of ourselves we cannot remove what is the least, the emotions to sin, how much less is it ours, that the greatest are subdued, (if they are indeed overcome) in us! So then for any thing which we have gained, we thank God; any power which we hope we have over ourselves, we hold of God; in every assault of evil we have recourse to God, by Whose grace alone we are freed from any evil or are advancing to any good.

This conflict is continual. It spreads through the whole life, and through every part in man. "From the sole of the foot to the crown of the head there is no soundness in him." Man is besieged on all sides. No power, no faculty, no sense, is free from this warfare. Every sense is tempted or tempts to sin; the law of sin is found, although by God's grace it reigns not, in all our members. The hearing tempts to curiosity, longs for forbidden knowledge, or for flattery; the eyes covet; the taste invites to greediness; the touch to wrong softness, or sloth, or passion. The mind wanders away from God to all sins of the body, and is the seat also of its own proper sins, ambition, pride, anger, envy, avarice, and the like. But though the whole man is besieged thus within and without, his inward self, his life, his soul, where God dwells, whereby he is united to

<sup>c</sup> S. Greg. Mor. 19, 6. T. ii. p. 461 Oxf. Tr.



God, is hemmed in, but not overcome, unless his will consents. "Sin lieth at the door." The will holds the door closed; the will alone opens the door. If thou open not the door thyself, sin cannot enter in.

Thou hast then these two opposite sides, on which, by God's grace, to guard thyself. Think not lightly of the power of sin; for it threatens thy life. Despond not on account of this power of sin; for God will keep it chained, unless thou thyself free it, and invite it unto thee. It does not in itself make thee evil, although it is evil in thee. It is *in* thee; but if thou wilt, it may be subdued unto thee. It is present *to* thee; it is not *thine*, unless thou make it thine. It does not separate between thee and thy God. "The law of sin in the members," although evil, is not *thy* evil, unless thou will it, and encourage it, and make it "the law of thy mind." "The law of God," if thou "delight in it in the inner man," is God's good *in* thee, and thine, if thou will it. And mightier will be God's good in thee, His power, His grace, His love, His Holy Spirit which He has placed within thee, than the evil of thy nature to thee.

No risings, then, of any passion, yea, though it should rise again and again against thee, and by rising, weary thee and almost wear thee out; no thought by night, when thou hast not power over thy soul, and thy will is not conscious; no thoughts by day, which come to thee again and again, and besiege thee, and torment thee, and would claim thee for their own; no distractions in prayer, even if they carry thee away and thou lose thyself, and awake, as it were out of a dream, and thy prayer be

gone;—none of these things are thine. Nothing without thy will is thine, or will be imputed to thee. It is not the mere presence with thee of what thou hatest; it is not the recurrence, again and again, of what thou loathest, which will hurt thee; not even if it seem to come from thy inmost self, unless thy will consent to it.

But the more good God is to thee, in thus not imputing to thee that to which thy will gives no assent, the more diligent thou must be, not for a moment to give way, or to will what God wills not. All this evil is against the Holy Will of God. “The law of sin” which would assault thee and bring thee captive to itself, does rebel against the law of God. Only so long as thou hold it down, it rebels against *thee* as well as against God. Do thou submit thy own will to God, and God will subject this contrary will to thee. Yea, thou wilt the more be of the same mind with God, the more thou art opposed by what is contrary to thee, if thou yet subduest it. Each unlawful motion of the soul does, in truth, dispute the wisdom and goodness of God, Who forbids it and makes it unlawful. Every motion of envy is against His love; all anger is against His gentleness; all pride is against His greatness and thy dependence on Him; all unholiness is against His holiness; all foul thoughts are against His purity. But though these or other things boil up out of the muddy lake of thy corrupted nature against the brightness of His Serene and Holy Nature, give not way, in the very least, and though they take place *in* you, they will not be done *by* you.

Thou canst not have victory unless thou be as-

saulted. The thickening of thy temptations may be the very favour of God, Who permits Satan to try and "sift thee like wheat," yet wills that thou shouldest not fall. Even then, though fierce temptation should come on thee in thy holiest moments, when thou art most earnest in prayer, or after thou hast received thy Lord in Holy Communion, or when thy will is strongest, thy soul humblest, thy love most self-forgetful, fear not. Rather thou mayest take it as a token of God's love, Who sets thee in the conflict. He will uphold thee by His Hand, when the waves are boisterous. So shalt thou have the victory through His Spirit; thou shalt, in His Might, trample on the Evil One, the more he assaults thee. So shalt thou hate sin the more, the more thou art tormented by the sinfulness of thy mortal nature; and be a good soldier of Jesus Christ, Who willeth to crown thee, and to be crowned in thee. Only hold fast to Him; grasp His Hand the tighter, by Whom thou art held. He will refresh thee when wearied; He will meet thee, as the King of Righteousness, and will recruit thee with spiritual Food, His Body and Blood; He will forgive thy sins; He will heal thine infirmities; He will renew thy decays. He will hear thee, when thou criest; He will answer thee when thou prayest; He will have compassion on thy afflictions; He will loose thy bands; He will uphold thy feeble knees; He will make straight paths for thy feet; He Himself, thy Redeemer, will be thy Way unto Himself, thy God.

Resist the very first motions. It is *then* that thou art most in thy own power. Be not weary of resisting, although the temptation come again and again.

Be not off thy guard, although it go away for a time in order to come again. Each such resistance is an act of obedience to God ; each, done by His grace, draws down more of His grace to thee ; in each, His good pleasure will the more rest upon thee ; by each, thou wilt become more a vessel of His grace and love, more fitted and enlarged for His everlasting Love. Christ, Who is the Power of God and the Wisdom of God, will dwell in thy soul, as in His own abode. He will rule thee, He will teach thee, He will speak with thee, He will fence thee from the assaults of the enemy, with the helmet of salvation. He will direct thy senses within, He will guard thee without.

And through all this conflict, the more thou art tossed here, the more thou wilt learn to long for thy Heavenly Home, the home of His rest and love. Thou shalt learn to long lovingly for that day when the remaining corruption shall be put off, and this body of sin have died through the body's death, but the body itself shall be instinct with new life, and conformed to the glorious Body of thy Lord. Death shall be to thee the gate of Life, the end of woe and conflict, the beginning of eternal refreshment, the entrance into thine eternal dwelling-place, where thou shalt have all thou now longest for, shalt rest in the sight of God, joy in His love, be enriched by His imparting of Himself. Thou shalt then see what thou now believest ; thou shalt have what thou now hopest for ; thou shalt attain to what thou now canst not conceive. For thou shalt be one spirit with God, united with Him, dwelling in Him, beholding Him, encircled with His love, share His, and what is His shall be thine for evermore. Amen.

## SERMON XIX.

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### VICTORY THROUGH LOVING FAITH.

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EASTER.

1 S. JOHN v. 3, 4.

*“ This is the love of God, that we keep His commandments : and His commandments are not grievous. For whatsoever is born of God overcometh the world : and this is the victory that overcometh the world, even our faith.”*

THE Gospels, in this our Easter Season, set forth what Christ has done *for* us, the Epistles what He wills to do *in* us. The Gospels speak to us of continued, familiar presence with His disciples, His gifts of peace, forgiveness of sins,<sup>a</sup> the love of the Good Shepherd<sup>b</sup> for all His sheep, the joy<sup>c</sup> which no man shall take from us, the joy of the Comforter<sup>d</sup> Whom He sends in His stead, joy<sup>e</sup> amid tribulation, and the unbounded fulness of His goodness, which knows

<sup>a</sup> First Sunday after Easter.

<sup>b</sup> Second Sunday.

<sup>c</sup> Third Sunday.

<sup>d</sup> Fourth Sunday.

<sup>e</sup> Fifth Sunday.

no measure, save that of our asking. The Epistles are full of earnest teaching, and plain rules for our lives. S. Paul, S. John, S. Peter, and S. James, preach to us, Sunday after Sunday, take up the same solemn notes of death to sin, and life to Christ, victory over the world through faith in Christ, treading in Christ's steps, that we may be acceptable to God in Christ, abstaining from fleshly lusts, becoming a kind of first-fruits of His creatures, looking into the perfect law of liberty, and continuing therein.

So would the Church work into our souls, by God's grace, the solemn thoughts of wondering love at our Lord's Blessed Passion, and the triumph of the Resurrection. She would not have us *feel* only, but live and act in faith, and obedience, and love. The Son of God died for you. The very sun, as he shines in heaven, tells us of that scene of shame from which he hid his face. That Holy Body was handled as lifeless, and laid in the tomb, as the body of a deceiver, its wounds livid and swollen as if awaiting corruption; His soul deigned to go, accompanied by the restored malefactor, to the common abode of the dead. And then what followed? The grave stands open and empty; death and hell have been conquered in their own kingdom, Satan cast down; our sins are atoned for, our chains loosed, our pardon sealed, our Father reconciled to us, and our enmity to Him, Whom we had offended, extinguished, the wrath of God turned away, the kingdom of Heaven is opened to all believers.

And for what? What is the end of this? what the object of recalling it? That we should have a little passing thankfulness, some shifting April gleam



of joy and comfort, and thought of love, and so think that we are alive to God, because we *have* felt ! This were to deceive ourselves. To overcome the world, to have victory, to love God and keep His commandments, to have the witness in ourselves that we are born of God, to "have the Son," abiding in Him through faith, and love, and obedience, because He abides in us through His Spirit and His Sacraments, to have already eternal life, since we have Him Who is life;—these, these, are His Easter gifts, these are our Easter joys. This is living faith, a faith which overcomes the world ; this is love unfeigned, which keeps God's commandments. Obedience is the fruit of faith, the proof of love ; it grows from faith and love, and draws in life and strength, and the quickening dew of God's grace, to enlarge, and strengthen, and expand the stock on which it grows.

As Christ died, so He rose again, not for Himself, but for us. For us did He raise in incorruption the Body which, for us, He put on as corruptible ; for us did He raise in glory, what for us He laid aside in shame ; for us did He clothe with might what, for us, He subjected to the weakness of death ; for us did He quicken in spirit, and raise a spiritual Body, the Body which, for us, He gave to the death of the Cross. "Thee<sup>t</sup> thy God recalled to peace ; thee He brought to the Father ; thee He advanced to glory ; thee He clad with beauty ; thee He clothed with the robe of immortality. Thy body He renewed in spirit, that He might re-form thy spirit in Himself." Christ, Who is our Life, took this our body, that through the Life which He Himself is, He might

<sup>t</sup> S. Laur. Just. in Res. Dom. p. 344.

impart life to us, and make us to share all which He is, His life, His holiness, His power over the world and Satan, His love, and we might dwell in His peace, peace from God and in God, "peace which passeth all understanding."

