Philippians

Saint John Chrysostom

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HOMILY 1

PHILIPPIANS 1:1, 2

"Paul and Timothy, servants of Christ Jesus, to all the saints in Christ Jesus which are at Philippi, fellow-Bishops and Deacons: Grace to you, and peace, from God our Father, and the Lord Jesus Christ."

HERE, as writing to those of equal honor, he does not set down his rank of Teacher, but another, and that a great one. And what is that? He calls himself a "servant," and not an Apostle. For great truly is this rank too, and the sum of all good things, to be a servant of Christ, and not merely to be called so. "The servant of Christ," this is truly a free man in respect to sin, and being a genuine servant, he is not a servant to any other, since he would not be Christ's servant, but by halves. And in again writing to the Romans also, he says, "Paul, a servant of Jesus Christ." (Romans 1:1.) But writing to the Corinthians and to Timothy he calls himself an "Apostle." On what account then is this? Not because they were superior to Timothy. Far from it. But rather he honors them, and shows them attention, beyond all others to whom he wrote. For he also bears witness to great virtue in them, For besides, there indeed he was about to order many things, and therefore assumed his rank as an Apostle. But here he gives them no injunctions but such as they could perceive of themselves.

"To the saints in Christ Jesus which are at Philippi." Since it was likely that the Jews too would call themselves "saints" from the first oracle, when they were called a "holy people, a people for God's own possession " (Exodus 19:6; Deuteronomy 7:6, etc.); for this reason he added, "to the saints in Christ Jesus." For these alone are holy, and those hence-forward profane. "To the fellow-Bishops and Deacons." What is this? were there several Bishops of one city? Certainly not; but he called the Presbyters so. For then they still interchanged the titles, and the Bishop was called a Deacon. For this cause in writing to Timothy, he said, "Fulfill thy ministry," when he was a Bishop. For that he was a Bishop appears by his saying to him, "Lay hands hastily on no man." (1 Timothy 5:22.) And again, "Which was given thee with the laying on of the hands of the

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Presbytery." (1 Timothy 4:14.) Yet Presbyters would not have laid hands on a Bishop. And again, in writing to Titus, he says, "For this cause I left thee in Crete, that thou shouldest appoint elders in every city, as I gave thee charge. If any man is blameless, the husband of one wife" (Titus 1:5, 6); which he says of the Bishop. And after saying this, he adds immediately, "For the Bishop must be blameless, as God's steward, not self willed:" (Titus 1:7.) So then, as I said, both the Presbyters were of old called Bishops and Deacons of Christ, and the Bishops Presbyters; and hence even now many Bishops write, "To my fellow-Presbyter," and, "To my fellow-Deacon." But otherwise the specific name is distinctly appropriated to each, the Bishop and the Presbyter. "To the fellow-Bishops," he says, "and Deacons,

Verse 2. *"Grace to you and peace from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ."*

How is it that though he nowhere else writes to the Clergy, not in Rome, nor in Corinth, nor in Ephesus, nor anywhere, but in general, to "all the saints, the believers, the beloved," yet here he writes to the Clergy? Because it was they that sent, and bare fruit, and it was they that dispatched Epaphroditus to him.

Verse 3. *"'I thank my God," he says, "upon all my remembrance of you."*

He said in another of his writings, "Obey them that have the rule over you, and submit to them: for they watch in behalf of your souls, as they that shall give account; that they may do this with joy, and not with grief." (Hebrews 13:17.) If then the "grief" be due to the wickedness of the disciples, the doing it" with joy" would be due to their advancement. As often as I remember you, I glorify God. But this he does from his being conscious of many good things in them. I both glorify, he says, and pray. I do not, because ye have advanced unto virtue, cease praying for you. But "I thank my God," he says, "upon all my remembrance of you,"

Verse 4. *"Always in every prayer of mine for you all making request also with joy."*

"Always," not only while I am praying. "With joy." For it is possible to do this with grief too, as when he says elsewhere, "For out of much

affliction and anguish of heart I wrote unto you with many tears." (2 Corinthians 2:4.)

Verse 5. *"For your fellowship in furtherance of the Gospel from the first day even until now."*

Great is that he here witnesseth of them, and very great, and what one might have witnessed of Apostles and Evangelists. Ye did not, because ye were entrusted with one city, he saith, care for that only, but ye leave nothing undone to be sharers of my labors, being everywhere at hand and working with me, and taking part in my preaching. It is not once, or the second, or third time, but always, from the time ye believed until now, ye have assumed the readiness of Apostles. Behold how those indeed that were in Rome turned away from him; for hear him saying, "This thou knowest, that all that are in Asia turned away from me." (2 Timothy 1:15.) And again, "Demas forsook me": and " at my first defense no one took my part." (2 Timothy 4:10, 16.) But these, although absent, shared in his tribulations, both sending men to him, and ministering to him according to their ability, and leaving out nothing at all. And this ye do not now only, saith he, but always, in ever), way assisting me. So then it is a "fellowship in furtherance of the Gospel." For when one preacheth, and thou waitest on the preacher, thou sharest his crowns. Since even in the contests that are without, the crown is not only for him that striveth, but for the trainer, and the attendant, and all that help to prepare the athlete. For they that strengthen him, and recover him, may fairly participate in his victory. And in wars too, not only he that wins the prize of valor, but all they too that attend him, may fairly claim a share in the trophies, and partake of the glory, as having shared in his conflict by their attendance on him. For it availeth not a little to wait on saints, but very much. For it makes us sharers in the rewards that are laid up for them. Thus; suppose some one hath given up great possessions for God, continually devotes himself to God, practices great virtue, and even to words, and even to thoughts, and even in everything observes extreme strictness. It is open to thee too, even without showing such strictness, to have a share in the rewards that are laid up for him for these things. How? If thou aid him both in word and deed. If thou encourage him both by supplying his needs, and by doing him every possible service. For then the smoother of that rugged path will be thyself. So then if ye admire those in the deserts that have adopted the

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angelic life, those in the churches that practice the same virtues with them; if ye admire, and are grieved that ye are far behind them; ye may, in another way, share with them, by waiting on them, and aiding them. For indeed this too is of Godlovingkindness, to bring those that are less zealous, and are not able to undertake the hard and rugged and strict life, to bring, I say, even those, by another way, into the same rank with the others. And this Paul means by "fellowship." They give a share to us, he means, in carnal things, and we give a share to them in spiritual things. For if God for little and worthless things granteth the kingdom, His servants too, for little and material things, give a share in spiritual things: or rather it is He that giveth both the one and the other by means of them. Thou canst not fast, nor be alone, nor lie on the ground, nor watch all night? Yet mayest thou gain the reward of all these things, if thou go about the matter another way, by attending on him that laboreth in them, and refreshing and anointing him constantly, and lightening the pains of these works. He, for his part, stands fighting and taking blows. Do thou wait on him when he returns from the combat, receive him in thy arms, wipe off the sweat, and refresh him; comfort, soothe, restore his wearied soul. If we will but minister to the saints with such readiness, we shall be partakers of their rewards. This Christ also tells us. "Make to yourselves friends by means of the mammon of unrighteousness, that they may receive you into their eternal tabernacles." (Luke 16:9.) Seest thou that they are become sharers? "From the first day," he says, "even until now." And "I rejoice" not only for what is past, but also for the future; for from the past I guess that too.

Verse 6. *"Being confident of this very thing, that He which began a good work in you will perfect it until the day of Jesus Christ."*

See how he also teaches them to be unassuming. For since he had witnessed a great thing of them, that they may not feel as men are apt to do, he presently teaches them to refer both the past and the future to Christ. How? By saying, not, "Being confident that as ye began ye will also finish," but what? "He which began a good work in you will perfect it." He did not rob them of the achievement, (for he said, "I rejoice for your fellowship," clearly as if making it their act,) nor did he call their good deeds solely their own, but primarily of God. "For I am confident," saith he, "that He which began a good work in you will perfect it until the day of Jesus Christ." That is, God will. And it is not about yourselves, he

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implies, but about those descending from you that I feel thus. And indeed it is no small praise, that God should work in one. For if He is "no respecter of persons," as indeed He is none, but is looking to our purpose when He aids us in good deeds, it is evident that we are agents in drawing Him to us; so that even in this view he did not rob them of their praise. Since if His in working were indiscriminate, there would have been nothing to hinder but that even Heathens and all men might have Him working in them, that is, if He moved us like logs and stones, and required not our part. So that in saying "God will perfect it," this also again is made their praise, who have drawn to them the grace of God, so that He aids them in going beyond human nature. And in another way also a praise, as that "such are your good deeds that they cannot be of man, but require the divine impulse." But if God will perfect, then neither shall there be much labor, but it is right to be of good courage, for that they shall easily accomplish all, as being assisted by Him.

Verse 7. *"Even as it is right for me to be thus minded on behalf of you all, because I have you in my heart, inasmuch as both in my bonds, and in the defense and confirmation of the Gospel, ye all are partakers with me of grace."*

Greatly still does he show here his longing desire, in that he had them in his heart; and in the very prison, and though bound, he remembered the Philippians. And it is not a little to the praise of these men, since it is not of prejudice that this Saint conceived his love, but of judgment, and right reasons. So that to be loved of Paul so earnestly is a proof of one's being something great and admirable. "And in the defense," he says, "and confirmation of the Gospel." And what wonder if he had them when in prison, since not even at the moment of going before the tribunal to make my defense, he says, did ye slip from my memory. For so imperial a thing is spiritual love, that it gives way to no season, but ever keeps hold of the soul of him who loves, and allows no trouble or pain to overcome that soul. For as in the case of the Babylonian furnace, when so vast a flame was raised, it was a dew to those blessed Children. So too does friendship occupying the soul of one who loves, and who pleases God, shake off every flame, and produce a marvelous dew.

"And in the confirmation of the Gospel," he says. So then his bonds were a confirmation of the Gospel, and a defense. And most truly so. How? For if he had shunned bonds, he might have been thought a deceiver; but he that endures every thing, both bonds and affliction, shows that he suffers this for no human reason, but for God, who rewards. For no one would have been willing to die, or to incur such great risks, no one would have chosen to come into collision with such a king, I mean Nero, unless he looked to another far greater King. Truly a "confirmation of the Gospel" were his bonds. See how he more than succeeded in turning all things to their opposite. For what they supposed to be a weakness and a detraction, that he calls a confirmation; and had this not taken place, there had been a weakness. Then he shows that his love was not of prejudice, but of judgment. Why? I have you (in my heart), he says, in my bonds, and in my defense, because of your being "partakers of my grace." What is this? Was this the "grace" of the Apostle, to be bound, to be driven about, to suffer ten thousand evils? Yes. For He says, "My grace is sufficient for thee, for my power is made perfect in weakness." (2 Corinthians 12:9.) "Wherefore," saith he, "I take pleasure in weaknesses, in injuries." Since then I see you in your actions giving proof of your virtue, and being partakers of this grace, and that with readiness, I reasonably suppose thus much. For I that have had trial of you, and more than any have known you, and your good deeds; how that even when so distant from us, ye strive not to be wanting to as in our troubles, but to partake in our trials for the Gospel's sake, and to take no less share than myself, who am engaged in the combat, far off as ye are; am doing but justice in witnessing to these things.

And why did he not say "partakers," but "partakers with me"? I myself too, he means, share with another, that I may be a partaker of the Gospel; that is, that I may share in the good things laid up for the Gospel. And the wonder indeed is. that they were all so minded; for he says that "ye all are fellow-partakers of grace." From these beginnings, then, I am confident that such ye will be even to the end. For it cannot be that so bright a commencement should be quenched, and fail, but it points to great results.

Since then it is possible also in other ways to partake of grace, and of trials, and of tribulations, let us also, I beseech you, be partakers. How many of those who stand here, yea, rather all, would fain share with Paul

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in the good things to come! It is in your power if ye are willing, on behalf of those who have succeeded to his ministry, when they suffer any hardship for Christ's sake, to take their part and succor them. Hast thou seen thy brother in trial? Hold out a hand! Hast thou seen thy teacher in conflict? Stand by him! But, says one, there is no one like Paul! now for disdain! now for criticism! So there is no one like Paul? Well, I grant it. But, "He that receiveth," saith He, "a prophet in the name of a prophet, shall receive a prophet's reward." (Matthew 10:41.) For was it for this that these were honored, that they cooperated with *Paul*? Not for this, but because they cooperated with one who had undertaken the preaching. Paul was honorable for this, that he suffered these things for Christ's sake.

There is indeed no one like Paul. No. not even but a little approaching to that blessed one. But the preaching is the same as it was then.

And not only in his bonds did they have fellowship with him, but also from the beginning. For hear him saying, "And ye yourselves also know, ye Philippians, that in the beginning of the Gospel, no Church had fellowship with me in the matter of giving and receiving, but ye only." (Philippians 4:15.) And even apart from trials, the teacher has much labor, watching, toiling in the word, teaching, complaints, accusations, imputations, envyings. Is this a little matter, to bear ten thousand tongues, when one might have but one's own anxieties? Alas! what shall I do? for I am in a strait between two things. I long to urge you on and encourage you to the alliance and succor of the saints of God; but I fear lest some one should suspect another thing, that I say this not for your sakes, but for theirs. But know that it is not for their sakes I say these things, but for your own. And if ye are willing to attend, I convince you by my very words; the gain is not equal to you and to them. For ye, if ye give, will give those things from which, willing or unwilling, ye must soon after part, and give place to others; but what thou receivest is great and far more abundant. Or, are ye not so disposed, that in giving ye will receive? For if ye are not so disposed, I do not even wish you to give. So far am I from making a speech for them! Except one have first I so disposed himself, as receiving rather than giving, as gaining ten thousand fold, as benefited rather than a benefactor, let him not give. If as one granting a favor to the receiver, let him not give. For this is not so much my care, that the saints may be supported. For even if thou give not, another will give. So that

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what I want is this, that you may have a relief from your own sins. But he that gives not so will have no relief. For it is not giving that is doing alms, but the doing it with readiness; the rejoicing, the feeling grateful to him that receives. For, “not grudgingly,” saith he, “or of necessity; for God loveth a cheerful giver.” (2 Corinthians 9:7.) Except then one so give, let him not give: for that is loss, not alms. If then ye know that ye will gain, not they, know that your gain becomes greater. For as for them the body is fed, but your soul is approved; for them, not one of their sins is forgiven when they receive, but for you, the more part of your offenses is removed. Let us then share with them in their great prizes. When men adopt kings they do not think they give more than they receive: Adopt thou Christ, and thou shalt have great security. Wilt thou also share with Paul? Why do I say Paul when it is Christ that receiveth?

But that ye may know that all is for your sakes that I say and do, and not of care for the comfort of others, if there is any of the rulers of the church that lives in abundance and wants nothing, though he be a saint, give not, but prefer to him one that is in want, though he be not so admirable. And wherefore? Because Christ too so willeth, as when He saith, “If thou make a supper or a dinner, call not thy friends, neither thy kinsmen, but the maimed, the lame, the blind, that cannot recompense thee.” (Luke 14:12.) For it is not indiscriminately that one should pay such attentions, but to the hungry, but to the thirsty, but to those who need clothing, but to strangers, but to those who from riches have been reduced to poverty. For He said not simply, “I was fed,” but ‘I was an hungered,” for, “Ye saw me an hungered,” He says,” and fed me.” (Matthew 25:35.) Twofold is the claim, both that he is a saint and that he is hungry. For if he that is simply hungry ought to be fed, much more when he is a saint too that is hungry. If then he is a saint, but not in need, give not; for this were no gain. For neither did Christ enjoin it; or rather, neither is he a saint that is in abundance and receiveth. Seest thou that it is not for filthy lucre that these things have been said to you, but for your profit? Feed the hungry, that thou mayest not feed the fire of hell. He, eating of what is thine, sanctifies also what remains. (Luke 11:41.) Think how the widow maintained Elias; and she did not more feed than she was fed: she did not more give than receive. This now also takes place in a much greater thing. For it is not a “barrel of meal,” nor “a cruse of oil” (1 Kings 17:14), but what? “An

hundred fold, and eternal life" (Matthew 19:21, 29), is the recompense for such — the mercy of God thou becomest; the spiritual food; a pure leaven. She was a widow, famine was pressing, and none of these things hindered her. Children too she had, and not even so was she withheld. (1 Kings 17:12.) This woman is become equal to her that cast in the two mites. She said not to herself, "What shall I receive from this man? He stands in need of me. If he had any power he had not hungered, he had broken the drought, he had not been subject to like sufferings. Perchance he too offends God." None of these things did she think of. Seest thou how great a good it is to do well with simplicity, and not to be over curious about the person benefited? If she had chosen to be curious she would have doubted; she would not have believed. So, too, Abraham, if he had chosen to be curious, would not have received angels. For it cannot, indeed it cannot be, that one who is exceeding nice in these matters, should ever meet with them. No, such an one usually lights on impostors; and how that is, I will tell you. The pious man is not desirous to appear pious, and does not clothe himself in show, and is likely to be rejected. But the impostor, as he makes a business of it, puts on a deal of piety that is hard to see through. So that while he who does good, even to those who seem not pious, will fall in with those who are so, he who seeks out those who are thought to be pious, will often fall in with those who are not so. Wherefore, I beseech you, let us do all things in simplicity. For let us even suppose that he is an impostor that comes; you are not bidden to be curious about this. For, "Give," saith he, "to every one that asketh thee" (Luke 6:30); and, "Forbear not to redeem him that is to be slain." (Proverbs 24:11.) Yet most of those that are slain suffer this for some evil they are convicted of; still he saith, "Forbear not." For in this shall we be like God, thus shall we be admired, and shall obtain those immortal blessings, which may we all be thought worthy of, through the grace and lovingkindness of Jesus Christ our Lord, with whom, to the Father, together with the Holy Spirit, be glory, power, honor, now and forever, and world without end. Amen.

HOMILY 2

PHILIPPIANS 1:8-11

"For God is my witness, how I long after you all in the tender mercies of Jesus Christ. And this I pray, that your love may abound yet more and more in knowledge and all discernment; that ye may approve the things that are excellent; that ye may be sincere and void of offense unto the day of Christ; being filled with the fruits of righteousness, which are through Jesus Christ, unto the glory and praise of God."

HE calls not God to witness as though he should be doubted, but does this from his great affection, and his exceeding persuasion and confidence; for after saying that they had fellowship with him, he adds this also, "in the tender mercies of Christ," lest they should think that his longing for them was for this cause, and not simply for their own sake. And what mean these words, "in the tender mercies of Christ "? They stand for "according to Christ." Because ye are believers, because ye love Christ, because of the love that is according to Christ. He does not say "love," but uses a still warmer expression, "the tender mercies of Christ," as though he had said, "having become as a father to you through the relationship which is in Christ." For this imparts to us bowels warm and glowing. For He gives such bowels to His true servants. "In these bowels," saith He, as though one should say, "I love you with no natural bowels, but with warmer ones, namely, those of Christ." "How I long after you all." I long after all, since ye are all of this nature; I am unable in words to represent to you my longing; it is therefore impossible to tell. For this cause I leave it to God, whose range is in the heart, to know this. Now had he been flattering them, he would not have called God to witness, for this cannot be done without peril.

Verse 9. *"And this," saith he, "I pray, that your love may abound yet more and more."*

For this is a good of which there is no satiety; for see, being so loved he wished to be loved still more, for he who loves the object of his love, is willing to stay at no point of love, for it is impossible there should be a

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measure of so noble a thing. Paul desires that the debt of love should always be owing; “Owe no man any thing, save to love one another.” (Romans 13:8.) The measure of love is, to stop nowhere; “that your love,” says he, “may abound yet more and more.” Consider the character of the expression, “that it may abound yet more and more,” he says, “in knowledge and all discernment.” He does not extol friendship merely, nor love merely, but such as comes of knowledge; that is, Ye should not apply the same love to all. for this comes not of love, but from want of feeling. What means he by “in knowledge”? He means, with judgment, with reason, with discrimination. There are who love without reason, simply and any how, whence it comes that such friendships are weak. He says, “in knowledge and all discernment, that ye may approve the things that are excellent,” that is, the things that are profitable. This I say not for my own sake, says he, but for yours, for there is danger lest any one be spoiled by the love of the heretics; for all this he hints at, and see how he brings it in. Not for my own sake, says he, do I say this, but that ye may be sincere, that is, that ye receive no spurious doctrine under the pretense of love. How then, says he, “If it be possible, live peaceably with all men”? “Live peaceably” (Romans 12:18), he says, not, Love so as to be harmed by that friendship; for he says, “if thy right eye causeth thee to stumble, pluck it out, and cast it from thee; that ye may be sincere” (Matthew 5:29), that is, before God, “and without offense,” that is, before men, for many men’s friendships are often a hurt to them. Even though it hurts thee not, says he, still another may stumble thereat. “Unto the day of Christ”; i.e. that ye may then be found pure, having caused no one to stumble.

Verse 11. *“Being filled with the fruits of righteousness which are through Jesus Christ unto the glory and praise of God;” i.e. holding, together with true doctrine, an upright life.*

And not merely upright, but “filled with the fruits of righteousness.” For there is indeed a righteousness not according to Christ, as, for example, a moral life. “Which are through Jesus Christ to the glory and praise of God.” Seest thou that I speak not of mine own: glory, but the righteousness of God; and oftentimes he calls mercy itself too righteousness; let not your love, he says, indirectly injure you, by hindering your perception of things profitable, and take heed lest you fall through your love to any one. For I would indeed that your love should be

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increased, but not so that ye should be injured by it. And I would not that it should be simply of prejudice, but upon proof whether I speak well or no. He says not, that ye may take up my opinion, but that ye may "prove" it. He does not say outright, join not yourself to this or that man, but, I would that your love should have respect to what is profitable, not that ye should be void of understanding. For it is a foolish thing if ye work not righteousness for Christ's sake and through Him. Mark the words, "through Him." Does he then use God as a mere assistant? Away with the thought. Not that I may receive praise, says he, but that God may be glorified.

Verse 12, 13. *"Now I would have you know, brethren, that the things which happened unto me have fallen out rather unto the progress of the Gospel, so that my bonds became manifest in Christ throughout the whole praetorian guard, and to all the rest."*

It was likely they would grieve when they heard he was in bonds, and imagine that the preaching was at a stand. What then? He straightway destroys this suspicion. And this also shows his affection, that he declares the things which had happened to him, because they were anxious. What say you? you are in bonds! you are hindered! how then does the Gospel advance? He answers, "so that my bonds in Christ became manifest in all the praetorium." This thing not only did not silence the rest, nor affright them, but contrariwise rather encouraged them. If then they who were near the dangers were not only nothing hurt, but even received greater confidence, much more should you. Had he when in bonds taken it hardly, and held his peace, it were probable that they would be affected in like sort. But as he spoke more boldly when in bonds, he gave them more confidence than if he had not been bound. And how have his bonds "turned to the progress of the Gospel "? So God in His dispensation ordered, he means, that my bonds were not hid, my bonds which were "in" Christ, which were "for" Christ.

"In the whole praetorium." For up to that time they so called the palace. And in the whole city, says he.

Verse 14. *"And that most of the brethren in the Lord, being confident through my bonds, are more abundantly bold to speak the word without fear."*

This shows that they were of good courage even before, and spoke with boldness, but much more now. If others then, says he, are of good courage through my bonds, much more am I if I am the cause of confidence to others, much more to myself. “And most of the brethren in the Lord.” As it was a great thing to say, My bonds gave confidence to them, he therefore adds beforehand, “in the Lord.” Do you see how, even when he sees himself constrained to speak great things, he departs not from moderation? “Are more abundantly bold,” he says, “to speak the word without fear”; the words” more abundantly” show that they had already begun.

Verse 15. *“Some indeed preach Christ even of envy and strife, and some also of good will.”*

And what this means is worth enquiry. Since Paul was under restraint, many of the unbelievers, willing to stir up more vehemently the persecution from the Emperor, themselves also preached Christ, in order that the Emperor’s wrath might be increased at the spread of the Gospel, and all his anger might fall on the head of Paul. From my bonds then two lines of action have sprung. One party took great courage thereat; the other, from hope to work my destruction, set themselves to preach Christ; “some of them through envy,” that is, envying my reputation and constancy, and from desire of my destruction, and the spirit of strife, work with me; or that they themselves may be esteemed, and from the expectation that they will draw to themselves somewhat of my glory. “And some also of good will,” that is, without hypocrisy, with all earnestness.

Verse 16. *“The one proclaim Christ of faction not sincerely.”*

That is, not with pure motives, nor from regard to the matter itself; but why? “thinking to add affliction to my bonds.” As they think that I shall thus fill into greater peril, they add affliction to affliction. O cruelty! O devilish instigation! They saw him in bonds, and cast into prison, and still they envied him. They would increase his calamities, and render him subject to greater anger: well said he, “thinking,” for it did not so turn out. They thought indeed to grieve me by this; but I rejoiced that the Gospel was furthered.

Verse 17. *"But the other of love, knowing that I am set for the defense of the Gospel."*

What means, "that I am set for the defense of the Gospel"? It is, They are preparing for the account which I must give to God, and assisting me.

What is meant by "for the defense"? I have been appointed to preach, I must give account, and answer for the work to which I have been appointed; they assist me, that my defense may be easy; for if there be found many who have been instructed and have believed, my defense will be easy. So it is possible to do a good work, from a motive which is not good. And not only is there no reward in store for such an action, but punishment. For as they preached Christ from a desire to involve the preacher of Christ in greater perils, not only shall they receive no reward, but shall be subject to vengeance and punishment. "And some of love." That is, they know that I must give account for the Gospel.

Verse 18. *"What then? only that every way, whether in pretense, or in truth, Christ is proclaimed."*

But see the wisdom of the Man. He did not vehemently accuse them, but mentioned the result; what difference does it make to me, says he, whether it be done in this or that way? only that every way, "whether in pretense or in truth, Christ is proclaimed." He did not say, "Let him be proclaimed," as some suppose, stating that he opens the way for the heresies, but, "He is proclaimed." For in the first place he did not lay down the law and say, as if laying down the law, "Let Him be proclaimed," but he reported what was taking place; secondly, if he even spoke as laying down the law, not even thus would he be opening the way for the heresies.