"Whosoever believeth that Jesus is the Christ is born of God." This is the first source of our life, our strength, our victory, that we have strength not our own, but by a new and spiritual birth of God ; a birth whereby a new and spiritual life, above the world, apart from the world's life, and unknown to the world, is imparted to the soul ; and man, through grace, becomes the son of God. Of this birth the proofs are, the love of Christ ; the love of one another, as members of Christ ; the love of God, in keeping His commandments. Love is the proof of our birth of God, because God is love. The son hath a likeness of the Father. He, then, who is a child of God, must have a likeness to *his* Father. How could he be a son of God, who had not *that* in him which God *is*, love ? He, then, who is born of God, must have the love of God ; he who loveth the Father, must love Him, the Son, Who is begotten of Him ; he who loveth the Son, must love them also who are members of Him, the children of God in Christ. No one can rend one link of this golden chain of love without destroying all. True love of man cannot be without love of God, nor true love of God without love of man. Nor, again, can there be true love of God which does not love His commandments. Who ever loved, and loved not the will of the object of that love ? How much more, when He Who is loved is the Fountain of all Good, Whose

Will is very good, the rule, and law, and substance of all good? "And His commandments are not grievous." For nothing is grievous or burdensome to him who loves. They are not grievous, because love makes them light; they are not grievous, because Christ gives strength to bear them. Wings are no weight to the bird, which they lift up in the air until it is lost in the sky above us, and we see it no more, and hear only its note of thanks. God's commands are no weight to the soul, which, through His Spirit, He upbears to Himself; nay, rather, the soul, through them, the more soars aloft and loses itself in the love of God.

"They are not grievous," he says, "because every thing which is born of God overcometh the world." He saith not only whosever, but "every thing which," shewing the largeness of the gift. "Every thing," of every age or sex, time or clime, "which is born of God, overcometh the world," and that not of themselves, but of the gift of God; not they, but the power, through their new birth, in-born in them, faith, love, grace, from God, unto God, and they, as wielding in them a power not their own, overcome the world. "The commandments of God are not grievous," because we have a power implanted in us mightier than all which would dispute the sway of God's commandments and God's love, a power which would lift us above all hindrances, carry us over all temptations, impel our listlessness, sweep with it whatever opposes it, sweep with it even the dulness or sluggishness of our own wills, the Almighty power of the grace of God.

This, then, is matter of faith, that if we will we

can, by the grace of God, prevail over every temptation. This our Lord says, "In the world ye shall have tribulation; but be of good cheer, I have overcome the world." This God says by S. John, "Ye are of God, little children, and have overcome them; because greater is He that is in you than he that is in the world." This, by S. Paul, "If God be for us, who can be against us?" "I can do all things through Christ instrengthening me." "Thanks be to God Who alway maketh us to triumph in Christ." This by S. John again, "they overcame him by the Blood of the Lamb, and by the word of their testimony." "The<sup>h</sup> victory of the saints is the work of God, Who dwelleth in the saints." Christ willeth to give us of His own power. He overcame the world for us; He willeth to overcome it in us. He willeth, thus too, to be "the first-born among many brethren," that as He overcame, so should we, through His might, yea through Himself, as the power and principle of life within us, overcome.

And with what weapons shall we overcome? "This is the victory that overcometh the world, even our faith." This is the victory by which the martyrs overcame, by which the weak became strong, and, in Divine strength, mastered the strong; the strength of endurance wearied out the brutal might of infliction; children overcame the oppressor; the ignorant took captive the learning of the world; fishermen and the tent-maker subdued the world; the dying conquered the living; the blood of martyrs became the harvest-seed of the Church. By faith, S. Paul says, "they subdued kingdoms;" by faith S.

<sup>s</sup> 2 Cor. ii. 14.

<sup>h</sup> De vocat. Gent. 1. 24.

Peter bids us resist the evil one. For faith knits us to Christ; faith obtains for us the power of Christ; faith prevails with Him Who is Almighty, and overcomes the world, for it has power with Him Who has power over the world.

Faith binds us to Him Who is Almighty; but faith too opens our own eyes to things invisible. It imparts to us also of the power of the All-Powerful, of the wisdom of the All-Wise. It gives us to see the nothingness of all things which are but for a time. It opens our eyes to the majesty and beauty of things eternal. What to us are things which perish in the grasp? What to us are things of time and sense, save as they speak of that which lives when time shall cease to be, or as they shall themselves live on, purified but indestructible? One only is above us, He Who made us. All we see is below us. His friends we may be, His we have been made, Who is Lord of the world. The world itself and all which is in the world is for our use, subject to us, as we to God. All things beautiful to sight, sweet to taste, transporting in sound, pleasant to smell, and thrilling to touch, all things are ours and for us, if used in obedience to their and our Maker. But we are above them. They were made for us, not we for them; they are made to serve us, not we to be slaves to them. Faith shows us Him Who is above all things, but in all things; immortal, invisible, incomprehensible, in light unapproachable, yet Who willeth to come unto us, and make His abode in us. God made us, because He willed to impart Himself to us. He made us, not that He needed us, but to shew us His love. He has made us for Himself, He

willed not to make us apart from Himself. He willed to join us to Himself. He Who hath and is all things, of which we have the shadow here below, "the<sup>1</sup> true riches of wisdom, and spiritual delight, royal glory, eternal power, a kingdom incorruptible, eternal joy, overflowing peace, true bliss, certain knowledge," pleasure for evermore, He willeth to give thee all which is His, and much more, He willeth to give thee Himself. Why shall we not trust Him with the things of time, or with ourselves, who must trust Him with our eternity? Why not trust that, for these few days and years, He will provide for us, whom He has made for His love, if we will have it, in those countless ages which time measures not?

Why is it, but that men cannot have faith, if they will wilfully do deeds contrary to faith. "If thou art not awed by His threats, nor drawn by His promises, obeyest not His commands, nor listenest to His counsels, though in words thou confess Him, in deeds and indeed thou denyest Him."<sup>k</sup> "Victory over temptation is the witness of thy heavenly birth." Living and victorious faith is that whereby Christ dwelleth in our hearts. But Christ will not dwell in our hearts, if we fill our hearts with things which He hates.

Yet is there then no victory, nor real faith, when the world holds a struggle with us, sometimes overcoming us, sometimes overcome? In some things victory should be complete at once. Sins of infirmity there may be; sins against light there should

<sup>1</sup> S. Laur. Just. de Int. Conf. c. 7, p. 304.

<sup>k</sup> S. Bern. Serm. in Oct. Pasch.

not be. To do wilfully and knowingly what God hates, destroys faith and hope and love.

But so that thou art fighting against thy besetting-sin, if thou art conquering thyself, thou art still Christ's soldier, even though in thought, word, or deed, thou be from time to time, in lesser things, surprised. God has so willed that every thing, even victory over ourselves, should be gained step by step. Our buildings rise stone by stone. If they be large and laboured, we only see from time to time that they rise at all. Ye know how slowly ye have learnt whatever ye have learnt, even if ye were at pains to learn it, often forgetting, often mistaking, yet at last mastering. God Alone works things at once. It belongs to His Almightyness to say "Let there be light and there was light." He, and He Alone "spake the word and it was made; He commanded and it was created." He created us in a moment; He giveth us, in one moment, through His Sacrament, the first spark and principle of life; He willeth that we should, through our whole lives, guard, cherish, enlarge, that first gift, and receive it more fully, by being ourselves enlarged to receive it. He willeth that through our very slowness and failures we should learn and keep humility. He Himself hath likened to leaven the workings of His Grace, His kingdom within us. Ye know how leaven works. Small it is at first; hidden out of sight; but it spreads silently and slowly, until it has reached every part; and the heavy lump is lightened, and it expands and unfolds itself and rises upwards. So mostly is it with the grace of God. God lodges it in the soul. He places in Baptism a principle of life within us, which, if we

allow it to work, as we grow on, will fill our every power, penetrate our whole souls, transform this heavy mass of our earthliness into its own Divine nature, make us "friends of God, fellow-citizens of the Angels, lords of the world, rulers of ourselves."<sup>1</sup> Yet though hidden out of sight, it is not therefore lost; though for the time it seems scarce to work at all, yet need it not be therefore idle; thou canst not abridge for thyself the time of its working. Let it work on peacefully, and, like the leaven, it will transform thy whole self into itself, the whole soul into its own perfection, the perfection of Christ. Yet is this complete change mostly slow. We hinder it ourselves, by our own early waywardness, the disobedience of our youth, our self-will, presumption, carelessness, whereby we allow habits of our besetting sin to creep over us. If we were to conquer speedily, we might think that the victory was easy, won through our own strength, not through the grace of God.

No man is crowned, says S. Paul, unless he strive lawfully. To be crowned then we must strive; and strife has hardship and weariness, at times defeat and failure, or distress of temptations in which thou knowest not whether thou hast yielded or no. The things of this world are not gained without trial. The children of this world, those who love this world, know this law of God and count it as their portion. They rise early and late take rest; they are not much disappointed, if they often fail; they will toil day after day, or month after month, with but far distant hope of their reward. Loss only spurs them

<sup>1</sup> S. Laur. Just. l. c.



anew to recover what they have lost. Ye bury your seed out of sight, know that much will be wasted, see it corrupt, know to what enemies it is exposed, hope on amid lowering skies.

Take but the same pains for the seed-corn of eternity. As certainly as God is God, so certainly may ye have the victory, if ye will. God has not pledged Himself to you as to the seasons. He has not promised us that He will not send us famine or the sword or the pestilence ; yet we trust Him, and hope on even at the worst. God has pledged to you His Almighty Word, as to your soul. Think not, " this is impossible, this is beyond me, I have always failed in this ; this fault is become part of my nature ; this ever surprises me. If I succeed for a while, it again overtakes me, it overpowers me, overwhelms me. I have no strength against it."

True, very true, if it were thyself alone. It is not thou who art to overcome the world, within thee or without thee, but thy faith, which is the gift of God, and the grace of God, and the power of Christ within thee. The strong man will not give way to *thee*, but he will give way to the power of Christ. Thou mayest not see thy progress ; nor, for a while, perhaps, may others see it ; but strive on in humility, strive on as for thy life, and pray God that thou mayest strive on to the end, and thou canst not fail.

It is not thyself, although it is not *without* thyself. All this veering to and fro, sometimes a little hoping, more often desponding ; thinking a little on God's mercy, but more on thine own misery ; now waiting for a while calmly and patiently, and then, at the next failure, fretting and complaining, and thinking

“God will not hear me;” thinking “a little of the love of God,” but more of His Justice, and more of His love to others than to thyself; a little of the greatness of God’s goodness, but much more of the greatness of thy sins,—all this vacillating, which but for a brief time, rests on God, and then sinks down to the contemplation of self, wastes the soul more than thou canst think. It is as if thou hadst two souls, one which hopes, the other which desponds; one which believes, the other which mistrusts; one which knows by the light of faith, that God will do all we ask Him, the other so stunned and stupified by its own miseries, that it cannot see what God has plainly written, or hear what Christ has spoken, or feel what God the Holy Ghost would speak in the inmost heart.

Meanwhile, it may be that God “waits” only “to be gracious,” that He wills only that thou shouldest learn to be patient, and in patience to persevere in asking. He wills, it may be, to heal the wounds, if thou wilt be still and not rend them open afresh. He wills that thou gather up thyself into one, wholly to depend upon Him, wholly to trust Him, wholly to believe Him. Human things are gained by human energy, Divine things by Divine. When Peter looked round upon the waves which were boisterous, he was ready to sink; when he said “Lord save me,” “Jesus stretched forth His Hand and caught him.” So then look not to the tumult around thee, look not to thy fears within thee, but “go forth out of thyself, and go to Jesus.”

And now in these Easter days, try to set before thyself in thought, if but for a minute in the day,

thy Lord's Glorified Body as He arose for thee. The closed tomb could not hold Him; the closed doors could not hinder His passing. It was not bounded to this earth; It came and went after the manner of a spirit. He ate and drank with them, to shew that His was no phantom body; He came, He went; He appeared, He vanished out of their sight; in order to shew how His Nature was above the laws of ours. And what is It now? Something of what It is now, you may see in the Revelations. Full It is of the Majesty and Beauty and Glory of God; visibly in-oned with God become visible. And such, if we attain, are our poor bodies to be, conformed to His Glorious Body. Misuse them then not; sin not with them; keep them pure by His Grace, that they may be made like our Lord's. It is not long for thee to wait for harvest, and for a return of thy gains. Thou wouldest wait yet longer, if thy harvest or thy earthly gain were thereby doubled, if every day added to thy harvest, or thy gain. But, for heaven, every day is thy seed-time; day by day, thou mayest sow that which thou shalt reap in life eternal. As the hairs of your heads are numbered, so are the moments of your lives, and every event in every moment, which shall be a portion of thy trial, and may be a portion of thy crown. As not a hair of your head shall perish, so neither a moment of your time. A day lost, wherein thou doest nothing whereby to please God, is a loss for eternity. Every day thou mayest store something for eternity; every day thou mayest be enlarged by the grace of God, to contain the love of God, yea God Who is love, for all eternity. "This is our reward; this our crown;

this the prize set before us ; gladness itself, life, glory, peace, pleasure, bliss, sweetness, overwhelming joy, and all in one, for all shall be in God, and God in all, Himself the Life, the Joy of all who love.”

Let us not then be wearied, though the strife be, at times, wearisome ; let us not relax, though it need much watchfulness. Christ says His yoke is easy. He Who saith so, can and will make it so. He saith, my burden is light ; for He Himself will bear it. His burden is light, for it will displace the heavy burdens of thine own ; the burden of thy sin ; the burden of thy passions ; the burden of thy restlessness ; the burden of thy desires ; the burden of thy fears ; the burden of thyself. Christ’s burden, the larger it is, the lighter is it ; the closer thou fit it to thyself, the more it will free thee ; the more thou takest it on thee, the more it will uplift thee. It will be borne by thee, but rather it will itself upbear thee, where there shall be no yoke or burden more ; but the free, calm, rest and dwelling in everlasting holy joy. Yet the burden and the yoke are but for a few days ; the glory and bliss are as eternal as the everlasting glory and bliss of Almighty God, in Whom shall be our glory and our bliss.

## SERMON XX.

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### THE POWER AND GREATNESS OF LOVE.

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FIRST SUNDAY AFTER TRINITY.

1 S. JOHN iv. 7, 8.

*“Beloved, let us love one another; for love is of God, and every one that loveth is born of God, and knoweth God. He that loveth not, knoweth not God; for God is love.”*

God has set before us to-day in the Epistle and the Gospel, two pictures, of love of self, and of love of God, as shewn in love to our brother, and of the end of those two loves, weal and woe, Heaven and Hell, dwelling in God, and dwelling in torments. And to-day it has come to me to speak to you of love, love which is to be shewn to His little ones, love which you are to shew by enabling this love the more to be shewn to them, that they may be taught to love Him. S. John, as it were, encircles us with love; he goes round from love to love; from the love of one another to the love of God, from the love

of God to the Being of God, which is Love; thence to His love of us in Christ, the source of our love to Him and to one another, and so to the In-dwelling by Him and in Him and the perfecting of our love, and boldness in the Day of Judgment, and likeness to God even in this world. He tells us, the source, the birth, the ground, the fruit of love.

What is its source? God Himself. "Love is of God." Whence is it born in us? Of God Himself. "Every one that loveth is born of God." What its ground? The love of God in Christ. Eternal love sent Co-eternal Love into the world to win us to His Love. "Herein is Love, not that we loved God, but that He loved us, and sent His Son to be the propitiation for our sins." What its fruit? Rather one might ask what is not its fruit? Likeness to God, the sight of God, the knowledge of God, the in-dwelling of God, the dwelling in God, the perfection of His love in us, and our perfection in His Love.

This is the greatness of the love of God, this its power, this it is which makes it not the most eminent only of all virtues, the first and great commandment, but the essence and substance and soul of all virtues, *the* commandment of Christ, that "God is love." This touches, so to speak, on the Essence of the Divine Nature. "Thine, O Lord, is the greatness, and the power, and the glory, and the majesty;"<sup>a</sup> "wisdom, and riches, and strength, and blessing,"<sup>b</sup> and "praise, and dominion,"<sup>c</sup> are His. His "Alone is Immortality."<sup>d</sup> Yet Holy Scripture

<sup>a</sup> 1 Chron. xxix. 11.

<sup>b</sup> Rev. v. 12.

<sup>c</sup> 1 S. Pet. iv. 11.

<sup>d</sup> 1 Tim. vi. 16.

does not say "Thine is love," or "Thou art Power, Thou art Righteousness or Justice." For although God in His simple Essence, is All-Powerful, yet His Being is not Power, nor Mind, but Love. He Himself has told us, that "God is love." In this way then He brings us into direct relation to Himself. In this way He calls us to return Him like for like. He gives us that in us, although created, which answers, as it were, face to face, to what He Himself IS. "Love," says a holy man,<sup>e</sup> "is the only one of all the emotions, affections, and feelings of the soul, in which the creature can, although not as an equal, answer to its Author, and return like for like. If God is angry with me, shall I be angry in turn with Him? Nay, I shall fear and tremble and sue for pardon. If He rebuke me, He shall not be answered by me, but shall rather be justified by me. And if He judge me, I will not judge, but will adore, Him; and when He saveth me, He doth not seek Himself to be saved, nor to be delivered by any one, Who delivereth all. If He ruleth, I must serve; if He commandeth, I must obey; and not require in turn from the Lord service or compliance. See now how different it is as to love. For when God loveth, He willeth nothing else than to be loved; for to no other end doth He love, save that He may be loved, knowing that they who love Him, will through that very love be blessed. Great indeed is love!"

And so, by loving God we know God, as He says, "every one that loveth knoweth God, for God is love." We know a man when we know his inmost self, that which is most himself. The very Being of

<sup>e</sup> S. Bern. Serm. 83. in Cant. § 4.

God is Love. To know God we need not to be powerful, or learned, or wise, or clever, or understanding. For God has power and wisdom and knowledge perfectly, and all come from Him; He is in them but they are not He. But God *is* love. The Heathen sought through wisdom to find out God, for they thought of God as an infinite Mind. God has taught us that we shall know Him by love, because, although Infinitely Wise, He is not Mind, but "He is Love." No created eye by its own natural power hath seen or can see God. No wisdom, no piercing, penetrating sight, no power of mind mounting up above man and all created things, can reach what God is. It can only tell what He is not. God must lift man, not only above all created things, but above man's own self, and through His own infused light enable him to enter with that light unapproachable, which to created eyes shrouds Him in darkness. But although we cannot see God by the eye, we can know and see Him by that which He is, Love. We cannot see His Face, His Form. But love, and thou knowest God; thou knowest Him by that which He *is*, Love. Love, and He dwells in thee; abide in love, and He will not only dwell, He will abide in thee.

And through that in-dwelling, we are renewed in the image of God, and become like Him, "As He is, so are we in this world." God does not make us like to Himself, as an image or a lifeless statue is like to the living being. Nothing can be like to God, but Himself and what partaketh of Himself. We could not make ourselves like to God, though copying Him as a pattern. We could not imitate



or copy God, without God. We do not become like God, by doing an outward service, nor should we, even if we could of ourselves, by obeying God, by fulfilling His commandments. "Wind and storm fulfil His word." "All things serve Him." "The stars in their courses" obey His word; "He calleth them and they stand and say here we are." All creation *is*, as, and because, and to what end, He wills it. The inanimate creation obeys, it is not like Him. We become like God, by His inward renewal of us; by His Spirit within us, not through any power of our own (for of our own we have only our own evil and the capacity of receiving from Him His good), but His Spirit transforming us, His Power working in us, Himself within us, as the Life of our soul, the Spirit of our spirit, the Framer of our thoughts, the Hallower of our affections, the Controller or Suggester of our words, the Worker of all our works in us. But love, which He creates, opens the heart for Love which He is. Love which He gives, enlarges the heart to receive larger love. Love softens its hardness, kindles its coldness, purifies its dross, melts it into one, glues it and unites it indissolubly to God. The Uncreated Love, which God is, united our nature in oneness of Person with the Eternal Word, that Uncreated Love with which God loved us, before He created us. Created love, which Uncreated Love pours into our souls through His Spirit which dwelleth in us, is the bond of perfectness, uniting and banding all graces together through love, which is the soul of all, uniting all souls to one another in the one Body of Christ, and making all one in Him, joining each soul to Christ

and in Christ to the Holy Trinity, conforming the heart of man, with all its longings and all its powers, to the Eternal Will and Mind and Love of the Infinite God.

This, then, it is which makes "love the fulfilling of the law." Thence is it that our Lord says: "This is My commandment that ye love one another." For true love is the Presence of the Holy Ghost, the Sanctifier; true love is the life of God in the soul; love is the life of every commandment. Whatever commandment any one breaketh, he breaketh with it, the law of love. Deadly sins destroy love; lesser sins weaken love. "Put ye on," says S. Paul, "bowels of mercies, kindness, humbleness of mind, meekness, long-suffering, forbearing one another, and forgiving one another." What of these can be without love? Or those sins which shut out from the kingdom of God, "Adultery, fornication," could not be, if there were true love, any more than hatred, variance, emulation, wrath, strife, sedition, heresies, envying, murders. For whoso loveth not the soul of another, loves not their real self; whoso would tempt another to do what is against the will of God, hates them, in truth, with the most deadly hatred.