For let us examine the matter. For even if he gave permission to preach as they preached, not even thus was he opening the way for the heresies. How so? In that they preached healthfully; though the aim and purpose on which they acted was corrupted, still the preaching itself was not changed, and they were forced so to preach. And why? Because, had they preached otherwise than as Paul preached, had they taught otherwise than as he taught, they would not have increased the wrath of the Emperor. But now by furthering his preaching, by teaching in the same way, and making

disciples as he did, they had power to exasperate the Emperor, when he saw the multitude of the disciples numerous. But then some wicked and senseless man, taking hold of this passage, says, Verily they would have done the contrary, they would have driven off those who had already believed, instead of making believers to abound, had they wished to annoy him. What shall we answer? That they looked to this thing only, how they might involve him in present danger, and leave him no escape; and thus they thought to grieve him, and to quench the Gospel, rather than in the other way.

By that other course they would have extinguished the wrath of the Emperor, they would have let him go at large and preach again; but by this course they thought that because of him all would be ruined, could they but destroy him. The many however could not have this intention, but certain bitter men alone.

Then "and therein," says he, "I rejoice, yea, and will rejoice." What means, "yea, I will rejoice "? Even if this be done still more, he means. For they cooperate with me even against their will; and will receive punishment for their toil, whilst I, who contributed nothing thereto, shall receive reward. Is there anything beyond this villainy of the Devil, to contrive the punishment of the preaching, and vengeance for the toils? Seest thou with how many evils he pierces through his own. How else would a hater and an enemy of their salvation have arranged all this? Seest thou how he who wages war against the truth has no power, but rather wounds himself, as one who kicks against the goads?

Verse 19. *"For I know," says he, "that this shall turn to my salvation through your supplication, and the supply of the Spirit of Jesus Christ."*

Nothing is more villainous than the Devil. So does he everywhere involve his own in unprofitable toils, and rends them. Not only does he not suffer them to obtain the prizes, but he even subjects them to punishment.

For not only does he command them the preaching of the Gospel, but likewise fasting and virginity, in such sort as will not only deprive them of their reward, but will bring down heavy evil on those who pursue that course. Concerning whom he says elsewhere, also, "Branded in their own conscience as with a hot iron." (1 Timothy 4:2.)

Wherefore, I beseech you, let us give thanks to God for all things, since he hath both lightened our toil, and increased our reward. For such as among them live in virginity enjoy not the rewards, which they do who among us live chastely in wedlock; but they who live as virgins among the heretics are subject to the condemnation of the fornicators. All this springs from their not acting with a right aim, but as accusing God's creatures, and His unspeakable Wisdom.

Let us not then be sluggish. God hath placed before us contests within measure, having no toil. Yet let us not despise them for this. For if the heretics put themselves to the stretch in unprofitable toils, what excuse shall we have if we will not endure those which are less, and which have a greater reward? For which of Christ's ordinances is burdensome? which is grievous? Art thou unable to live a virgin life? Thou art permitted to marry. Art thou unable to strip thyself of all thou hast? Thou art permitted to supply the needs of others from what thou hast. Let "your abundance be a supply for their want." (2 Corinthians 8:14.) These things indeed appear burdensome. What things? I mean to despise money, and to overcome the desires of the body. But His other commands require no cost, no violence. For tell me, what violence is there in speaking no ill, in simply abstaining from slander? What violence is there in envying not another man's goods? What violence in not being led away by vain-glory? To be tortured, and endure it, is the part of strength. The exercise of philosophy is the part of strength. To bear poverty through life is the part of strength. It is the part of strength to wrestle with hunger and thirst. Where none of these things are, but where you may enjoy your own, as becomes a Christian, without envying others, what violence is there?

From this source springs envy; nay, rather all evils spring from no other source than this, that we cleave to things present. For did you hold money and the glory of this world to be nought, you would not cast an evil eye on its possessors. But since you gape at these things, and idolize them, and are flattered by them, for this reason envy troubles you, and vain-glory; it all springs from idolizing the things of the present life. Art thou envious because another man is rich? Nay, such an one is an object for pity and for tears. But you laugh and answer straight, I am the object for tears, not helThou also art an object for tears, not because thou art poor, but because thou thinkest thyself wretched. For we weep for those who have nothing

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the matter, and are discontented, not because they have anything the matter, but because, without having, they think they have. For example: if any one, cured of a fever, still is restless and rolls about, lying in health on his bed, is he not more to be wept for than those in fever, not that he has a fever, for he has none, but because having no sickness he still thinks he has? And thou art an object for tears just because thou thinkest thyself wretched, not for thy poverty. For thy poverty thou art to be thought happy.

Why enviest thou the rich man? Is it because he has subjected himself to many cares? to a harder slavery? because he is bound like a dog, with ten thousand chains — namely, his riches? Evening overtakes him, night overtakes him, but the season of rest is to him a time of trouble of anguish, of pain, of anxiety. There is a noise he straightway jumps up. Has his neighbor been plundered? He who has lost nothing cares more for it than the loser. For that man has lost once, but having endured the pain he lays aside his care; but the other has it always with him. Night comes on, the haven of our ills, the solace of our woes, the medicine of our wounds. For they who are weighed down by excess of grief, often give no ear to their friends, to their relations, to their intimates, — ofttimes not even to a father when he would give comfort, but take their very words amiss; but when sleep bids them rest, none has the power to look him in the face. For worse than any burning does the bitterness of grief afflict our souls. And as the body, when parched and worn down by struggling against the violence of the sunbeams, is brought to a caravansary with many fountains, and the soothing of a gentle breeze, so does night hand over our soul to sleep. Yea, rather, I should say, not night nor sleep does this, but God, who knoweth our toil-worn race, has wrought this, while we have no compassion on ourselves, but, as though at enmity with ourselves, have devised a tyranny more powerful than natural want of rest — the sleeplessness which comes of wealth. For it is said, “The anxieties of wealth drive away sleep.” (Ecclus. 31:1.) See how great is the care of God. But He hath not committed rest to our will, nor our need of sleep to choice, but hath bound it up in the necessities of nature, that good may be done to us even against our wills. For to sleep is of nature. But we, as mighty haters of ourselves, like enemies and persecutors of others, have devised a tyranny greater than this necessity of nature that, namely, which

comes of money. Has day dawned? Then such an one is in dread of the informers. Hath night overtaken him? He trembles at robbers. Is death at hand? The thought that he must leave his goods to others preys upon him worse than death. Hath he a son? His desires are increased; and then he fancies himself poor. Has he none? His pains are greater. Deemest thou him blessed who is unable to receive pleasure from any quarter? Can you envy him thus tempest-tossed, while you yourself are placed in the quiet haven of poverty? Of a truth this is the imperfection of human nature; that it bears not its good nobly, but casts insults on its very prosperity.

And all this on earth; but when we depart thither, listen what the rich man, who was Lord of innumerable goods, as you say (since for my part I call not these things good, but indifferent), listen to what this Lord of innumerable goods says, and of what he stands in need: “Father Abraham,” he exclaims, “send Lazarus, that with the tip of his finger he may drop water on my tongue, for I am scorched in this flame.” For even if that rich man had endured none of the things I have mentioned, if he had passed his whole life without dread and care — why say I his whole life? rather that one moment (for it is a moment, our whole life is but one moment, compared with that eternity which has no end) — if all things had turned out according to his desire; must he not be pitied for these words, yea, rather, for this state of things? Was not your table once deluged with wine? Now you are not master even of a drop of water, and that, too, in your greatest need. Did not you neglect that poor man full of sores? But now you ask a sight of him, and no one gives leave. He lay at your gate; but now in Abraham’s bosom. You then lay under your lofty ceiling; but now in the fire of hell.

These things let the rich men hear. Yea, rather not the rich, but the pitiless. For not in that he was rich was he punished, but because he showed no pity; for it is possible that a man who is at the same time rich and pitiful, should meet with every good. And for this cause the rich man’s eyes were fixed on no one else, but on him alone, who then begged his alms; that he might learn from memory of his former actions, that his punishment was just. Were there not ten thousand poor men who were righteous? But he, who then lay at his gate, alone is seen by him, to instruct him and us, how great a good it is to put no trust in riches. His poverty hindered not the one in obtaining the kingdom; his riches helped not the other to avoid hell.

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Where is the point at which a man is poor? where is the point at which he is reduced to beggary? He is not, he is not poor, who has nought, but he who desires many things! He is not rich who has large possessions, but he who stands in need of nothing. For what profit is there to possess the whole world, and yet live in greater despondency than he who has nothing? Their dispositions make men rich and poor, not the abundance or the want of money. Would you, who are a poor man, become rich? You may have your will, and no one can hinder you. Despise the world's wealth, think it nought, as it is nought. Cast out the desire of wealth, and you are straightway rich. He is rich who does not desire to become rich he who is unwilling to be poor, is the poor man. As he is the diseased man, who even in health bemoans his case, and not the man who bears his disease more lightly than perfect health, so also he is poor who cannot endure poverty, but in the midst of wealth thinks himself poorer than the poor; not he who bears his poverty more lightly than they their riches, for he is a richer man.

For tell me, wherefore learest thou poverty? wherefore tremblest thou? is it not by reason of hunger? is it not for thirst? is it not for cold? Is it not indeed for these things? There is not, there is not any one who is ever destitute in these things! "For look at the generations of old, and see, did ever any one trust in the Lord, and was forsaken? or did any one hope in Him, and was made ashamed?" (Ecclesiastes 2:11.)

And again, "Behold the birds of the heaven, that they sow not, neither do they reap, nor gather into barns; and your heavenly Father feedeth them." (Matthew 6:26.) No one can readily point us out any one who has perished by hunger and cold. Wherefore then dost thou tremble at poverty? Thou canst not say. For if thou hast necessaries enough, wherefore dost thou tremble at it? Because thou hast not a multitude of servants? This truly is to be quit of masters; this is continual happiness, this is freedom from care. Is it because your vessels, your couches, your furniture are not formed of silver? And what greater enjoyment than thine has he who possesses these things? None at all. The use is the same, whether they are of this or that material. Is it because thou art not an object of fear to the many? May you never become so! For what pleasure is it that any should stand in dread and fear of thee? Is it because thou art afraid of others? But thou canst not be alarmed. For "wouldest thou have

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no fear of the power? do that which is good, and thou shalt have praise from the same." (Romans 13:3.) Does any say, It is because we are subject to contempt, and apt to suffer ill? It is not poverty but wickedness which causes this; for many poor men have quietly passed through life, whilst rulers, and the rich, and powerful, have ended their days more wretchedly than all evil doers, than bandits, than grave-robbers. For what poverty brings in thy case, that doth wealth in theirs. For that which they who would ill-treat thee do through thy contemptible estate, they do to him from envy and the evil eye they cast upon him, and the latter still more than the former, for this is the stronger craving to ill-treat another. He who envies does everything with all his might and main, while the despiser ofttimes has even pity on the despised; and his very poverty, and utter want of power, has often been the cause of his deliverance.

And sometimes by saying to him, "A great deed it will be if you make away with such an one! If you slay one poor man, what vast advantage will you reap?" we may lulls soften down his anger. But envy sets itself against the rich, and ceases not until it has wrought its will, and has poured forth its venom. See you, neither poverty nor wealth is good in itself, but our own disposition. Let us bring it to a good tone, let us discipline it in true wisdom. If this be well affected, riches cannot cast us out of the kingdom, poverty will not make us come short. But we shall meekly bear our poverty, and receive no loss in respect to the enjoyment of future goods, nor even here on earth. But we shall both enjoy what is good on earth, and obtain the good things in heaven, which may we all obtain, through the grace and lovingkindness, etc.

HOMILY 3

PHILIPPIANS 1:18-20

"And therein I rejoice, yea, and will rejoice. For I know that this shall turn to my salvation through your supplication, and the supply of the Spirit of Jesus Christ, according to my earnest expectation and hope, that in nothing shall I be put to shame, but that with all boldness, as always, so now also Christ shall be magnified in my body, whether by life, or by death."

NONE of the grievous things which are in this present life can fix their fangs upon that lofty soul, which is truly philosophic, neither enmity, nor accusations, nor slanders, nor dangers, nor plots. It flies for refuge as it were to a mighty fortress, securely defended there against all that attack it from this lower earth. Such was the soul of Paul; it had taken possession of a place higher than any fortress, the seat of spiritual wisdom, that is, true philosophy. For that of those without, i.e. the heathen, is mere words, and childish toys. But it is not of these we now speak, but at present concerning the things of Paul. That blessed one had both the Emperor for his enemy, and in addition, many other foes many ways afflicting him, even with bitter slander. And what says he? Not only do I not grieve nor sink beneath these things, but "I even rejoice, yea, and will rejoice," not for a season, but always will I rejoice for these things. "For I know that this shall turn out to my salvation," that which is to come, when even their enmity and jealousy towards me further the Gospel. "Through your supplication," he adds, "and the supply of the Spirit of Jesus Christ according to my earnest expectation and hope.' Behold the humble-mindedness of this blessed one; he was striving in the contest, he was now close to his crown, he had done ten thousand exploits, for he was Paul, and what can one add to this? still he writes to the Philippians, I may be saved "through your supplication," I who have gained salvation through countless achievements. "And the supply," saith he, "of the Spirit of Jesus Christ." It is as though he said, if I am thought worthy of your prayers, I shall also be thought worthy of more grace. For the meaning of "supply" is this, if the Spirit be supplied to me, be given to me more abundantly. Or he is speaking of deliverance, "unto salvation"; that is, I

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shall also escape the present as I did the former danger. Of this same matter he says, “At my first defense no one took my part, but all forsook me; may it not be laid to their account. But the Lord stood by me, and strengthened me.” (2 Timothy 4:16.) This then he now predicts: “Through your supplication and the supply of the Spirit of Jesus Christ, according to my earnest expectation and hope,” for thus do I hope. For that he may persuade us not to leave the whole matter to the prayers made for us, and contribute nothing ourselves, behold how he lays down his own part, which is Hope, the source of all good, as the Prophet says. “Let thy mercy, O Lord, be upon us, according as we have hoped in Thee.” (Psalm 33:22.) And as it is written in another place, “Look to the generations of old and see, did any one hope in the Lord, and was made ashamed?” (Ecclus. 2:10.) And again, this same blessed one says, “Hope putteth not to shame.” (Romans 5:5.) This is Paul’s hope, the hoping that I shall nowhere be put to shame.