Or take again S. Paul's description of love. For what sin could it leave place? by what would it be mastered? Not by vexatiousness; for it not only suffereth long, but returns evil with good; "it is kind;" not by envy, for it "envieth not;" not by pride, for it "vaunteth not itself;" not by thinking of its good deeds, for it "is not puffed up;" not by conceit of station or wealth, for it "doth not behave itself unseemly;" not by selfishness, for it "seeketh

not its own; not by injuries, for it "is not provoked;" not by suspicions, for it "thinketh no evil;" not by malice, for it "rejoiceth not in iniquity;" not by error, for it "rejoiceth in the truth;" not by all ill-treatment, for it "beareth all things;" not by being deceived, for it "believeth all things;" not by despondency, for it "hopeth all things;" not by failure of all good or infliction of all evil, for it "endureth all things."

Love runs through the compass of all the commandments; it runs through them and overflows them all. It contains all and is contained by none, except that one command to love. God gives to it, as it were, of His own boundless Nature. Like Himself, it is not bounded by time or space; it embraces all which has been or is or shall be, which God can love; it reaches to what is seen or what is not seen; it enfolds Angels and Archangels, the Patriarchs, Prophets, Apostles, and the little child which is just born, fresh from its Maker's Hands. It embraces all who shall in all Eternity live in the everlasting love of God, those whom it knows and those whom it knows not; those who lived before, and those who shall live after. It knows of no enemies, no rivals. It rejoices in the good of all, though above itself, as though it were its own. It rejoices that others have a sight of God, and a knowledge of God, and a fulness of His love, to which it cannot attain. It is gladdened by every grace in every soul, which is won to the love of God. But itself goes beyond them all, beyond all created being, and is enlarged by God to love His own Infinite and Adorable Perfections, embracing

in a manner, in that it loves, that which embraces all, the Infinite love of God, which is His own Infinite Being, since "God is love."

Some commandments are bounded by time and place, by condition or station, age or sex. All others are limited to this one state of trial. Rich or poor, husbands and wives, parents and children, masters and servants, learned and ignorant, ruler and subject, old and young, are bound together equally to and by the law of love. Other commandments cease with this world; the command of love will then have its entire fulness, intensity, immensity. Then shall it be impaired by no defect, restrained by no weakness, confined by no ignorance, clouded by no darkness, interrupted by no necessities. Then shall we know even as we are known, and, one may say, love as we are loved. As our knowledge shall be enlarged, so shall our love; for our love is the parent of our knowledge. Since then Holy Scripture says our knowledge shall have some relation to the infinite knowledge of God, "then shall we know, even as we are known," so, and much more, shall our love, which is our very being, stretch forth toward the Infinite Love of God. From that love it shall ever flow; to that love it shall ever flow back, that from Him it may ever anew spring, anew to return to Him. Rather all shall be one there; for all shall be unchangeable. One love there shall be, ever loving, ever filled with love from God; evermore beholding, evermore beheld, and illumined, and kindled, and penetrated with the love of God; evermore thirsting for that which it has, and having what it thirsteth for; satisfied, so as not to have pain, not

sated, so as not to desire the love which it shall still have. And, of one another, since some spark of the beauty of the grace of God and the love of God, now so penetrates the soul, what will it be when the whole soul shall be transparent, transfigured, translucent, with the light of the Glory of the Love of God !

These two loves of God and of one another are, in truth, one. For love is but one, different in degree, in measure, in intensity ; yet whether concentrated in one, or spread forth toward many, there is but one power of love, that capacity and might of love which God pours into the soul ; there is but one Object of love, Almighty God, in Himself or in the works of His Hands. For all which is lovely, is lovely, as bearing some impress of God, shadowing out God, speaking of God, containing God. God Himself pours love into the soul, and how should the soul which loves Him not love all which He loves, or which it knows that He loves ?

The love of Christ constrains us that we should love all, as Christ loveth them ; we must bear with those whom Christ bears with as with ourselves ; we must desire that all should love Him, whom He willeth to love Him, for whom, with us, God became man ; for whom, with us, Christ died ; whom with us Christ redeemed, to be partakers of His own joy and love.

Our very proverbs tell us, that if we love, we must love the very poorest object of the love of those we love.<sup>f</sup> The holy Angels love us, and minister to us,

<sup>f</sup> From S. Bernard in Fest. S. Michael. Serm. 1. 3. p. 1026.  
“ Dicitur vulgari quodam proverbio, ‘ Qui me amat, amat et canem

because Christ, whom they love, loves us. We are but as dogs, unworthy as we own to gather up the crumbs under our master's table. How should not we, being so poor and mean ourselves, love the very poorest which Christ loves ?

The love of God is the Fountain, the love of man the stream in which it flows. Both are parts of one whole, threads of one cord, so intertwined that thou canst not have the one without the other, links of one chain which binds us to Almighty God, descending from Him to us, and lifting us up to His very Being, which is love.

But of these two forms of that one love, God gives us the love of our neighbour as the test of our love of Himself. The love of God is the soul of the love of our neighbour. But as we see not the soul, or might think it away when it is in the body, and present when it is away, (so like each other are some forms of life and death, as in sleep, or a swoon, or extreme illness), so we might often deceive ourselves as to the love of God, thinking that we have it when we have it not, or have it not when we have it. But love to others goes forth into acts, involves self-denial, self-command, self-sacrifice. It is the living body which enshrines the soul of the love of God. We may deceive ourselves about what we see not ; we cannot so easily deceive ourselves about what we see ; for our very senses force the truth as to our own hearts upon us. The very senses which distract us from the thought of God, Whom we see not,

meum.' Nos vero, o beati Angeli, catelli sumus Domini illius, quem tanto affectu diligitis ; catelli, inquam, cupientes saturari de micis, quæ cadunt de mensa dominorum nostrorum."

impress upon us our thoughts towards our neighbour, whom we see.

Yet not only is love of our neighbour the test of our love of God, it increases it. For God willeth to infuse fresh grace or to withdraw what He has given us, through or upon our acts. We use or refuse His grace, and so we use or refuse Himself. What we do of deeds of love, we do to Him; what any refuse, they refuse to Him. He Who said to Saul "Why persecutest thou Me?" He is sinned against in all unlove; in all deeds of love He is loved. And how shall He Who loved us when we loved Him not, loved us that we might love Him, not love us more when we love Him and shew our love towards Him? Whoso injureth another, injureth Christ; whoso detracteth from another, detracteth from Christ; whoso neglecteth others, neglecteth Christ; whoso sheweth love to others, sheweth love to Christ; whoso giveth to others, toileth for others, for love's sake, denieth self for others, hath pity upon others, prayeth for others, beareth with others, instructeth, cheereth, traineth, helpeth, comforteth others, for the love of Christ, layeth up a store with Christ, Who has said, "What thou spendest more, when I come again I will repay thee."

If there be any one act of charity more than another to which our very nature turns, if there be any one which touches the heart of all in which love, however overladen with care, or pleasure, or selfishness, still lives, it is the love of those, one of whom our Lord set in the midst and said, "Whoso receiveth one such little child in My Name receiveth Me." Human nature, which knows of their future trials,

temptations, sufferings, and all that developement to good or evil to which they are day by day tending, but which they know not of, imagine not, fear not,—cannot but yearn over their yet remaining innocence, cannot but long for the well-being of those over whom it yearns. If, then, there be any work of love more than another, which love must desire, or cherish, it is any plan which shall guard these little ones against those future perils, arm them for a conflict in which their innocence and purity will be maintained or lost, the beauty of their soul be increased or fade ; that freshness which we love in them, as God's work, be blighted or matured ; they themselves be a blessing or a curse to the parents who bare them, a blessing or a curse to themselves ; their own souls be lost or saved ; themselves be among those to whom our Lord shall say, "Come ye blessed of My Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you ; " enter thou into the joy of thy Lord ;" or "Depart, ye cursed, into everlasting fire."

Secular education will not so arm them. Knowledge is but a two-edged sword to save or to destroy. Knowledge in itself sharpens, it does not direct, nor temper, nor guide, nor control the soul, nor teach, much less empower the soul to control itself. Even religious knowledge is not education. It is light, not warmth. By itself it would only make sin more deadly, in that it would be sin against light. Religious education is to train the whole soul, to watch and correct the temper, to strengthen what is weak, soften what is hard, temper what is strong, check what is heady, and bring the whole soul with all its powers into the obedience of the law of the love of



Christ. They only can really educate who are themselves under the power of that love, and the vessels of that love to others. Love, and thou mayest do what thou willest. Love has power over the heart, for it is the power of God. Love may rebuke. It will be kindness, not fierceness, and will soften, not irritate. Love may chasten or discipline; love, which uses discipline, because it dares not to leave undisciplined, will, like the love of God, be loved even while it chastens. But it were better, safer, truer, far, to educate with love without knowledge, than with knowledge without love. Better far were such instructors of the young which we had of old, with motherly matronly care over the few little ones gathered under their dame's eye, though with very little knowledge, than one who should teach them all mysteries and all knowledge without love. Better one grain of love than an hundred weight of knowledge. Love, like a grain of mustard-seed, may expand and grow until it fills the whole earth. All the knowledge of the wisest of the heathen, but turned to them to foolishness.

On this ground, the very first step towards educating the poor, except as far as the Clergy themselves educate them, is to train those who are to train *them*. Education is not the hour or two in the day, if so be, given to the imparting of even religious knowledge. It is the forming of the whole mind and all its habits and powers. It is to mould it in its daily acts, in whatever way it shews itself, by whatever avenue lies open to it. And therefore, since we are obliged to join with ourselves those who shall aid us in educating the poor, it is of the ex-

trement moment to give the most careful heed to whom they are committed. As God pervades and fills all things, so the thought of God should leaven all other thoughts, the knowledge of God should fill all other knowledge, the love of God should penetrate all things. Knowledge is partly of God's works, partly of Himself. But as the whole world is filled with God, and "in Him," (though we see Him not), "we live and move and have our being," and without Him and His sustaining Will all would fall back into the nothing out of which He called it into being, so all knowledge, without the light of God, is but one shapeless, unmeaning, lifeless, lightless chaos. But knowledge, whether of this world or of God Who made it, or of man who has marred it, is, as I said, but one part of education. The deepest, most inmost part of education is to train the soul; to teach it to subdue in itself, through the grace of God, whatever is contrary to His holy law and will. Christian education is not for earth, but for Heaven; for earth, yet not in itself, but as the seedplot, the way, the prelude of eternity.