“According to my earnest expectation and hope,” says he, “that in nothing shall I be put to shame.” Do you see how great a thing it is to hope in God? Whatever happens, he says, I shall not be put to shame, i.e. they will not obtain the master}, over me, “but with all boldness, as always, so now also, Christ shall be magnified in my body.” They forsooth expected to catch Paul in this snare, and to quench the preaching of the Gospel, as though their craftiness were of any power. This then, he says, shall not be so, I shall not now die, but “as always, so now also, Christ shall be magnified in my body.” How so? Ofttimes have I fallen into dangers, when all men gave us up, and what is more, when I myself did. For “we had the answer of death within ourselves” (2 Corinthians 1:9), but from all the Lord delivered me, so now too he shall be magnified in my body. What then? Lest any one should suppose and say, If you die, will He not then be magnified? Yes, he answers, I know He will; for this cause I did not say that my life alone shall magnify him, but my death too. At present he means “by life “; they will not destroy me; even did they so, Christ will even thus be magnified. How so? Through life, because He delivered me, but through my death, because even death itself could not persuade me to deny Him, since He gave me such readiness, and made me stronger than death. On the one hand because He freed me from peril; on the other, because He suffered me not to fear the tyranny of death: thus shall he be

magnified through life and death. And this he says, not as though he were about to die, but lest on his death they should be affected as men are apt to be.

But that you may know these his words did not point to immediate death, the thought that pained them most, see how be relieves it by almost saying, These things I say, not as one about to die; wherefore he soon after adds, “And having this confidence I know that I shall abide, yea and abide with you all.” “In nothing,” says he,” shall I be put to shame; that is, death brings no shame to me, but rather great gain. Why so? Because I am not immortal, but I shall shine more brightly than if I were so, for it is not the same thing for one immortal, and for one who is mortal, to despise death; so that not even instant death is shame to me, yet shall I not die; “in nothing shall I be put to shame,” neither in life nor death. For I will bear either nobly, whether life or death. Well says he! This is the part of a Christian soul! but he adds, “with all boldness.” Seest thou how entirely I am freed from shame? For if the fear of death had cut short my boldness, death would have been worthy of shame, but if death at its approach cast no terror on me, no shame is here; but whether it be through life I shall not be put to shame, for I still preach the Preaching, or whether it be through death I shall not be put to shame; fear does not hold me back, since I still exhibit the same boldness. Do not, when I mention my bonds, think shame of the matter; so manifold good hath it caused to me, that it hath even given confidence to others. For that we should be bound for Christ, is no shame, but for fear of bonds to betray aught that is Christ’s, this is shame. When there is no such thing, bonds are even a cause of boldness. But since I have ofttimes escaped dangers, and have this to boast of to the unbelievers, do not straightway think I am put to shame, if now it should turn out otherwise. The one event no less than the other gives you boldness. Note how he brings this forward in his own person, which he does in many places, as in the Epistle to the Romans; “For I am not ashamed of the Gospel.” (Romans 1:16.) And again in that to the Corinthians; “And these things I have in a figure transferred to myself and Apollos.” (1 Corinthians 4:6.) — “Whether by life or by death”: this he says not as in ignorance, (for he knew that he was not then to die, but some time after); yet even now does he prepare their soul.

Verse 21. *“For to me,” he says, “to live is Christ, and to die is gain.”*

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For even in dying, he means, I shall not have died, for I have my life in myself: then would they truly have slain me, had they had power through this fear to cast faith out of my soul. But as long as Christ is with me, even though death overtake me, still I live, and in this present life, not this, but Christ is my life. Since, then, not even in the present life is it so, "but that life which I now live in the flesh I live in faith;" so I say in that state also, "I live, yet not I, but Christ liveth in me." (Galatians 2:20.) Such ought a Christian to be! I live not, he says, the common life. How livest thou then, O blessed Paul? Dost thou not see the sun, dost thou not breathe the common air? art thou not nourished with the same food as others? dost thou not tread the earth as we? needest thou not sleep, nor clothing, nor shoes? what meanest thou by, "I live not"? how dost thou not live? Why boastest thou thyself? No boasting is here. For if indeed the fact did not witness to him, a man might with some show have called it boasting; but if facts do witness, how is boasting here? Let us then learn how he lives not, for he himself says in another place, "I have been crucified to the world, and the world to me. " (Galatians 6:14.) Hear then how he says, "I no longer live." And how he says, "to me to live is Christ." The word "life" is much significant, beloved, as also the word "death." There is this life of the body, there is the life of sin, as he himself elsewhere says, "But if we died to sin, how shall we any longer live therein?" (Romans 6:2.) It is then possible to live the life of sin. Attend diligently, I entreat you, lest my labor be vain. There is the life everlasting and immortal; with eternal life the heavenly; "for our citizenship" says he "is in heaven" (Philippians in 20.) There is the life of the body whereof he speaks, "through him we live and move and have our being." (Acts 17:28.) He does not then deny that he lives the natural life, but that of sin, which all men live. He who desires not the present life, how does he live it? He who is hastening to another, how does he live this life? He who despiseth death, how does he live this life? He who desires nothing, how does he live it? For as one made of adamant, though he were struck a thousand blows, would never attend to it, no more would Paul. And "I live," says he, "but no longer I," that is, no longer the old man; as again elsewhere, "Wretched man that I am, who shall deliver me out of the body of this death!" (Romans 7:24.) How too does he live who does though(for the sake of food, nought for the sake of clothing, nought for any of these present things? Such an one does not even live the natural life: he who takes thought for none of the things

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which sustain life, lives not. We live this life, whose every action regards it. But he lived not; he busied himself about nought of the things here. How then lived he? Just as we are accustomed to say, in common matters, such an one is not with me, when he does nothing that pertains to me. Again, in like sort, such a man lives not for me. Elsewhere he shows that he rejects not the natural life: “The life which I now live in the flesh, I live in the faith of the Son of God, who loved me, and gave himself for me” (Galatians 2:20); i.e. a certain new life I live, an altered one. And truly all these things he said to comfort the Philippians. Think not, says he, that I shall be deprived of this life, for neither whilst alive did I live this life, but that which Christ willed. For tell me? He who despises money, luxury, hunger, thirst, dangers, health, safety, does he live this life? He who has nothing here, and is ofttimes willing to cast life away, if need be, and clings not to it, does he live this life? By no means. This I must make dear to you by a kind of example. Let us imagine some one in great wealth, with many servants, and much gold, and who makes no use of all these things; is such an one rich for all his wealth? By no means. Let him see his children dissipating his property, strolling idly about; let him feel no concern for them; when beaten let him not even be pained; shall we call him a man of wealth? By no means; although his wealth is his own. “To me,” he says, “to live is Christ;” if you will enquire of my life, it is He. “And to die is gain.” Wherefore? Because I shall more clearly be present with Him; so that my death is rather a coming to life; they who kill me will work on me no dreadful thing, they will only send me onward to my proper life, and free me from that which is not mine. What then, while thou wert here, wert thou not Christ’s? Yes, and in a high degree.

Verse 22. *“But if to live in the flesh, — if this is the fruit of my work, then what I shall choose I wot not.”*

Lest any should say, If what you say is life, wherefore hath Christ left you here? “It is,” he says, “the fruit of my work;” so that it is possible to use to good purpose the present life, while not living it. Lest you should think that reproach is cast upon life. For if we gain no advantage here, wherefore do we not make away with ourselves, nor slay ourselves? By no means, he answers. It is open to us to profit even here, if we live not this, but another life. But perchance one will say, does this bear thee fruit? Yes! he answers. Where are now the heretics? Behold now; “to live in the

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flesh," this is "the fruit of his work." "That which I now live in the flesh, I live in faith;" therefore it is "the fruit of my work."

"And what I shall choose I know not." Marvelous! How great was his philosophy! How hath he both cast out the desire of the present life, and yet thrown no reproach upon it! For in that he saith, "to die is gain," by this he hath cast out the desire, but in that he saith, "to live in the flesh is the fruit of my work," here he shows that the present life also is needful, if we use it as need is, if we bear fruit; since if it be unfruitful, it is no longer life. For we despise those trees which bear no fruit, as though they were dry, and give them up to the fire. Life itself belongs to that middle class of indifferent things, whilst to live well or ill is in ourselves. We do not then hate life, for we may live well too. So even if we use it ill, we do not even then cast the blame on it. And wherefore? Because not itself, but the free choice of those who use it ill is to blame. For God hath made thee live, that thou mayest live to Him. But thou, by living through corruption unto sin, makest thyself accountable for all blame. What sayest thou, tell me. Thou knowest not what to choose? Here hath he revealed a great mystery, in that his departure was in his own power; for where choice is, there have we power. "What I shall choose," says he, "I know not." Is it in thine own power? Yes, he answers, if I would ask this grace of God.

Verse 23. *"I am in a strait betwixt the two, having the desire."*

See the affection of this blessed one; in this way too he comforts them, when they see that he is master of his own choice, and that this is done not by man's sin, but by the dispensation of God. Why mourn ye, says he, at my death? It had been far better to have passed away long since. "For to depart," he says, "and to be with Christ, is very far better."

Verse 24. *"Yet to abide in the flesh is more needful for your sake."*

These words were to prepare them for his death when it came, that they might bear it nobly: this was to teach true wisdom. "It is good for me to depart and be with Christ," for even death is a thing indifferent; since death itself is no ill, but to be punished after death is an ill. Nor is death a good, but it is good after our departure "to be with Christ." What follows death is either good or ill.

Let us then not simply grieve for the dead, nor joy for the living simply. But how? Let us grieve for sinners, not only when dying, but also while living. Let us joy for the just, not only while living, but also when dead. For those though living are dead, while these although dead, yet live: those even while here are to be pitied of all, because they are at enmity with God; the other even when they have departed Thither, are blessed, because they are gone to Christ. Sinners, wherever they are, are far from the King. Therefore they are subjects for tears; while the just, be they here, or be they there, are with the King; and there, in a higher and nearer degree, not through an entrance, or by faith, but "face to face." (1 Corinthians 13:12.)

Let us then not make wailings for the dead simply, but for those who have died in sins. They deserve wailing; they deserve beating of the breast and tears. For tell me what hope is there, when our sins accompany us Thither, where there is no putting off sins? As long as they were here, perchance there was great expectation that they would change, that they would become better; but when they are gone to Hades, where nought can be gained from repentance (for it is written, "In Shed who shall give thee thanks?") (Psalm 6:5), are they not worthy of our lamentation? Let us wail for those who depart hence in such sort; let us wail, I hinder you not; yet in no unseemly way, not in tearing our hair, or baring our arms, or lacerating our face, or wearing black apparel, but only in soul, shedding in quiet the bitter tear. For we may weep bitterly without all that display. And not as in sport only. For the laments which many make differ not from sport. Those public mournings do not proceed from sympathy, but from display, from emulation and vainglory. Many women do this as of their craft. Weep bitterly; moan at home, when no one sees you; this is the part of true sympathy; by this you profit yourself too. For he who laments another in such sort, will be much the more earnest never to fall into the same sins. Sin henceforth will be an object of dread to thee. Weep for the unbelievers; weep for those who differ in nowise from them, those who depart hence without the illumination, without the seal! they indeed deserve our wailing, they deserve our groans; they are outside the Palace, with the culprits, with the condemned: for, "Verily I say unto you, Except a man be born of water and the Spirit, he shall not enter into the kingdom of Heaven." Mourn for those who have died in wealth, and did not from their wealth think of any solace for their soul, who had power to wash

away their sins and would not. Let us all weep for these in private and in public, but with propriety, with gravity, not so as to make exhibitions of ourselves; let us weep for these, not one day, or two, but all our life. Such tears spring not from senseless passion, but from true affection. The other sort are of senseless passion. For this cause they are quickly quenched, whereas if they spring from the fear of God, they always abide with us. Let us weep for these; let us assist them according to our power; let us think of some assistance for them, small though it be, yet still let us assist them. How and in what way? By praying and entreating others to make prayers for them, by continually giving to the poor on their behalf. This deed hath some consolation; for hear the words of God Himself, when He says, "I will defend this city for Mine own sake, and for My servant David's sake." (2 Kings 20:6.) If the remembrance only of a just man had so great power when deeds are done for one, how great power will it not have? Not in vain did the Apostles order that remembrance should be made of the dead in the dreadful Mysteries. They know that great gain resulteth to them, great benefit; for when the whole people stands with uplifted hands, a priestly assembly, and that awful Sacrifice lies displayed, how shall we not prevail with God by our entreaties for them? And this we do for those who have departed in faith, whilst the catechumens are not thought worthy even of this consolation, but are deprived of all means of help save one. And what is this? We may give to the poor on their behalf. This deed in a certain way refreshes them. For God wills that we should be mutually assisted; else why hath He ordered us to pray for peace and the good estate of the world? why on behalf of all men? since in this number are included robbers, violaters of tombs, thieves, men laden with untold crimes; and yet we pray on behalf of all; perchance they may turn. As then we pray for those living, who differ not from the dead, so too we may pray for them. Job offered sacrifice for his children, and freed them from their sins. "It may be," said he, "that they have renounced God in their hearts." (Job 1:5.) Thus does one provide for one's children! He said not, as many do nowadays, I will leave them property; he said not, I will procure them honor; he said not, I will purchase an office; he said not, I will buy them land; but, "it may be that they have renounced God in their hearts." For what profit is there in those things? None at all, in those that remain here. I will make the King of all things favorable to them, and then they will no more want any thing. "The Lord," saith one, "is my

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Shepherd, I shall not want." (Psalm 23:4.) This is great wealth, this is treasure. If we have the fear of God, we want nothing; if we have not this, though we have royalty itself, we are the poorest of all men. Nothing is like the man that feareth the Lord. For "the fear of the Lord," it is said, "surpasseth all things." (Ecclus. 25:11.) This let us procure; let us do all things for its sake. If need be that we lay down our lives, if our body must be mangled, let us not spare them; let us do all, to obtain this fear. For thus shall we abound above all men; and shall obtain those good things to come in Christ Jesus our Lord, to whom, etc.

HOMILY 4

PHILIPPIANS 1:22-26

"Then what I shall choose I wot not. But I am in a strait betwixt the two, having the desire to depart and be with Christ; which is very far better: yet to abide in the flesh is more needful for your sake. And having this confidence, I know that I shall abide, yea and abide with you all, for your progress and joy in the faith; that your glorying may abound in Jesus Christ in me, through my presence with you again."

NOTHING can be more blessed than the spirit of Paul, for the reason that nothing is more noble. We all shudder at death, I am wont to say, some by reason of our many sins, of whom I too am one, others from love of life, and cowardice, of whom may I never be one; for they who are subject to this fear are mere animals. This then, which we all shudder at, he prayed for, and hasted toward Him; saying, "To depart is very far better." What sayest thou? when thou art about to change from earth to heaven, and to be with Christ, dost thou not know what to choose? Nay, far is this from the spirit of Paul; for if such an offer were made to any one on sure grounds, would he not straightway seize it? Yes, for as it is not ours "to depart and be with Christ," neither, if we were able to attain to this, were it ours to remain here. Both are of Paul, and of his spirit. He was confidently persuaded. What? Art thou about to be with Christ? and dost thou say, "What I shall choose I wot not "? and not this only, but dost thou choose that which is here, "to abide in the flesh "? What in the world? didst thou not live an exceeding bitter life, in "watchings," in shipwrecks, in "hunger and thirst," and "nakedness," in cares and anxiety? "with the weak" thou wert "weak," and for those who "were made to stumble" thou dost "burn." (2 Corinthians 11:23, 29.) "In much patience, in afflictions, in necessities, in distresses, in stripes, in imprisonments, in tumults, in fastings, in pureness." (2 Corinthians 6:5, 6.) "Five times" didst thou "receive forty stripes save one," "thrice" wast thou "beaten with rods, once" wast thou "stoned" "a night and a day" thou hast "been in the deep, in perils of waters, in perils of robbers, in perils in the city, in perils in the wilderness, in perils among false brethren." (2 Corinthians 11:24-26.) Didst thou not, when the whole nation of the Galatians

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returned to the observance of the law, didst thou not cry aloud, and say, “Whosoever of you would be justified by the law, ye are fallen away from grace”? (Galatians 5:4.) How great was then thy grief, and still dost thou desire this perishing life? Had none of these things befallen thee, but had thy success, wherever success attended thee, been without fear, and full of delight, yet shouldest not thou hasten to some harbor, from fear of the uncertain future? For tell me, what trader, whose vessel is full of untold wealth, when he may run into port, and be at rest, would prefer to be still at sea? what wrestler, when he might be crowned, would prefer to contend? what boxer, when he might put on his crown, would choose to enter afresh into the contest, and offer his head to wounds? what general is there, who when he might be quit of war with good report, and trophies, and might with the king refresh himself in the palace, would choose still to toil, and to stand in battle array? How then dost thou, who livest a life so exceeding bitter, wish to remain still here? Didst thou not say, I am in dread, “lest by any means, after that I have preached to others, I myself should be rejected?” (1 Corinthians 9:27.) If for no other cause, yet surely for this, thou oughtest to desire thy release; were the present full of innumerable goods, yet for the sake of Christ thy Desire.

Oh that spirit of Paul! nothing was ever like it, nor ever will be! Thou fearest the future, thou art compassed by innumerable dreadful things, and wilt thou not be with Christ? No, he answers, and this for Christ’s sake, that I may render more loving unto Him those whom I have made his servants, that I may make the plot which I have planted bear much fruit. (1 Corinthians 3:9). Didst thou not hear me, when I declared that I sought not “that which profited myself” (1 Corinthians 10:33), but my neighbor? Heardest thou not these words, “I could wish that I myself were anathema from Christ” (Romans 9:3), that many might come unto Him? I, who chose that part, shall I not much rather choose this, shall I not with pleasure harm myself by this delay and postponement, that they may be saved?

“Who shall utter Thy mighty acts, O Lord” (Psalm 106:2), because Thou sufferedst not Paul to be hidden, because Thou madest manifest to the world such a man? All the Angels of God praised Thee with one accord, when Thou madest the stars (Job 38:7), and so too surely when Thou madest the sun, but not so much as when Thou didst manifest Paul to the whole world. By this, the earth was made more brilliant than the heaven,

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for he is brighter than the solar light, he hath shot forth more brilliant rays, he hath shed abroad more joyous beams. What fruit hath this man born for us! not by making fat our corn, not by nurturing our pomegranates, but by producing and perfecting the fruit of holiness, and when falling to pieces, continually recovering them. For the sun itself can nothing profit fruits that are once decayed, but Paul has called out of their sins those who had manifold decays. And it gives place to the night, but he had mastery over the Devil. Nothing ever subdued him, nothing mastered him. The sun, when it mounts the heavens, darts down its rays, but he, as he rose from beneath, filled not the mid space of heaven and earth with light, but as soon as he opened his mouth, filled the Angels with exceeding joy. For if "there is joy in heaven over one sinner that repenteth" (Luke 15:7), while he at his first address caught multitudes, does he not fill with, joy the Powers above? What say I? It sufficeth that Paul should only be named, and the heavens leap for joy. For if when the Israelites "went forth out of Egypt, the mountains skipped like rams" (Psalm 114:4), how great, thinkest thou, was the joy, when men ascended from earth to heaven!

Verse 24. *For this cause "to abide in the flesh is more needful for your sake."*

And what excuse is left to us? ofttimes it happens that a man who possesses a little and poor city, chooses not to depart to another place, preferring his own rest. Paul might depart to Christ, and would not, (Christ whom he so desired, as for his sake to choose even hell,) but still remained in the contest on behalf of man. What excuse shall we have? May we then even make mention of Paul? Look to his deeds. He showed that to depart was better, persuading himself not to grieve: he showed them, that if he remained, he remained for their sake, that it proceeded not from wickedness of those who plotted against him. He subjoined also the reason, that he might secure their belief. For if this is necessary, that is, I shall by all means remain, and I will not "remain" simply, but "will remain with you." For this is the meaning of the word, "and I shall abide with," i.e. I shall see you. For what cause? "For your progress and joy in the faith." Here too he rouses them, to take heed unto themselves. If, says he, for your sakes I abide, see that ye shame not my abiding. "For your progress," I have chosen to remain, when I was about to see Christ. I have chosen to remain, because my presence advances both your faith and your

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joy. What then? Did he remain for the sake of the Philippians only? He stayed not for their sake only; but this he says, that he may show regard to them. And how were they to "progress" in "the faith "? That you may be more strengthened, like young fowl, who need their mother until their feathers are set. This is a proof of his great love. In like sort, we also rouse some of you, when we say, for your sake have I remained, that I may make you good.

Verse 26. *"That your glorying may abound in Christ Jesus in me, through my presence with you again."*

You see that this explains the word "abide with you." Behold his humility. Having said, "for your progress," he shows that it was for his own profit too. This also he does, when he writes to the Romans, and says, "That is, that we may be comforted together in you." (Romans 1:11, 12.) Having previously said, "That I may impart unto you some spiritual gift." And what means, "That your glorying may abound"? This glorying was, their establishment in the faith. For an upright life is glorying in Christ. And sayest thou, "Your glorying in me, through my presence with you again"? Yes, he answers; "For what is our hope, or crown of glorying? Are not even ye?" (1 Thessalonians 2:19.) Because "you are our glorying, even as we also are yours" (2 Corinthians 1:14), i.e. that I may be able to rejoice in you greatly. How sayest thou, "That your glorying may abound "? I may glory the more when you make progress.

"Through my presence with you again." What then! Did he come to them? Search ye whether he came.

Verse 27. *"Only let your manner of life be worthy of the Gospel of Christ."*

Do you see, how all that he has said, tends to turn them to this one thing, advancement in virtue? "Only let your manner of life be worthy of the Gospel of Christ." What means this word" only," but that this, and nought else, is the only thing we should seek? If we have this, nothing grievous will befall us. "That whether I come and see you, or be absent, I may hear of your state." This he says not as if he had changed his purpose, and no longer meant to visit them. But if this come to pass, he says, even though absent, I am able to rejoice. "If," that is, "I hear that ye stand fast in one spirit, with one soul." This is what above all things unites believers, and

maintains love unbroken, “that they may be one.” (John 17:11.) For a “kingdom divided against itself shall not stand.” (Mark 3:24.) For this cause he everywhere counsels his disciples much to be of one mind. And Christ says, “By this shall all men know that ye are My disciples, if ye love one another.” (John 13:35.) That is, do not look with expectation toward me, and therefore slumber, as waiting for my coming, and then, when ye see me not coming faint. For even from report I can receive pleasure likewise.

What means, “In one spirit “? By the same gift of grace, viz. that of concord, and zeal; for the Spirit is one, and he shows it; for then are we able to stand in “one soul,” also, when we all have “one Spirit.” See how the word “one” is used for concord. See how their souls being many are called one. Thus was it of old. “For they were all,” it is written, “of one heart and of one soul. Striving together for the faith of the Gospel.” (Acts 4:32.) Does he say, striving together for each other, as though the faith did strive? For did they wrestle against each other? But help each other, he says, in your striving for the faith of the Gospel.

Verse 28. *“And in nothing affrighted by the adversaries; which is for them an evident token of perdition, but to you of salvation.”*

Well said he, “affrighted,” this is what befalls us from our enemies, they only frighten. “In nothing” therefore, he says, whatever happens, whether dangers — whether plots. For this is the part of those who stand upright; the enemy can do nought but frighten only. Since it was likely that they should be greatly troubled, when Paul suffered such numberless ills, he says, I exhort you not only not to be shaken, but not to be affrighted, yea rather to despise them heartily; for if ye are thus affected, ye will straightway, by this means, make evident at once their destruction, and your salvation. For when they see, that with their innumerable plots they are unable to frighten you, they will take it as a proof of their own destruction. For when the persecutors prevail not over the persecuted, the plotters over the objects of their plots, the powerful over those subject to their power, will it not be self-evident, that their perdition is at hand, that their power is nought, that their part is false, that their part is weak? “And this,” he says, “comes from God.”

Verse 29. *"For unto you it is given in the behalf of Christ, not only to believe on Him, but also to suffer in his behalf."*

Again does he teach them moderation of spirit by referring all to God, and saying that sufferings in behalf of Christ are of grace, the gift of grace, a free gift. Be not then ashamed of the gift of grace, for it is more wonderful than the power of raising the dead, or working miracles; for there I am a debtor, but here I have Christ for my debtor. Wherefore ought we not only not to be ashamed, but even to rejoice, in that we have this girl. Virtues he calls gifts, yet not in like sort as other things, for those are entirely of God, but in these we have a share. But since even here the greatest part is of God, he ascribes it entirely to Him, not to overturn our free will, but to make us humble and rightly disposed.

Verse 30. *"Having the same conflict which ye saw in me";*

i.e. ye have also an example. Here again he raises them up, by showing them that everywhere their conflicts were the same with his, their struggles were the same with his, both severally, and in that they united with him in bearing trials. He said not, ye have heard, but "ye saw," for he strove too at Philippi. Truly this is an exceeding virtue. Wherefore writing to the Galatians, also he said, "Did ye suffer so many things in vain, if it be indeed in vain." (Galatians 3:4.) And again, writing to the Hebrews, he said, "But call to remembrance the former days, in which, after ye were enlightened, ye endured a great conflict of suffering; partly, being made a gazing-stock both by reproaches and afflictions." (Hebrews 10:32, 33.) And writing again to Macedonians, that is, to the Thessalonians, he said, "For they themselves report concerning us, what manner of entering in we had unto you." (1 Thessalonians 1:9.) And again, "For yourselves, brethren, know our entering in unto you, that it hath not been found vain." (1 Thessalonians 2:1.) And in like sort does he witness the same things of them all, labors and strivings. But such things ye will not now find among us; now it is much if one suffer a little in goods alone. And in respect of their goods also he witnesses great things of them. For to some he says, "For ye took joyfully the spoiling of your possessions" (Hebrews 10:34); and to others, "For it hath been the good pleasure of Macedonia and Achaia to make a certain contribution for the poor" (Romans 15:26); and "your zeal hath stirred up very many of them." (2 Corinthians 9:2.)