It is then a blessed work which has been begun by your Bishop, whose devoted energy in good ye all know, ever ready to spend himself and his substance for the good of souls, that he has devised a larger plan than heretofore for training, in a village<sup>s</sup> not far distant, those who are to be the future schoolmasters of the diocese. Secular knowledge will not be neglected, nay, will be diligently pursued, in their three years' course; while yet the very chiefest object will be, through the grace of God, so to form

<sup>s</sup> Culham.

them, that they shall, in their turn, be able to train others as good citizens, but still more as your fellow-citizens in bliss. He has, amid the many calls for works of piety and charity which press upon him, given to his utmost of his own substance towards it. It is already in active operation. It can afford room for a hundred to be trained in it for this and another Diocese ; which, in its turn, will educate the school-mistresses for this. But a heavy debt of three thousand pounds, upon which six thousand pounds more depends,<sup>h</sup> still weighs upon those who have undertaken and are responsible for it.

Your Bishop asks you to help him in this work. Such of you as have witnessed his confirmations know what love he has for the souls of the poor, how like a father he speaks to their children, how out of the love of Christ and with His love, he speaks to their souls. Ye surely will gladly help him in this.

Yet not he alone, but Christ asks you. Christ says to you "A new commandment I give unto you, that ye love one another, *as* I have loved you, that ye also love one another." How did He love us, my brethren ? By emptying Himself of His Glory, to take our shame ; by laying aside His Riches, to take our poverty ; by giving His soul to death, and bearing for us, in His Human Nature, the weight of His Father's wrath He bids you, as renewed men, to fulfil His new commandment ; He bids you, as Himself renewing you, and giving you new powers of love ; He bids you, as giving you, day by day, new hopes, new strength, new love ; He bids you, as hav-

<sup>h</sup> The grants of the National Society and Privy Council, which cannot be claimed until the whole remaining sum is raised.

ing given us a new pattern of love, loving us when we were hateful, that we might be renewed by and into His love. "Beloved, if God so loved us, we ought also to love one another." Christ gave His life for you. What will ye give to Christ? What ye give He will give you back. He Who giveth you all things now, and supplieth all your needs, will own as done to Himself, whatever ye do for others for love of Him and will give it you back, not in any created thing, not in any thing out of Himself, or short of Himself, but in the fulness of that everlasting love wherewith He loved you and gave Himself for you.

## SERMON XXI.

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### OUR BEING IN GOD.

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ACTS xvii. 28.

*“ In Him we live, and move, and have our being.”*

WHERE is God, my brethren ? Ye will answer me readily, “ Our<sup>a</sup> God is in Heaven.” True, very true. Our Lord teaches us to begin our prayer, “ Our Father which art in Heaven.” When He taught us so to pray, He would teach us that since “ our Father is in Heaven,” we too should long to be there ; our hearts, our hopes, our thoughts should be there, where our Father is. What child would not long to be where its good and loving father was ? Here on earth we do not, cannot, see God. In Heaven He is seen and shall be seen in His Glory, and Beauty, and Majesty, and Wisdom, and Love, and Loveliness, by the blessed angels and saints, and all to whom He shall give power to behold that sight of over-

<sup>a</sup> Psalm cxv. 3.

whelming bliss, Himself. But, again, where is Heaven, my brethren? Above our heads, ye will say, or ye will wonder at my asking you what seems so simple. And yet we see in the Heavens above us sun, moon, and stars, but we do not see God. But Holy Scripture tells us of "Heavens of Heavens," Heavens to which this our nearest Heaven is as earth, and those Heavens manifold times over, as we would picture to ourselves stories of a house, only that each story, as it were, would be a vastness of space which we could not, even by our utmost stretch of thought, measure. Well then, my brethren, in some part of those Heavens, which reach where thought cannot soar, which to us seem all but infinite, God is *seen*. It may be that those who live in those different Heavens see more or less fully and clearly the greatness of the glory and beauty of God.

But do we then mean that God is in such wise in those almost boundless spaces which we call Heaven, as kings are wont to be seen in an inner chamber of a palace, when we have gone through room after room? Is God *confined* to Heaven? Many doubtless think of Him so, as being a great way off. Many, I fear, wish that He were a great way off, and so would give no heed to them and to their ways. So the Psalmist says, "Thy judgments are on high from before him,"<sup>b</sup> that is, the wicked is taken up with this earth, and his own ends on this earth; he looks on ever *before* him, how he may bring them to pass, and does not look *up* to God, and so thinks not of Him or His judgments. "They are on high, out of his sight," and he, grovelling on earth, knows not of

<sup>b</sup> Ps. x. 5. מִיּוֹם מִשְׁפָּטֶיךָ מִנְּגִידֶיךָ

them, and thinks not of them. A drunkard could not bear to think of God as on earth, in the very place where he is, worse than a beast ; or the adulterer, who waiteth for the twilight, that God is in the very room where he is sinning ; or the thief, that God is in the very place where he is stealing ; or the vain person, that God is where he is walking with haughty eyes and conceited look ; or the angry man, that God is around him, where he is storming, and that when he is casting out his anger, he is throwing out his oath, as it were, in the very Face of God.

True it is "God *is* in Heaven," Scripture says so ; our Lord says so. But God is not *inclosed* in Heaven. It is not as the sun sends its light on every part of this earth, and is here, in a measure, by its light, although in its bodily substance it is in Heaven. "God is a Spirit." God says Himself "Do I not fill Heaven and earth, saith the Lord?" God, as being a Spirit, has not parts, so that He should be in one place and not in another, or more in one than in another. Place and space are, where God is. Boundless, infinite space would be the Infinite Presence of God. God contains space, not space God, as it does us, or any created substance. The Eternity of God contains all time ; the Being of God, all being ; the Infinity of God, all space. Nothing can be without God ; else God would not be Infinite. God, then, is not in Heaven more than in earth, although He is *seen* there, not here. He has willed to be seen and glorified chiefly in that place, in what are to us the highest Heavens, where our Lord, in His Human Nature, dwells, and where are the highest, purest, most perfect of Angelic beings. But

although *seen* more there, in His beatific Nature, He *is* not more there than He is here. Heaven is that place where the blessed see Him. If we could see Him here as fully, behold His glory as blessedly, gaze on Him with the same intense sight of blessed-making love as the blessed Angels, this too would be Heaven. The same God, Who is the Eternal, Unchangeable Bliss of the blessed beings in Heaven, is *here* in this very Church, in the same fulness of Presence, the same Glory, the same Majesty, the same Love, the same Infinity of Perfections as in the highest Heavens.

God is everywhere wholly, and yet the whole of Him is nowhere. For if He were not here wholly, He would be divided into parts, which cannot be. God is present with us ; we, in that we cannot see Him, are absent from Him. A blind man is in the light, but he sees it not, because he has no eyes to behold it. God is, so to speak, a vast ocean of Being, in the midst of which we live, and move, and have our being, although we do not see, or feel, Him, because by our senses He cannot be seen or felt. The air surrounds us, and we are in it, although we do not see it, only, at times, the moisture in it. God surrounds us, and we are *in* Him, although we have no senses to see or feel Him.

God worketh in all things around us ; all things come into being, live, last, decay, by the working of His Will, by an ever-present working. Yet is He not Himself aloft, working, as some have imagined Him, at a distance, or giving laws by which all things should be and fulfil their being. Where He worketh, wherever anything is, or can be worked, there



is God. For God is Omnipresent, that is, everywhere. Our earthly substances do not shut out God. God's way of being is wholly different from ours. It is not with God as when we build a house, and part off what is without the house from what is within, that so God should be shut out by the works of His own Hands. He is above them, beneath them; behind them, before them; without them, within them; not a part of them, not immingled with them, nor confused with them; nor are they a part of Him; yet they hinder not His Presence. He is not in one way within them, in another way without them; but One and the Same God wholly everywhere. He does not fill one with one part of Himself, and another with another part; but is One and the Same in all. He is not stretched out in order to contain; not in place, although He is above and below, but the Same, *as* the Same, ruling above, and supporting below; encircling without, with that same Being which filleth within. One and the Same is He, although not *seen* in the same way, in Heaven and in earth, and under the earth, in hell. One and the same Presence is everywhere, although, such as angels, or saints, or devils, or the damned are, *they* see different aspects of the one Indivisible, Unchangeable, Eternal, God.

But then, since God is everywhere, we move, speak, act, think, *in* God. We rise up, we lie down, we eat, we drink, we work, we rest, we speak of God, we pray to God, or—men forget God, not only with God's Eye ever upon us, as much upon us as if in the whole circuit of created things there were, beside God, no other living being, but our one self; not

only with that all-beholding Eye resting upon us, seeing every motion of our frames, every emotion of our hearts, every thought before it is yet framed, every word when as yet unspoken ; but all we do, think, speak, by night or by day, we do, think, speak, *in* God, encompassed by God. “ *In* God we live and move.”

This *might* be very blessed, the bliss almost of the blessed in Heaven. But it has its awful side also. Since we think, speak, act *in* God, then every sin which men commit, the foulest, most cruel, most loathsome, most contrary to the nature which God formed, is committed *in* God. It cannot be otherwise. You can no more escape out of the Presence of God than out of the air which you breathe. The air you breathe is God's creature ; it has its being from God's sustaining Will. Nearer, closer, more inward than that creature of His air, is God Himself. The sun's rays are not defiled by shining on all the corruption of the foulest parts of this earth. God's All-Holy Nature is not defiled by the presence of sin, wrought by those who are encircled in it, any more than It is pained because It is present amid the pains of hell, which, in His Infinite Wisdom, God maintains in being. God's Infinite, Unchangeable Holiness is sinned against by every sin of every creature, but cannot be injured by all sin.

Yet it is a very awful thought, my brethren. The very human feelings which God has given us, make men shrink from doing deeds of shame even in this created light. Until shame itself is gone, they seek to shroud themselves and their sins in darkness. But to God, darkness is light. God not

only sees *through* the darkness, He is *in* it. There He is, where thou sinnest. Find<sup>c</sup> some place out of God, where to sin, and then sin as thou wilt. But first thou must find a place where to *exist* out of God, without God, to be thyself thy God. Else, as thou wouldest not sin, if those whom thou lovest were by, so sin not, since God is not only near thee, close to thee, closer than those who are beside thee, but closer to thee than the very air thou breathest. The very air has seemed to press upon the sinner; the very darkness has seemed to contain an eye which beheld him; the very sounds around him, have seemed to him to speak of his deeds. If the viewless air which is around thy very frame, were all eyes, all bent upon thee in thy sin, what a faint image were it of the One, All-seeing, All-piercing Presence of God, in which "we live and move," and in which and against which, if thou sin, thou sinnest. Thou canst not turn away from God, except to meet God. Thou canst turn away from His Love, yet only to meet Him in His displeasure. Turn, then, in sorrow from thy sin, and thou wilt meet Him and see Him forgiving thee.<sup>d</sup>

Yes! so is there a more blessed Presence, than that through which, in nature, "we live and move and have our being" in God. By nature, that is, as God has formed us as mere rational beings, we have our being *in* God, in that we are surrounded by God; we have our being *in* God, in that we have that being, sustained, upheld, ever anew given to us, by

<sup>c</sup> Ibi pecca, ubi nescis esse Deum. De modo bene vivendi, c. 29. App. S. Bernard. ii. 870.