Seest thou the praises of the men of that time? But we endure not so much as buffetings or blows, neither insult nor loss of our possessions: they were straightway zealous, and all of them strove as martyrs, whilst we hive grown cold in love toward Christ. Again I am constrained to accuse things present; and what shall I do? It is against my will, yet am I constrained. Were I able by my silence of things which are done, by holding my peace, and not mentioning aught, to remove them, it would behoove me to be silent. But if the contrary comes to pass; if not only are these things not removed by our silence but even become worse, we are forced to speak. For he who rebukes sinners, if he does nought else, suffers them not to go farther. For there is no such shameless and rash soul, as not to turn, and remit the extravagance of its evil deeds, on hearing any one continually rebuking it. There is, there is indeed, even in the shameless, a small portion of shame. For God hath sown in our nature the seeds of shame; for since fear was insufficient to bring us to a right tone, He hath also prepared many other ways for avoiding sin. For example, that a man should be accused, fear of the enacted laws, love of reputation, the desire of forming friendships; for all these are paths to avoid sin. Ofttimes that which was not done for God's sake, was done through shame; that which was not done for God's sake, was done for fear of men. That which we seek for is, in the first place not to sin, and we shall afterwards succeed in doing this for God's sake. Else why did Paul exhort those, who were about to overcome their enemies, not by the fear of God, but on the score of waiting for the vengeance? "For by so doing," he says, "thou shalt heap coals of fire upon his head." (Romans 12:20.) For this is his first wish, that our virtue should be established. As I said then, there is in us a sense of shame. We have many good natural affections, which lead to virtue; as, for example, all of us men are naturally moved to pity, and no other good thing so inheres in our nature, but this alone. Whence any one might reasonably enquire, wherefore these seeds have above all others been sown in our nature, by which we melt at tears, by which we are turned to compassion, and are ready to pity. No one is naturally idle, no one is naturally regardless of his reputation, no one is naturally above emulation, but pity lies deep in every one's nature, however fierce and ungentle he be. And what wonder? we pity beasts, such a superabundance of pity lies deep in us. If we see a lion's whelp, we are somewhat affected; much more in the case of one of our race. See, how many maimed are there! and this is

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sufficient to lead us to pity. Nothing so much pleases God as mercy. Wherefore with this the priests were anointed, and the kings, and the prophets, for they had, in oil, a type of God's love to man; and they further learnt, that rulers should have a greater share of mercy. It showed that the Spirit is to come to men through mercy, since Grid pities and is kind to man. For, "Thou hast mercy upon all," it is written, "for Thou canst do all things." (Wisd. 11:23.) For this cause they were anointed with oil. and indeed it was from mercy He appointed the priesthood. And kings were anointed with oil; and would one praise a ruler, he can make mention of nothing so becoming him as mercy. For pity is peculiar to power. Consider that the world was established by pity, and then imitate thy Lord. "The mercy of man is toward his neighbor, but the mercy of the Lord is upon all flesh." (Ecclus. 18:13.) How "upon all flesh"? Whether you mean sinners, or just men, we all need the mercy of God; we all enjoy it, be it Paul, be it Peter, or be it John. And listen to their own words; there is no need of mine. For what says this blessed one? "But I obtained mercy, because I did it ignorantly." (1 Timothy 1:13.) What then, was there afterwards no need of mercy? Hear what he says; "But I labored more abundantly than they all; yet not I, but the grace of God which was with me." (1 Corinthians 15:10.) And of Epaphroditus he says, "For indeed he was sick, nigh unto death; but God had mercy on him; and not on him only, but on me also, that I might not have sorrow upon sorrow." (Philippians 2:27.) And again he says, "We were weighed down exceedingly, beyond our power, insomuch that we despaired even of life. Yea, we ourselves have had the answer of death within ourselves, that we should not trust in ourselves, but in God, who delivered us out of so great a death, and will deliver." (2 Corinthians 1:8, 9, 10.) And again, "And I was delivered out of the mouth of the lion; and the Lord will deliver me." (2 Timothy 4:17, 18.) And everywhere we shall find him glorying in this, that by mercy he was saved. Peter, too, became so great, because mercy was shown him. For hear Christ saying to him, "Satan hath desired to sift you as wheat; and I made supplication for thee, that thy faith fail not." (Luke 22:31, 32.) John, too, became so great through mercy, and in short all of them. For listen to Christ when He says, "Ye did not choose Me, but I chose you." (John 15:16.) For we all have need of the mercy of God, as it is written, "The mercy of God is upon all flesh." But if these men needed the mercy of God, what should one say of the rest? For why, tell me, doth

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He “make the sun to rise on the evil and the good”? Did He withhold the rain for one year, would He not destroy all? And what if He caused overwhelming rain? what if He rained down fire? what if He sent flies? But what do I say? if He were so to do as He once did, would not all perish? If He were to shake the earth, would not all perish? It is now seasonable to say, “What is man, that Thou art mindful of him?” (Psalm 8:4.) Were He only to threaten the earth, all men would become one tomb. “As a drop of water from the bucket,” it is written, “so are the nations in His sight, they shall be counted as very small dust, as the turning of the balance.” (Isaiah 40:15.) It were as easy for Him to destroy all things, and to make them again, as for us to turn the balance. He then who has such power over us, and sees us sinning every day, and yet punishes us not, how is it but by mercy He bears with us? Since beasts too exist by mercy: “Thou, Lord, wilt preserve both men and beasts.” (Psalm 36:7.) He looked upon the earth, and filled it with living things. And wherefore? For thy sake! And wherefore did He make thee? Through His goodness.

There is nothing better than oil. It is the cause of light, and there also it is the cause of light “Then shall thy light break forth as the morning” (Isaiah 58:8), saith the Prophet, if thou showest pity upon thy neighbor. And as natural oil contains light, so then doth mercy [alms] grant Us a great, a marvelous light. Much mention doth Paul, too, make of this mercy. In one place, hear him say, “Only that we should remember the poor.” (Galatians 2:10.) And in another, “If it be meet for me to go also.” (1 Corinthians 16:4.) And in every place, turn where you will, ye see him anxious about this very thing. And again, “And let our people also learn to maintain good works.” (Titus 3:14.) And again, “These things are good and profitable unto men.” (Titus 3:8.) Listen to a certain other one who saith, “Alms do deliver from death” (Tob. 12:9); If Thou takest away pity, “Lord, Lord, who shall stand” (Psalm 130:3); and it is said, If Thou enterest “into judgment with thy servant” (Psalm 143:2); “A great thing is man”; why? “and an honorable thing is a merciful man.” (Proverbs 20:6, LXX.) For this is the true character of man, to be merciful, yea rather the character of God, to show mercy. Dost thou see, how strong is the mercy of God? This made all things, this formed the world, this made the angels, it was through mere goodness. For this cause, too, He threatened hell, that we may attain unto the kingdom, and through mercy we do attain unto the kingdom. For

wherefore did God, being alone, create so many beings? was it not through goodness? was it not through love to men? If you ask why such and such things are, you will always find your answer in Goodness. Let us show mercy to our neighbors, that mercy may be shown to us. These acts of mercy we show not so much to them, as lay up for ourselves against That Day. When the flame of the fire is great, this oil (mercy) is that which quenches the fire, and this brings light to us. Thus by this means shall we be freed from the fire of hell. For whence will He be compassionate and show mercy? Mercy comes of love! Nothing incenses God so much as to be pitiless. “A man was brought to him who owed him ten thousand talents, and he was moved with compassion, and forgave him. And there were owing to that man from his fellow-servant a hundred pence, and he caught him by the throat. Therefore the Lord delivered him to the tormentors, till he should pay what was due.” Let us on hearing this be merciful to those who are our debtors in money or in sins. Let no one remember evils, if at least he does not wish to injure himself; for he does not so much aggrieve the other (as he injures himself). For he either will follow him with vengeance, or he has not done so; but dost thou thyself, while not forgiving thy neighbor his sins, seek for a kingdom? Lest this should happen to us, let us forgive all, (for it is ourselves that we pardon,) that God may forgive us our sins, and so we may obtain the good things which are in store, through the grace and lovingkindness, etc.

HOMILY 5

PHILIPPIANS 2:1-4

"If there is therefore any comfort in Christ, if any consolation of love, if any fellowship of the Spirit, if any tender mercies and compassions, fulfill ye my joy, that ye be of the same mind, having the same love, being of one accord, of one mind; doing nothing through faction or through vainglory; but in lowliness of mind, each counting other better than himself; not looking each of you to his own things, but each of you also to the things of others."

THERE is nothing better, there is nothing more affectionate, than a spiritual teacher; such an one surpasses the kindness of any natural father. Do but consider, how this blessed one entreats the Philippians concerning the things which were to their own advantage. What says he, in exhorting them concerning concord, that cause of all good things? See how earnestly, how vehemently, with how much sympathy he speaks, "If there be therefore any comfort in Christ," that is, if ye have any comfort in Christ, as if he had said, If thou makest any account of me, if thou hast any care of me, if thou hast ever received good at my hands, do this. This mode of earnestness we use when we claim a matter which we prefer to everything else. For if we did not prefer it to everything, we should not wish to receive in it our recompense for all things, nor say that through it all is represented. We indeed remind men of our carnal claims; for example, if a father were to say, If thou hast any reverence for thy father, if any remembrance of my care in nourishing thee, if any affection towards me, if any memory of the honor thou hast received of me, if any of my kindness, be not at enmity with thy brother; that is, for all those things, this is what I ask in return.

But Paul does not so; he calls to our remembrance no carnal, but all of them spiritual benefits. That is, if ye wish to give me any comfort in my temptations, and encouragement in Christ, if any consolation of love, if ye wish to show any communion in the Spirit, if ye have any tender mercies and compassions, fulfill ye my joy. "If any tender mercies and compassions." Paul speaks of the concord of his disciples as compassion

towards himself, thus showing that the danger was extreme, if they were not of one mind. If I can obtain comfort from you, if I can obtain any consolation from our love if I can communicate with you in the Spirit, if I can have fellowship with you in the Lord, if I can find mercy and compassion at your hands, show by your love the return of all this. All this have I gained, if ye love one another.

Verse 2. *"Fulfill ye my joy."*

That the exhortation might not seem to be made to people who were still deficient, see how he says not, "do me joy," but "fulfill my joy"; that is, Ye have begun to plant it in me, ye have already given me some portion of peacefulness, but I desire to arrive at its fullness? Say, what wouldest thou? that we deliver thee from dangers? that we supply somewhat to thy need? Not so, but "that ye be of the same mind, having the same love," in which ye have begun, "being of one accord, of one mind." Just see, how often he repeats the same thing by reason of his great affection! "That ye be of the same mind," or rather, "that ye be of one mind." For this is more than "the same."

"Having the same love." That is, let it not be simply about faith alone, but also in all other things; for there is such a thing as to be of the same mind, and yet not to have love. "Having the same love," that is, love and be loved alike; do not thou enjoy much love, and show less love, so as to be covetous even in this matter; but do not suffer it in thyself. "Of one accord," he adds, that is, appropriating with one soul, the bodies of all, not in substance, for that is impossible, but in purpose and intention. Let all things proceed as from one soul. What means "of one accord "? He shows when he says "of one mind." Let your mind be one, as if from one soul.

Verse 3. *"Doing nothing through faction."*

He finally demands this of them, and tells them the way how this may be. "Doing nothing through faction or vainglory." This, as I always say, is the cause of all evil. Hence come fightings and contentions. Hence come envyings and strifes. Hence it is that love waxes cold, when we love the praise of men, when we are slaves to the honor which is paid by the many, for it is not possible for a man to be the slave of praise, and also a true

servant of God. How then shall we flee vainglory? for thou hast not yet told us the way. Listen then to what follows.

“But in lowliness of mind, each counting other better than himself.” Oh how full of true wisdom, how universal a gathering-word of our salvation is the lesson he has put forth! If thou deemest, he means, that another is greater than thyself, and persuadest thyself so, yea more, if thou not only sayest it, but art fully assured of it, then thou assignest him the honor, and if thou assignest him the honor, thou wilt not be displeased at seeing him honored by another. Do not then think him simply greater than thyself, but “better,” which is a very great superiority, and thou dost not think it strange nor be pained thereby, if thou seest him honored. Yea, though he treat thee with scorn, thou dost bear it nobly, for thou hast esteemed him greater than thyself. Though he revile thee, thou dost submit; Though he treat thee ill, thou bearest it in silence. For when once the soul is fully assured that he is greater, it falls not into anger when it is ill-treated by him, nor yet into envy, for no one would envy those who are very far above himself, for all things belong to his superiority.