<sup>d</sup> See S. Aug. Conf. v. 2. p. 66. Oxf. Tr.

God ; we exist in deed, because we exist in the mind of God ; we exist through His existing in us.

But near and close and blessed as this being might be, there is a way of being, nearer, closer, dearer, fuller far, whereby the soul, through grace, may be, or is, *in* God. God willed, before the foundation of the world, before man was formed, or sin was, to make us one with Himself *in* Christ. That oneness which He Himself has, and is, within the Co-equal Trinity, He willed to bestow in our measure, on us. He did not make us, to exist only *through* Him, or to be encompassed by Him. He willed that we should be *in* Him, in the very closest union of love and of being, of which created beings are capable. To this end, God the Son, in eternal harmony with the Father's Will, took the Manhood into God. Our Lord, Christ Jesus, was and is God and Man, One God with the Father, one Man with us ; that, joining together in His One Sacred Person the Godhead and Manhood, inseparably for ever, He might thereby unite us the more closely with God. The Father was *in* the Son, and the Son *in* the Father, by Oneness of Nature, because the Son is all which the Father is, save being the Father ; and the Father is all which the Son is, save that in the One Divine Being, the Father is the Father and not the Son, and the Son is the Son and not the Father ; but Father and Son with the Holy Ghost are the one indivisible God. But in that God the Son took our Nature into Himself in One Person, so closely were God and man united in Him, that he who had seen our Lord in the Flesh, had seen the Son ; and by seeing the Son, he had seen the Father, as He Himself says, "he

who hath seen Me, hath seen the Father also." When we see each other, what we see is the body, and the soul through the body. When men saw our Lord Jesus Christ in the Body, they saw Him Who was not man only but God; they saw Him Who was with the Father, One God.

And this oneness with us He took, not only to reconcile us to God, by putting away the Father's wrath, but to unite us to God in Himself. Does this seem a strange nearness to God? Strange indeed and marvellous mercy it is, that we, so estranged from God by sin, by our estranged wills and affections, so estranging ourselves through our own wilfulness, should—not only be brought so nigh, but should—be made so one with God. Yet, one might say boldly, since God has vouchsafed to do this, stranger yet were it, that God, Who so surrounds us, so upholds us, is the life of our life, the power of our thoughts, the moving strength of our acts,—stranger yet were it, that God should form us capable of His love, and yet not give us His love, if we will have it; that He should make us capable of being united with Himself, and not unite us closely, if we will. So hath He not left us. He Himself saith, "Whoso dwelleth in love, dwelleth *in* God, and God *in* him." "He who is joined unto the Lord is one spirit;" one, not as our Lord was by Unity of Nature, yet still one, through the oneness of His In-dwelling by His Spirit. And again, "The love of God is shed abroad in our hearts through the Holy Spirit Who is given to us." Not the grace only of the Spirit, not any created gift or quality, or power, or habit of grace, but the Holy Spirit Itself

is "given to us," as the Fountain of all grace, a heavenly Inhabitant of soul and body, making us to partake of His own Holiness and Love. Thenceforth He is the Life of our soul, the Author, In-worker, Perfecter, of all holy thoughts, words, and deeds; the Glow of our love, the Strength of our hope, the Upholder of our faith; He knits our souls into one, and knits them in Himself to God. And thenceforth man is the dwelling-place of the Holy Trinity. For where one Person of the Ever-Blessed Trinity dwells, there dwelleth the Undivided Trinity; and our Lord has said, "My Father will love him, and We will come unto him, and make our abode in him."

If, then, we are Christ's, we are *in* God, by God dwelling in us. In a way of nature, He dwells wherever there is any created being; He dwells there, being Himself "above all," through His Majesty, and "through all" through His upholding power; "and in us all" too, as the source of our life. Yet "in us all," being Christians, He is, in a nearer way of union with Himself, dwelling in us that we may dwell in Him, He in us, by Himself, and the fruits of His Presence, in grace, and gifts of grace, and holiness; we in Him, by cleaving with our whole united spirit, and all our power and affections to Him Who loveth us.

Since then all is of God, and in God, since we ourselves, if our souls are alive, are *in* Christ and through Christ in God, there is no room to claim any thing as our own. To claim any gift of God as our own, is to rob God. But who could wish to hold any thing of his own? How much holier,

deeper, more blessed, more full of love, is it, to draw every breath of our lives in Him, as supplying it; to move around Him as the Centre of our being, Who gives us power to move! As in nature, even the strength which men abuse against God, is, in every separate act, still continued to them by God Whom they offend, so, in grace, not only the general power to do acts well-pleasing to God is given and upheld by God, but each act wherewith, from the sacrifice of Abel until now, God has been well-pleased, has been done through the power of His Grace put forth in men by Him, and by Him perfected in them.

Where then can be boasting, my brethren? Where any thought of any thing as our own? Where any pleasure in any works as our own? Let them have pleasure in works as their own, who have pleasure in thinking of themselves as their own! But we, my brethren, who believe that we are not our own, but bought with a price, even the Blood of Christ, our glory and our joy shall be, that we have nothing of our own, that all we have, all we are, (if we have any thing good) is of God in Christ. Our joy shall be, that we are not our own; that our life, our breath, our being, whether of soul or body, are not our own; that they are not even given to us, to have in our keeping, as though they were our own; but "*in Him we live, and move, and have our being;*" every power, every grace, every thing lovely, every good *in us*, is His work in us, Who hath "wrought all our work in us." How poor, and mean, and miserable, a thought were it, to be, (if it were possible,) the highest Archangel, or to have the wisdom of the Cherubim, apart from God, when God Himself, Who

fillet heaven and earth and Infinity, Eternity of being, and unbounded space, He, the All-Holy, All-Wise, All-Pure, All-Loving, will dwell *in* us, and Himself be our Righteousness, and Wisdom, and Holiness, and Love, working and perfecting them in us.

To the true Christian, all is Christ's, all is full of Christ. Do not speak, then, my brethren, any more, (if any of you have,) of persons placing this or that instead of Christ;—the Church, or the Sacraments, or the Minister of Christ. "Who is Paul, and who is Apollos, says S. Paul, but ministers *by* whom ye believed?" S. Paul says not that they are nothing; but that they are nothing *in themselves*; yet much more than if they were any thing of themselves, the instruments of Christ, "ministers *by* whom ye believed." What, again, is the Church, but "the Body of Christ?" What are Sacraments, as our Church teacheth us, but "means, ordained by Christ Himself *whereby* we receive the inward grace" and Presence of Christ? How can any place the means of receiving Christ "instead of Christ," when his very hope is to receive thereby the grace of Christ and Christ Himself, the Author of grace? What is Baptism, but that whereby "we put on Christ?" What says S. Paul of the Holy Eucharist? "The Cup which we bless, is it not the Communion of," or communication of, "the Blood of Christ? The Bread which we break, is it not the Communion of the Body of Christ?"

And so, again, as to these Churches,<sup>e</sup> why do we

<sup>e</sup> This was preached on the re-opening of a Church. The close, asking for help, has been altered.



value them, but for His promise Who has said, "Where two or three are gathered together in My Name, there am I in the midst of them?" He Who is by Nature every where present, is present here in a special manner by grace. He was in the Temple, as much before He filled it with that unutterable glory which "filled the house of the Lord; so that the priests could not stand to minister because of the cloud."<sup>1</sup> But by that visible sight of glory He shadowed out His invisible grace. These visible Churches are not so holy, as may be the hearts of Christians. Christ, by His Spirit, dwells in them, when we come to worship here in spirit and in truth, but with the soul of the Christian He unites Himself, dwelling in her in holiness, that she may dwell in Him everlastingly.

Yet these temples of God have their value, as visible witnesses to His unseen Presence, ensigns and way-posts to the unseen world, amid the din and distractions and absorbing whirl of things seen; folds, wherein we may be gathered to worship Christ, hear His voice, learn ourselves to follow Him, be fed by Him with His own Body and Blood.

Blessed emblems are they of the heavenly Jerusalem, and of the peace and rest above; blessed are they, as vestibules, wherein, if we worship here in faith and love, we may be prepared to enter into the palace of the Great King; resting-places amid a weary and barren land; refreshment to the weary and thirsty soul; pictures, in their rest, of the everlasting rest and peace in God.

Look chiefly then to that kingdom of God which

<sup>1</sup> 1 Kings viii. 10, 11.

is within you ; look to build to your Lord a temple within your souls, there to commune with Him, there to listen to Him, there long to receive Him ; thither by faith, and love, and longing, invite Him. These outward temples are but raised for the sake of that more glorious temple, with which God Himself unites Himself. That temple for God thou buildest by every prayer ; for He says, " My house shall be called a house of prayer," and by prayer we call God to us, on Whom we call. We build it by keeping His commandments through His Grace ; for He says, " If a man love Me, he will keep My commandments, and My Father will love him, and we will come unto him, and make our abode in him." That temple we prepare by casting out from us thoughts, words, and deeds, at variance with His holy Will. We build up its walls, when we gather up our whole souls to love what He loves, and flee what He hates ; that so they may be whole and entire to contain Him, and wilfully harbour nothing which displeaseth Him.

Since, then, my brethren, "*in* Him we do live, and move, and have our being," surely we ought by our own wills " to live, move, and be, *in*" and to Him. *In* Him we must be by the very law of our being, since out of Him we could not be, nor exist ; we must live, encircled, and enwrapt, and enfolded in and by His Being ; we belong to Him, we are encompassed by Him. Every breath we draw is through Him. But more blessedly we may be in Him by grace. He is the life of our soul, the Being of our being. He wills to knit us to Himself. Not more surely does our blood circulate through our

frames, than the life of our souls may flow into us continually from the Spirit of God, never decayed, ever renewed. With Him thou mayest ever be ; He will walk with thee by the way ; He will talk with thee in thy secret heart ; He will be with thee as thy Friend ; by night or by day He will not be separated from thee. He will teach thee through all who teach. Through every dispensation of His Providence He will instruct thee. He will teach thee to pray by His Spirit within thee. In every trouble He will be with thee, nearer than the trouble nearest to thy heart, for He will be within thee. He will kindle thee with love, He will strengthen thy faith ; He will be Himself thy hope.

All which He gives thee now, shall be the more precious, because they will not be without Himself, but will be tokens of His Presence. He will be "all in all" things to thee now, the very good of all good, the joy of all pleasure, the sweetness of all things sweet, the life of thy life. He will be the essence of all good here, that He may be thine All hereafter, when "all" will be again "very good," because all will be full of Him.

## SERMON XXII.

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### THE SACREDNESS OF MARRIAGE.

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EPHESIANS V. 33.

*“ This is a great mystery ; but I speak concerning Christ and the Church.”*

GREAT indeed and holy is the mystery of marriage.<sup>a</sup> Great and poor are all the things of man. Poor are the things of man, as they belong to this earth ; great are they, as they are the shadows of things unseen, the foretaste, in some measure, of things eternal.

Great is the mystery of holy union. God Himself Is, the Holy Blessed Three, and yet is One. His Eternal Being is One, Simple, Indivisible Essence, without parts, without passion. The Three Persons in the Co-Equal Trinity, Father, Son, and Holy Ghost, *are* eternally ; the Son everlastingly Begotten of the Father, and the Holy Ghost proceeding from Both ; yet Father, Son, and Holy Ghost are perfectly

<sup>a</sup> Preached in the Communion Service, after a marriage, as contemplated in the Marriage Service.

One. "They are not three Gods, but One God." And this is the Eternal Bliss of God, that, although Three in Person, They are in perfectness One God, and "God is love."

In some shadow of this oneness God willed eternally to make us, His creatures. Even in Paradise God instituted that two should be one. He made the oneness the closer, in that He took from Adam part of his very self; that as, in the All-holy Trinity, the Son is from the Father co-eternally, that oneness should be shadowed out, as far as it could be, in His creature; and the woman was formed not apart, as other creatures were, not as daughter only, but of the very substance, and strength, and firmness of the man. And man and woman were again to become one. But for the fall, there would have been no passion in love and loving intercourse; no shame, no distress, no pain in child-bearing; but there would have been perfect union of love. For in Paradise too God said, "They twain shall be one flesh." One they were, by origin one of the other; one they should be in their offspring; one they should be, in that they were to live through life for one another alone; one they should be in the oneness of mutual love, and their one will, whereby their souls should be knit together in one; one through the blessing of Almighty God, Who made them what He declared them, no more twain, but one.

After the fall, all was changed. The fire and poison of the forbidden fruit ran through the whole of man. What was innocent and pure then, would be shameless now. There was nothing then to be ashamed of, because they had not then by sin changed

what God had made. Man rebelled against God, and so was no longer master of himself. Shame of himself was the punishment of his pride against God. He lost the glory and fearlessness of his innocence, and veiled his shame, until his nature should again be blessedly restored, and our vile body be conformed to the Glorious Body of Him, Who shall restore us.

Yet even thus God made the penalty of our sin, our sin's remedy. Labour, weariness, and toil, are the discipline of the body, and the rest and health of the mind. Labour according to the will of God, is, all but the contemplation of God Himself, the happiest condition of man. "The desire unto the husband," which corrected woman's wrongful tempting of Adam, and her wrongful power over him in leading him to sin, became the bond of mutual love; protecting, guiding, cherishing, on the husband's part; to the wife, the guardian of humility, unspeakable tenderness, the deepest yearning of love. "Sorrow in conception," which was the penalty of the pleasure of the forbidden fruit, was softened by the hope of the promised Seed Who was to bruise the serpent's head.

Thenceforth, marriage looked on to Him Who was to come. Holy women longed that God would give them children, because the victory over him who had seduced them, was to be given through the seed of the woman. And when He came, a far deeper union succeeded.

Then there began a three-fold union of God with man, of which that union of marriage was the image. First there was the union of God the Word with our flesh, whereby He betrothed indissolubly to Himself our Human Nature, joining it in one Person with

His Godhead, so that God and Man were one Christ. God the Son, Who as God fills all space and all eternity, liveth and shall live for ever as God Man in perfect oneness. This union cemented that further union shadowed in the Canticles, whereby the whole number of the redeemed should be one mystical Body, united through His Spirit and His Sacraments with Him their Head. This union He shadowed forth when He formed Eve from Adam's side. From the Saviour's Precious Side gushed forth, in His Passion, those two Sacraments, water and blood, by which the Church is formed. But since what Christ does for the whole Church, He, through His indivisible love, does for every soul which He makes His, in that same awful hour He, with the bridal pledge and dowry of His outpoured Blood, espoused to Himself each single soul which, by His love, He should draw unto Himself.

Hence, in the Gospel, marriage is a mystery, blessed in itself, when lived in according to the law and will of Christ ; blessed, and holy, and mysterious, in that it is an image of a mystery as much above itself as Heaven is above earth, yea God above man, the union of the Church or the single soul with Christ. " This is a great mystery," says S. Paul, " but I speak concerning Christ and the Church." The oneness of marriage shadows forth that spiritual oneness whereby Christ and the whole company of the redeemed are so one, that He vouchsafes to speak of Himself as not complete without them ; Himself " the Head of the Church," " His Body, the fulness of Him Who filleth all in all."

Blessed, thrice blessed, they whom Christ Alone

sufficeth, the one aim of whose being is to live to Him and for Him. For Him they adorn themselves; His eyes Alone they desire to please through His graces in them; Him they long to serve without distraction; at His Feet they ever sit; to Him they speak in their inmost souls, to Him they hearken: He is their light, their love, their holy joy; to Him they ever approach with trustfulness; Him they consult in all things, on Him they wait; Him they love, even because they love Him; and desire nothing from Him but His love, desire no love but only His. Blessed foretaste of life eternal, to desire nothing on earth but the life of Angels, and the new song; to be wholly His, Whom her soul loveth, and He, the Lord of Angels, to be wholly her's, as He says, "I am my Beloved's, and my Beloved is mine."

Yet blessed too are all who, in whatever outward lot, are with virgin souls espoused unto Christ, in faith entire, and grounded hope, and fervent charity. Blessed, whether married or unmarried, are the pure in heart, who seek to make their souls a bridal chamber for Christ, fitted by His Grace for His In-dwelling by His Spirit.

But since marriage is this high and wondrous image of the union of the soul with Christ, how holily ought it to be compassed, entered upon, lived in!

What is the pattern, and measure, and model of the mutual love of the husband and the wife? What but the love of Christ Himself, and of His redeemed Church for Him, it's Head? "Husbands, love your wives, even as Christ also loved the Church." S. Paul stops short in no created being; He lifts us to Him Who is God and Man, the All-Holy, the All-



Loving. And how then did Christ love the Church? More than Himself, more than His own life. "He gave Himself for her." In what condition did Christ love the Church? For her beauty, her goodness, her holiness, her graces? Nay, ye know well what this our human nature was, before Christ came, how foul, how defiled, how full of all evil and deformity. And to what end did He love her? That He might array her with all beauty, that He might do away with every spot or wrinkle, and make her like a bride adorned for her Husband, holy and without blemish.

*This*, plainly, cannot belong to us. Christ is the pattern to us, not as to power or gifts of grace, but in His Love. "Love your wives," he saith, "as Christ loveth the Church." The love of Christ was with power; we cannot imitate the power, but we can, through His grace, imitate the love. Christ loved in the Church an undying beauty, which He would give her. He loved all souls, not for what they were, but for what He would make them. We love after the pattern of Christ when we love in one another that deathless beauty of the soul which Christ gives; when we love, in despite of defects, which Christ will, by His grace, remove; when we are patient and forbearing with what Christ has not as yet removed, looking and longing for His transforming grace now, yet onward still to that "mighty working whereby He shall subdue all things unto Himself." To love the beauty of the body, save as the soul shines through it, is not to love like Christ. Poor, fading, a shadow only of that which shall never fade, is any beauty of the body. Beautiful above the stars of Heaven, more piercing than their lustre,

and undying, is the beauty of the soul in grace. Look then to that in one another which shall live on and shine on in the Heavenly courts, when all which is of this earth shall be dissolved, yea when what is now of this earth, but from our Maker's Hands, not from our marring of His work, shall be transformed into the glory of Christ.

Live then, day by day, for that Day ; love, day by day, with that Day before you ; love, as ye shall wish that ye had loved in that Day ; love that which shall abide in that searching Day, when wood, hay, stubble shall be burnt up. But love, meanwhile, with a tender, forbearing love, as Christ is tender and compassionate with us, bearing with our decay, and beholding us as what, by His grace, we shall one day be ; cherishing one another, encouraging one another, helping one the other along the narrow road which leadeth unto Him ; denying, each, self for the other, as Christ loved our souls more than Himself, in that He poured out His own soul to death for us. This love shall grow with years, as the love of Christ and the grace of Christ, which is the beauty of the soul, grows and is enlarged in each. This love shall be refined and purified by sickness and the wasting of the body, as the soul shall, through God's chastening, purifying Hand, lay aside its dross, and glow the more with the beauty of the grace of Christ. This love shall not decay, much less die, even after the body's death. For souls which are united in Christ, shall not be separated from Christ ; they shall live on still, one in the one love of Christ. In Heaven there shall be "neither marrying nor giving in marriage," but there shall be love ; love, pure, holy,

happy, like that of the Angels of God in Heaven, who are ever filled with the love of God, ever behold the Face of God, are ever over-streamed with the radiancy of that love, which issues forth from the eternal Fountain of love.

So may the love of this life be the prelude of the love in life eternal. Daily, hourly, while we are in this Church, speaking, or listening, or praying, we are hastening on towards our eternal home. "The fashion of this world passeth away." Love then, with a love which shall not pass away; a love of Christ, from Christ, in Christ, to Christ. Kindle in one another the love of eternity; meditate together on the things of Heaven, the glories of Heaven, the joy, the peace, the purity of Heaven; do what ye do with the thought of Heaven, as "laying up treasure in Heaven;" so while ye live here, ye shall "have" already "eternal life;" so shall love here be perfected there, where is the true substance of what we have in shadows here, the abiding fulness of that transporting, Deifying love, where God shall be All in all, and we shall be like Him Who is love, for we shall, "accepted in Christ Jesus," "see Him as He is." Amen.

**Thanks be to God.**

## NOTES.

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[A.] Extracts from Galen, (a heathen about A. D. 188,) on Self-knowledge. Note on p. 164.

“HE [Antonius] seems sometimes to exhort us to reflect that we too fail like others; sometimes, in what way, any one may discern his own several failings; or, again, how each may recall himself from his failings. And this seems to me the object of the whole discourse. For all the rest are useless and superfluous, unless they be referred to this.