Here then he instructs the one party to be thus minded. But when he too, who enjoys such honor from thee, is thus affected toward thee, consider what a double wall there is erected of gentle forbearance [comp. Philippians 4:5]; for when thou esteemest him thus worthy of honor, and he thee likewise, no painful thing can possibly arise; for if this conduct when shown by one is sufficient to destroy all strife, who shall break down the safeguard, when it is shown by both? Not even the Devil himself. The defense is threefold, and fourfold, yea manifold, for humanity is the cause of all good; and that you may learn this, listen to the prophet, saying, “Hadst thou desired sacrifice, I would have given it: Thou wilt not delight in burnt offerings. The sacrifice for God is a broken spirit, a broken and a contrite heart God will not despise.” (Psalm 51:16, 17.) Not simply humility, but intense humility. As in the case of bodily substances, that which is “broken” will not rise against that which is “solid,” but, how many ills soever it may suffer, will perish itself rather than attack the other, so too the soul, even if constantly suffering ill, will choose rather to die, than to avenge itself by attack.

How long shall we be puffed up thus ridiculously? For as we laugh, when we see children drawing themselves up, and looking haughty, or when we see them picking up stones and throwing them, thus too the haughtiness of men belongs to a puerile intellect, and an unformed mind. “Why are earth and ashes proud?” (Ecclus. 10:9.) Art thou highminded, O man? and why? tell me what is the gain? Whence art thou highminded against those of thine own kind? Dost not thou share the same nature? the same life? Hast not thou received like honor from God? But thou art wise? Thou oughtest to be thankful, not to be puffed up. Haughtiness is the first act of ingratitude, for it denies the gift of grace. He that is puffed up, is puffed up as if he had excelled by his own strength, and he who thinks he has thus excelled is ungrateful toward Him who bestowed that honor. Hast thou any good? Be thankful to Him who gave it. Listen to what Joseph said, and what Daniel. For when the king of Egypt sent for him, and in the presence of all his host asked him concerning that matter in which the Egyptians, who were most learned in these things, had forsaken the field, when he was on the point of carrying off everything from them, and of appearing wiser than the astrologers, the enchanters, the magicians, and all the wise men of those times, and that from captivity and servitude, and he but a youth (and his glory was thus greater, for it is not the same thing to shine when known, and contrary to expectation, so that its being unlooked for rendered him the more admirable); what then, when he came before Pharaoh? Was it “Yea, I know”? But what? When no one urged it on him, he said from his own excellent spirit, “Do not interpretations belong to God?” Behold he straightway glorified his Master, therefore he was glorified. And this also is no small thing. For that God had revealed it to him was a far greater thing than if he had himself excelled. For he showed that his words were worthy of credit, and it was a very great proof of his intimacy with God. There is no one thing so good as to be the intimate friend of God. “For if,” says the Scripture, “he [Abraham] was justified by works, he hath whereof to glory, but not toward God.” (Romans 4:2.) For if he who has been vouchsafed grace maketh his boast in God, that he is loved of Him, because his sins are forgiven, he too that worketh hath whereof to boast, but not before God, as the other (for it is a proof of our excessive weakness); he who has received wisdom of God, how much more admirable is he? He glorifies God and is glorified of Him, for He says, “Them that honor Me, I will honor.” (1 Samuel 2:30.)

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Again, listen to him who descended from Joseph, than whom no one was wiser. “Art thou wiser,” says he, “than Daniel?” (Ezekiel 28:3.) This Daniel then, when all the wise men that were in Babylon, and the astrologers moreover, the prophets, the magicians, the enchanters, yea when the whole of their wisdom was not only coming to be convicted, but to be wholly destroyed (for their being destroyed was a clear proof that they had deceived before), this Daniel coming forward, and preparing to solve the king’s question, does not take the honor to himself, but first ascribes the whole to God, and says, “But as for me, O king, it is not revealed to me for any wisdom that I have beyond all men.” (Daniel 2:30) And “the king worshipped him, and commanded that they should offer an oblation.” (Daniel 2:46.) Seest thou his humility? seest thou his excellent spirit? seest thou this habit of lowliness? Listen also to the Apostles, saying at one time, “Why fasten ye your eyes on us, as though by our own power or godliness we had made this man to walk? (Acts 3:12.) And again, “We are men of like passions with you.” (Acts 14:15.) Now if they thus refused the honors paid them, men who by reason of the humility and power of Christ wrought greater deeds than Christ (for He says, “He that believeth in Me shall do greater works than those that I do” (John 14:12, abr.)), shall not we wretched and miserable men do so, who cannot even beat away gnats, much less devils? who have not power to benefit a single man, much less the whole world, and yet think so much of ourselves that the Devil himself is not like us?

There is nothing so foreign to a Christian soul as haughtiness. Haughtiness, I say, not boldness nor courage, for these are congenial. But these are one thing, and that another; so too humility is one thing, and meanness, flattery, and adulation another.

I will now, if you wish, give you examples of all these qualities. For these things which are contraries, seem in some way to be placed near together, as the tares to the wheat, and the thorns to the rose. But while babes might easily be deceived, they who are men in truth, and are skilled in spiritual husbandry, know how to separate what is really good from the bad. Let me then lay before you examples of these qualities from the Scriptures. What is flattery, and meanness, and adulation? Ziba flattered David out of season, and falsely slandered his master. (2 Samuel 16:1-3.) Much more did Ahitophel flatter Absalom. (2 Samuel 17:1-4.) But David was not so,

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but he was humble. For the deceitful are flatterers, as when they say, “O king, live for ever.” (Daniel 2:4.) Again, what flatterers the magicians are.

We shall find much to exemplify this in the case of Paul in the Acts. When he disputed with the Jews he did not flatter them, but was humble-minded (for he knew how to speak boldly), as when he says, “I, brethren, though I had done nothing against the people, or the customs of our fathers, yet was delivered prisoner from Jerusalem.” (Acts 28:17.)

That these were the words of humility, listen how he rebukes them in what follows, “Well spake the Holy Ghost, By hearing ye shall hear, and shall in nowise understand, and seeing ye shall see, and in nowise perceive.” (Acts 28:25; ib. 26.)

Seest thou his courage? Behold also the courage of John the Baptist, which he used before Herod; when he said, “It is not lawful for thee to have thy brother Philip’s wife.” (Mark 6:18.) This was boldness, this was courage. Not so the words of Shimei, when he said, “Begone, thou man of blood” (2 Samuel 16:7), and yet he too spake with boldness; but this is not courage, but audacity, and insolence, and an unbridled tongue. Jezebel too reproached Jehu, when she said, “The slayer of his master” (2 Kings 9:31), but this was audacity, not boldness. Elias too reproached, but this was boldness and courage; “I do not trouble Israel, but thou and thy father’s house.” (1 Kings 18:18.) Again, Elias spake with boldness to the whole people, saying, “How long will ye go lame on both your thighs?” (1 Kings 18:21, LXX.) Thus to rebuke was boldness and courage. This too the prophets did, but that other was audacity.

Would you see words both of humility and not of flattery, listen to Paul, saying,” But with me it is a very small thing that I should be judged of you, or of man’s judgment; yea, I judge not mine own self. For I know nothing against myself, yet am I not hereby justified.” (1 Corinthians 4:3, 4.) This is of a spirit that becomes a Christian; and again, “Dare any of you, having a matter against his neighbor, go to law before the unrighteous, and not before the saints”? (1 Corinthians 6:1.)

Would you see the flattery of the foolish Jews? listen to them, saying, “We have no king but Caesar.” (John 19:15.) Would you see humility? listen to Paul again, when he says,” For we preach not ourselves, but

Christ Jesus as Lord, and ourselves as your servants for Jesus' sake." (2 Corinthians 4:5.) Would you see both flattery and audacity? "Audacity" (1 Samuel 25:10) in the case of Nabal, and "flattery" (1 Samuel 23:20) in that of the Ziphites? For in their purpose they betrayed David. Would you see "wisdom" (1 Samuel 26:5-12) and not flattery, that of David, how he gat Saul into his power, and yet spared him? Would you see the flattery of those who murdered Mephibosheth, whom also David slew? In fine, and as it were in outline, to sum up all, audacity is shown when one is enraged, and insults another for no just cause, either to avenge himself, or in some unjust way is audacious; but boldness and courage are when we dare to face perils and deaths, and despise friendships and enmities for the sake of what is pleasing to God. Again, flattery and meanness are when one courts another not for any right end, but hunting after some of the things of this life; but humility, when one does this for the sake of things pleasing to God, and descends from his own proper station that he may perform something great and admirable. If we know these things, happy are we if we do them. For to know them is not enough. For Scripture says, "Not the hearers of a law, but the doers of a law shall be justified." (Romans 2:13.) Yea, knowledge itself condemneth, when it is without action and deeds of virtue. Wherefore that we may escape the condemnation, let us follow after the practice, that we may obtain those good things that are promised to us, by the grace and love of our Lord Jesus Christ.

HOMILY 6

PHILIPPIANS 2:5-8

"Have this mind in you, which was also in Christ Jesus; who, being in the form of God, counted it not a prize to be on an equality with God, but emptied Himself, taking the form of a servant, being made in the likeness of men; and being found in fashion as a man, He humbled Himself, becoming obedient even unto death, yea, the death of the cross."

OUR Lord Jesus Christ, when exhorting His disciples to great actions, places before them Himself, and the Father, and the Prophets, as examples; as when He says, "For thus they did unto the Prophets which were before you" (Matthew 5:12; Luke 6:23); and again, "If they persecuted Me, they will also persecute you" (John 15:20); and, "Learn of me, for I am meek" (Matthew 11:29); and again, "Be ye merciful, as your Father which is in heaven is merciful." (Luke 6:36.) This too the blessed Paul did; in exhorting them to humility, he brought forward Christ. And he does so not here only, but also when he discourses of love towards the poor, he speaks in this wise. "For ye know the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, that though He was rich, yet for your sakes He became poor." (2 Corinthians 8:9.) Nothing rouses a great and philosophic soul to the performance of good works, so much as learning that in this it is likened to God. What encouragement is equal to this? None. This Paul well knowing, when he would exhort them to humility, first beseeches and supplicates them, then to awe them he says, "That ye stand fast in one Spirit"; he says also, that it "is for them an evident token of perdition, but of your salvation." (Philippians 1:27, 28.) And last of all he says this, "Have this mind in you, which was also in Christ Jesus, who, being in the form of God, counted it not a prize to be on an equality with God, but emptied Himself, taking upon Him the form of a servant." (Philippians 2:5-7.) Attend, I entreat you, and rouse yourselves. For as a sharp two-edged sword, wheresoever it falls, though it be among ten thousand phalanxes, easily cuts through and destroys, because it is sharp on every side, and nought can bear its edge; so are the words of the Spirit. (Hebrews 4:12; Revelation 1:16.) For by these words he has laid low the followers of Arius of

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Alexandria, of Paul of Samosata, of Marcellus the Galatian, of Sabellius the Libyan, of Marcion that was of Pontus, of Valentinus, of Manes, of Apollinarius of Laodicea, of Photinus, of Sophronius, and, in one word, all the heresies. Rouse yourselves then to behold so great a spectacle, so many armies falling by one stroke, lest the pleasure of such a sight should escape you. For if when chariots contend in the horse race there is nothing so pleasing as when one of them dashes against and overthrows whole chariots with their drivers, and after throwing down many with the charioteers that stood thereon, drives by alone towards the goal, and the end of the course, and amid the applause and clamor which rises on all sides to heaven, with coursers winged as it were by that joy and that applause, sweeps over the whole ground; how much greater will the pleasure be here, when by the grace of God we overthrow at once and in a body the combinations and devilish machinations of all these heresies together with their charioteers?

And if it seem good to you, we will first arrange the heresies themselves in order. Would you have them in the order of their impiety, or of their dates? In the order of time, for it is difficult to judge of the order of their impiety. First then let Sabellius the Libyan come forward. What does he assert? that the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, are mere names given to one Person. Marcion of Pontus says, that God the Creator of all things is not good, nor the Father of the good Christ, but another righteous one, and that he did not take flesh for us. Marcellus, and Photinus, and Sophronius assert, that the Word is an energy, and that it was this energy that dwelt in Him who was of the seed of David, and not a personal substance.

Arius confesses indeed the Son, but only in word; he says that He is a creature, and much inferior to the Father. And others say that He has not a soul. Seest thou the chariots standing? See then their fall, how he overthrows them all together, and with a single stroke. How? “Have the same mind in you,” he says, “which was in Christ Jesus, who being in the form of God, counted it not a prize to be on an equality with God.” And Paul of Samosata has fallen, and Marcellus, and Sabellius. For he says, “Being in the form of God.” If “in the form” how sayest thou, O wicked one, that He took His origin from Mary, and was not before? and how dost thou say that He was an energy? For it is written, “The form of God took the form of a servant.” “The form of a servant,” is it the energy of a

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servant, or the nature of a servant? By all means, I fancy, the nature of a servant. Thus too the form of God, is the nature of God, and therefore not an energy. Behold also Marcellus of Galatia, Sophronius and Photinus have fallen.

Behold Sabellius too. It is written, “He counted it not a prize to be on an equality with God.” Now equality is not predicated, where there is but one person, for that which is equal hath somewhat to which it is equal. Seest thou not the substance of two Persons, and not empty names without things? Hearest thou not the eternal pre-existence of the Only-begotten?