“That it is probable that we do fail, although we ourselves think that we are without failings, may easily be inferred from this. We see that all men think that they themselves are either altogether without failings, or offend against right reason in some few and little things, and that this is chiefly the case with those whom others think to fail very much. But I have had very large experience of this, if of anything, that whoever have permitted others to pronounce upon them, and their character, these I observed mostly fail very little. But those who thought that they were very good, and would not allow others to pass judgment on them, these I observed to offend in very many and the greatest things. Wherefore what I myself, when a boy, thought was extolled without reason—that Pythian saying, Know thyself—as if it was no great precept, this I afterwards found to be rightly praised. For he only who has the highest wisdom, accurately knows himself; all the rest, none accurately; but some more, some less. For as in the whole of life and in all sciences, any man may know the great and outstanding differences of things; but the lesser are discerned by the intelligent and scientific only, so also as to failings and passions. For if any is vehemently angry for some slight cause, bites and ill-treats his servants, it is plain that such an one is passionate. So again if any passes his time amid revelries, and courtesans, and carousals. But it is not equally obvious, that to be moderately disturbed for a great loss of property, or for dishonour, also comes under the class of passions. Or again to eat a cake rather eagerly. And yet to any one who takes

care of his soul, and would reclaim it from all passions, it is plain that these too need correction, and that it is a greater thing to eat them out, although to avoid them is the more difficult, even because they are little. Whoever then wishes to become honest and good, must needs think that he is necessarily ignorant of many of his faults.

“For as Æsop said, we have two sacks hanging from our necks, one before us, of others’ faults; the other behind, of our own. Whence we always see those of others, but can never get a sight of our own. Which account whereas all admit to be true, Plato assigns the reason. For ‘whatever loves,’ he says, ‘is blind towards that which it loves. Therefore if each of us loves himself most of all, each of us must needs be most blind as to himself.’ How then shall he see his own evils? or how shall he understand that he fails? For both Æsop’s fable and Plato’s explanation seem to make the discovery of our failings more hopeless than before, for we can neither help loving ourselves, and that which loves must needs be blind towards what it loves.

“However if this account does not allow you to judge of yourself, it allows that you can judge of another, whom you neither love nor hate. When then you hear, in the city, of one of those who are the objects neither of your love nor your aversion, praised by many as flattering no one, then do you go to him, and make some such trial as this whether he is what he is reported to be.

But if you find him such, speak with him alone, and beg him that if he should observe in you any of the aforesaid passions, he would point it out at once to you, and promise him that you will be very grateful to him, and that you will think that you owe your life to him more than if he had healed your body when sick. And if he promise that he will tell you when he sees any of these faults in you, and then for many days, although living with you, say nothing, chide him, and entreat him yet more gently than before that he would forthwith shew you whatever of these passions he sees in you. But if he tells you that he has not said anything because he saw nothing of the kind about you in the interval, do not believe this readily, nor think that you are all of a sudden become faultless. But think one of the two, either that your friend, through indolence, did not attend to you, or that out of deference he suppressed the blame; or else that he did not like to be hated, because he knew that all

men (so to speak) are wont to hate those that tell them the truth. Or, if for none of these grounds, know that he had no wish to do you good, and was therefore silent, or for some other reason which we do not approve. For it is almost impossible that you should not have failed at all. Trust me as to this now, and you will praise me hereafter ; seeing that all men daily fail in ten thousand ways and act with pssion, but do not trace it in themselves. So then do not you think that you are anything better than a man. But you *do* think that you are something better than a man, if you persuade yourself that you have done all things well, I say not, in a single month but in a single day. . . .

“ For since those who their whole life through, have practised themselves in acquiring freedom from passion, do not believe that they have perfectly attained it, much more you who never practised it. Do not then believe one who has said that he has seen nothing done by you with passion, but think that he so speaks either because he wishes not to help you, or because he has not chosen to observe what you do amiss, or as being anxious not to be hated by you. Perhaps also he has known you, at some time, to be vexed with some one who found fault with your failings and passions, so that he has ground to be silent, not believing that you are speaking the truth when you wish to know all your failings. But if you change in silence the first of those things which you do amiss, you will find soon afterwards many who will faithfully correct you, and much more if, thanking those who blame you, you rid yourself of that which is blamed in you. And thereupon consider whether he blamed you truly or falsely ; so shall you derive great benefit. And if you do this perseveringly, determined in good earnest to become a good and noble man, you will become such. . . .

“ Each of us needs this practise almost throughout life, in order to become a perfect man. And yet a person must not give up making himself better, even if, being fifty years old, he perceives that his soul is deformed, yet not incurably or irreparably. For neither if any one, fifty years old, were sick in body, would he give himself over to his disease ; but he would try all means to get better, although he could not get the good condition of Hercules. So neither then let us give over making our souls better, although we cannot attain the condition of the wise man. But this too we may more readily hope to obtain, if we take care of

our souls from childhood ; but if not, let us be at pains that we be not altogether deformed in soul, as Thersites was in body. For had it been in our power, before we were born, to fall in with him who had the care of our birth, we should have asked that we should have some most noble body ; and if he denied it, we should any how have begged him for the second, at least, or third, or fourth degree of good condition. We should have been pleased, even if we had not the strength of Hercules, to have that of Achilles, or, if not even this, of Ajax, or Diomede, or Agamemnon, or Patroclus ; or if none of these, some of the good old heroes. So then, if a person cannot obtain the highest degree of good condition of soul, he should be glad of the second, or third, or fourth from the highest summit. But this is not impossible to one who willet to labour thereat, and for a long time steadily to practise it. . . .

“ Although you should not become much better, you may be satisfied to advance some little towards what is better after the first year. For if you persevere resisting the passions, and softening the anger, you will advance more notably in the second year. And if you continue to take heed to yourself, still more in the third, and after that in the fourth and fifth year, you will perceive a greater advance towards a graver life. For it is disgraceful that a man should labour for many years successively, in order to be a physician, or grammarian, or rhetorician, or geometrician, and not choose to toil for a length of time, in order to be a good man.

“ To me it seems far best to check those passions for a long time ; when you get up in the morning to consider all you have to do in detail. ‘ Is it best to live as a slave to passion, or to use right reason in all things ? ’ Secondly, whoever would become good and noble, must entreat some person to point out to him each several thing in which he fails. Then in every day and hour, to have this ever in mind, that it is best for him to become good and noble ; and that this is impossible without having some one who shall point out our failings. Such an one we ought to count our saviour, and greatest friend, who points out to us our several offences. And if he seems at any time to blame you untruly, you must not seem annoyed. First of all, because it is possible that he may see better than you the things in which you fail, as you too in him. Then, although he should censure you untruly, yet thereby he has roused you to examine more ac-

curately what you do, but chiefly herein ever keep before you the fixed purpose to reverence yourself.

“What I have hitherto said of anger, account to be said of other passions also. First of all, we must commit the judgment of them to another, not to ourselves. Then we should not entrust this to any chance person, but to elders who are acknowledged to be good and noble, who also were expositors of these things before us, and who are from their age unimpassioned. Then we must not appear to be angry with such, if they tell us any of our faults, but be grateful. Then daily recall yourself, it is best, oftentimes, but at least every morning before you begin to act, and in the evening, before you go to rest. This advice, which is circulated as that of Pythagoras, I have been wont to read at first twice in the day, and afterwards to speak orally. For it is not enough to keep free from anger only, but also from gluttony, and excess of wine, and idle curiosity, and envy.” . . . “If you know how thus to reverence yourself, see whether you lived more temperately yesterday, or to-day. For if you do this, you will perceive that it is daily easier to abstain from those things, and you shall feel great joy in your soul, if you indeed love sobriety. For what a person loves, therein he rejoices to make progress. . . . Bear in memory what has been well said, such as, ‘Choose the best life, custom will make it sweet.’ . . . What I have said on each occasion, I say now too. In one way to know oneself, is the most difficult of all things; in another, it is very easy. For if one wishes to know oneself inwardly, it is very difficult not so to know oneself outwardly.” *De cognosc. curandisque animi morbis*, Opp. Græc. T. i. p. 352—356, ed. Basil, 1538. The text, where imperfect, has been in some places supplied from the Latin translation, Ven. 1562. Vol. 3. extra ord. class. libb. f. 14 v.—17 v.

[B.] *Enchirid.*, c. 118. (*Shorter Treatises*, p. 155, Oxf. Tr.) de quæst. 83. qu. 66. and more fully in *Expos. Propos. ex Epist. ad Rom.* p. 904. ed Ben. Note on p. 331.

“So then we may distinguish these four states of man; before the Law; under the Law; under grace; in peace. Before the Law we follow the concupiscence of the flesh; under the Law, we are drawn by it; under grace, we neither follow it, nor are drawn



by it : in peace, there is no desire of the flesh. Therefore before the Law we do not fight, because we not only have concupiscence and sin, but we also approve the sins. Under the Law we fight, but are conquered ; for we confess the things which we do to be evil, and confessing them to be evil, we are unwilling to do them, but because as yet grace is not, we are conquered.

In this stage it is shown us how we lie prostrate, and while we will to rise and yet fall, we are the more sorely afflicted. Hence it is here said, 'The Law entered in, that sin might abound.' Hence also what has just been laid down, 'for through the Law is the knowledge of sin.' For it is not the taking away of sin, because sin is taken away through grace alone. The Law then is good, because it forbids what is to be forbidden, and commands what is to be commanded. But when any one thinks that he can fulfil it through his own strength, not through the grace of his Deliverer, that presumption profiteth him nothing ; yea, rather it only hurteth him, so that he is hurried along with a more vehement desire of sin, and in sin is found also a transgressor. For where there is no law, there is no transgression. When then he who so lieth prostrate, knoweth himself that by himself he cannot rise, let him implore the help of the Deliverer. Grace then cometh, which remitteth past sin, helpeth us struggling, and bestoweth the love of righteousness, and removeth fear. After this grace, although, while we are in this life, certain desires of the flesh war against our spirit, to lead it into sin, yet the spirit, consenting not to them, because it is established in the grace and love of God, ceases to sin. For we sin, not in the mere evil desire, but in our own consent. This is the meaning of what the same Apostle says, 'Let not sin then reign in your mortal bodies, that ye should obey the lusts thereof.' For hence he shows that there are desires, which by obeying not, we suffer not sin to reign in us. But because those desires spring from that mortal flesh which we inherit from the first sin of the first man, whence we are born carnally ; these desires will not cease, until through the restoration we shall attain to that change of the body, which is promised us, when peace will be perfect, when we shall be fixed in the fourth stage. But peace will be therefore perfect, because nothing will resist us, not resisting God."



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