Lastly, What shall we say against Arius, who asserts the Son is of a different substance? Tell me now, what means, “He took the form of a servant”? It means, He became man. Wherefore “being in the form of God,” He was God. For one “form” and another “form” is named; if the one be true, the other is also. “The form of a servant” means, Man by nature, wherefore “the form of God” means, God by nature. And he not only bears record of this, but of His equality too, as John also doth, that he is no way inferior to the Father, for he saith, “He thought it not a thing to seize, to be equal with God.” Now what is their wise reasoning? Nay, say they, he proves the very contrary; for he says, that,” being in the form of God, He seized not equality with God.” How if He were God, how was He able “to seize upon it”? and is not this without meaning? Who would say that one, being a man, seized not on being a man? for how would any one seize on that which he is? No, say they, but he means that being a little God, He seized not upon being equal to the great God, Who was greater than He. Is there a great and a little God? And do ye bring in the doctrines of the Greeks upon those of the Church? With them there is a great and a little God. If it be so with you, I know not. For you will find it nowhere in the Scriptures: there you will find a great God throughout, a little one nowhere. If He were little, how would he also be God? If man is not little and great, but one nature, and if that which is not of this one nature is not man, how can there be a little God and a great one?

He who is not of that nature is not God. For He is everywhere called great in Scripture; “Great is the Lord, and highly to be praised.” (Psalm 48:1.) This is said of the Son also, for it always calls Him Lord. “Thou art great, and doest wondrous things. Thou art God alone.” (Psalm 86:10.) And

again, “Great is our Lord, and great is His power, and of His greatness there is no end.” (Psalm 145:3.)

But the Son, he says, is little. But it is thou that sayest this, for the Scripture says the contrary: as of the Father, so it speaks of the Son; for listen to Paul, saying, “Looking for the blessed hope, and appearing of the glory of our great God.” (Titus 2:13.) But can he have said “appearing” of the Father? Nay, that he may the more convince you, he has added with reference to the appearing “of the great God.” Is it then not said of the Father? By no means. For the sequel suffers it not which says, “The appearing of our great God and Savior Jesus Christ.” See, the Son is great also. How then speakest thou of small and great?

Listen to the Prophet too, calling him “The Messenger of great counsel.” (Isaiah 9:6.) “The Messenger of great counsel,” is He not great Himself? “The mighty God,” is He small and not great? What mean then these shameless and reckless men when they say, that being little He is a God? I repeat ofttimes what they say, that ye may the more avoid them. He being a lesser God seized not for Himself to be like the greater God! Tell me now (but think not that these words are mine), if he were little, as they say, and far inferior to the Father in power, how could He possibly have seized to Himself equality with God? For an inferior nature could not seize for himself admission into that which is great; for example, a man could not seize on becoming equal to an angel in nature; a horse could not, though he wished it, seize on being equal to a man in nature. But besides all that, I will say this too. What does Paul wish to establish by this example? Surely, to lead the Philippians to humility. To what purpose then did he bring forward this example? For no one who would exhort to humility speaks thus; “Be thou humble, and think less of thyself than of thine equals in honor, for such an one who is a slave has not risen against his master; do thou imitate him.” This, any one would say, is not humility, but arrogance. Learn ye what humility is, ye who have a devilish pride! What then is humility? To be lowly minded. And he is lowly minded who humbles himself, not he who is lowly by necessity. To explain what I say; and do ye attend; he who is lowly minded, when he has it in his power to be high minded, is humble, but he who is so because he is not able to be high minded, is no longer humble. For instance, If a King subjects himself to his own officer, he is humble, for he descends from his high estate; but if

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an officer does so, he will not be lowly minded; for how? he has not humbled himself from any high estate. It is not possible to show humble-mindedness except it be in our power to do otherwise. For if it is necessary for us to be humble even against our will, that excellency comes not from the spirit or the will, but from necessity. This virtue is called humble-mindedness, because it is the humbling of the mind.

If he who has it not in his power to snatch at another's goods, continues in the possession of his own; should we praise him, think you, for his justice? I trow not, and why? The praise of free choice is taken away by the necessity. If he, who has it not in his power to usurp and be a king, remains a private citizen, should we praise him for his quietness? I trow not. The same rule applies here. For praise, O ye most senseless ones, is not given for abstaining from these things, but for the performance of good deeds; for the former is free indeed from blame, but partakes not yet of praise, while eulogy of the other is meet. Observe accordingly that Christ gives praise on this principle, when He says, "Come, ye blessed of My Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world. For I was an hungered, and ye gave Me meat; I was thirsty, and ye gave Me drink." (Matthew 25:34, 35.) He did not say, Because ye have not been covetous, because ye have not robbed; these are slight things; but because "ye saw Me an hungered, and fed Me." Who ever praised either his friends or his enemies in this sort? No one ever praised even Paul. Why say Paul? no one ever praised even a common man, as thou dost praise Christ, because he did not take that rule which was not his due. To admire for such things as this, is to give evidence of much evil. And why? because with evil men this is a matter of praise, as of one that stealeth, if he steal no more; but it is otherwise among good men. (Ephesians 4:28.) Because a man has not seized on a rule and an honor which was not his due, is he praiseworthy? What folly is this?

Attend, I entreat you, for the reasoning is long. Again, who would ever exhort to humility from such grounds as this? Examples ought to be much greater than the subject, to which we are exhorting, for no one will be moved by what is foreign to the subject, For instance, when Christ would lead us to do good to our enemies, He brought a great example, even that of His Father, "For He maketh His sun to rise on the evil and the good, and sendeth rain on the just and the unjust." (Matthew 5:45.) When He would

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lead to endurance of wrong He brought an example, “Learn of Me, for I am meek and lowly in heart.” (Matthew 11:29.) And again, “If I your Lord and Master do these things, how much more should ye”? (John 13:14.) Seest thou how these examples are not distant, for there is no need they should be so distant, for indeed we also do these things, especially as in this case the example is not even near. And how? If He be a servant, He is inferior, and subject to Him that is greater; but this is not lowliness of mind. It was requisite to show the contrary, namely, that the greater person subjected himself to the lesser. But since he found not this distinction in the case of God, between greater and lesser, he made at least an equality. Now if the Son were inferior, this were not a sufficient example to lead us to humility. And why? because it is not humility, for the lesser not to rise against the greater, not to snatch at rule, and to be “obedient unto death.”

Again, consider what he says after the example, “In lowliness of mind, each counting other better than themselves.” (Philippians 2:3.) He says, “counting,” for as ye are one in substance, and in the honor which cometh of God, it follows that the matter is one of estimation. Now in the case of those who are greater and lesser, he would not have said “counting,” but honor them that are better than yourselves, as he says in another place, “Obey them that have the rule over you, and submit to them.” (Hebrews 13:17.) In that instance subjection is the result of the nature of the case, in this of our own judgment. “In lowliness of mind,” he says, “each counting other better than themselves,” as Christ also did.

Thus are their explanations overthrown. It remains that I speak of our own after I have first spoken of theirs summarily. When exhorting to lowliness of mind, Paul would never have brought forward a lesser one, as obedient to a greater. If he were exhorting servants to obey their masters, he might have done so with propriety, but when exhorting the free to obey the free, to what purpose could he bring forward the subjection of a servant to a master? of a lesser to a greater? He says not, “Let the lesser be subject to the greater,” but ye who are of equal honor with each other be ye subject, “each counting other better than themselves.” Why then did he not bring forward even the obedience of the wife, and say, As the wife obeys her husband, so do ye also obey. Now if he did not bring forward that state in which there is equality and liberty, since in that the subjection is but slight,

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how much less would he have brought forward the subjection of a slave? I said above, that no one so praises a man for abstaining from evil, nor even mentions him at all; no one who desires to praise a man for continence would say, he has not committed adultery, but, he has abstained from his own wife; for we do not consider abstinence from evil as a matter of praise at all, it would be ridiculous.

I said that the "form of a servant" was a true form, and nothing less. Therefore "the form of God" also is perfect, and no less. Why says he not, "being made in the form of God," but "being in the form of God"? This is the same as the saying, "I am that I am." (Exodus 3:14.) Form" implies unchangeableness, so far as it is form. It is not possible that things of one substance should have the form of another, as no man has the form of an angel, neither has a beast the form of a man. How then should the Son?

Now in our own case, since we men are of a compound nature, form pertains to the body, but in the case of a simple and altogether uncompounded nature it is of the substance. But if thou contendest that he speaks not of the Father, because the word is used without the article, in many places this is meant, though the word be used without the article. Why say I, in many places? for in this very place he says, "He counted it not a prize to be on an equality with God," using the word without the article, though speaking of God the Father.

I would add our own explanation, but I fear that I shall overwhelm your minds. Meanwhile remember what has been said for their refutation; meanwhile let us root out the thorns, and then we will scatter the good seed after that the thorns have been rooted out, and a little rest has been given to the land; that when rid of all the evil thence contracted, it may receive the divine seed with full virtue.

Let us give thanks to God for what has been spoken; let us entreat Him to grant us the guarding and safe keeping thereof, that both we and ye may rejoice, and the heretics may be put to shame. Let us beseech Him to open our mouth for what follows, that we may with the same earnestness lay down our own views. Let us supplicate Him to vouchsafe us a life worthy of the faith, that we may live to His glory, and that His name may not be blasphemed through us. For, "woe unto you," it is written, "through whom the name of God is blasphemed." (Isaiah 52:5, LXX. nearly.) For if,

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when we have a son, (and what is there more our own than a son,) if therefore when we have a son, and are blasphemed through him, we publicly renounce him, turn away from him, and will not receive him; how much more will God, when He has ungrateful servants who blaspheme and insult Him, turn away from them and hate them? And who will take up him whom God hates and turns away from, but the Devil and the demons? And whomsoever the demons take, what hope of salvation is left for him? what consolation in life?

As long as we are in the hand of God, "no one is able to pluck us out" (John 10:28), for that hand is strong; but when we fall away from that hand and that help, then are we lost, then are we exposed, ready to be snatched away, as a "bowing wall, and a tottering fence" (Psalm 62:3); when the wall is weak, it will be easy for all to surmount. Think not this which I am about to say refers to Jerusalem alone, but to all men. And what was spoken of Jerusalem? "Now will I sing to my well-beloved a song of my beloved touching His vineyard. My well-beloved hath a vineyard in a very fruitful hill, and I made a fence about it, and surrounded it with a dike, and planted it with the vine of Sorech, and built a tower in the midst of it, and also dug a wine press in it, and I looked that it should bring forth grapes, and it brought forth thorns. And now, O men of Judah and inhabitants of Jerusalem, judge between Me and My vineyard. What should have been done to My vineyard, that I have not done to it? Wherefore, when I looked that it should bring forth grapes, brought it forth thorns? Now therefore I will tell you what I will do to My vineyard: I will take away the hedge thereof, and it shall be for a prey, and I will break down the wall thereof, and it shall be trodden down. And I will leave My vineyard, and it shall not be pruned or digged, but thorns shall come up upon it, as upon a desert land. I will also command the clouds, that they rain no rain upon it. For the vineyard of the Lord of Sabaoth is the house of Israel, and the men of Judah His pleasant plant. I looked that it should do judgment, but it did iniquity, and a cry instead of righteousness." (Isaiah 5:1-7, LXX.) This is spoken also of every soul. For when God who loveth man hath done all that is needful and man then bringeth forth thorns instead of grapes, He will take away the fence, and break down the wall, and we shall be for a prey. For hear what another prophet speaks in his lamentations: "Why hast thou broken down her fences, so that all they

which pass by the way do pluck her? The boar out of the wood doth ravage it, and the wild beasts of the field feed on it." (Psalm 80:12, 13.) In the former place He speaks of the Mede and the Babylonian, here nought is said of them, but "the boar," and "the solitary beast" is the Devil and all his host, because of the ferocity and impurity of his disposition. For when it would show us his rapacity, it saith, "As a roaring lion he walketh about, seeking whom he may devour" (1 Peter 5:8): when his poisonous, his deadly, his destructive nature, it calleth him a snake, and a scorpion; "For tread," saith He, "upon serpents and scorpions, and upon all the power of the enemy" (Luke 10:19): when it would represent his strength as well as his venom, it calleth him a dragon; as when it says, This dragon "whom thou hast formed to take his pastime therein." (Psalm 104:26.) Scripture everywhere calleth him a dragon, and a crooked serpent, and an adder (Psalm 74:13, 14); he is a beast of many folds, and varied in his devices, and his strength is great, he moves all things, he disturbs all things, he turns all things up and down. (Isaiah 27:1; 51:9; Ezekiel 29:3; 32:2.) But fear not, neither be afraid; watch only, and he will be as a sparrow; "for," saith He, "tread upon serpents and scorpions." If we will, He causes him to be trodden down under our feet.

See now what scorn is it, yea, what misery, to see him standing over our heads, who has been given to us to tread down. And whence is this? it is of ourselves. If we choose, he becomes great; and if we choose, he becomes of small power. If we take heed to ourselves, and take up our stand with Him who is our King, he draws himself in, and will be no better than a little child in his warfare against us. Whensoever we stand apart from Him, he puffeth himself up greatly, he uttereth terrible sounds, he grindeth his teeth, because he finds us without our greatest help. For he will not approach to us, except God permit him; for if he dared not to enter into the herd of swine, except by God's permission, how much less into men's souls. But God does permit him, either chastening or punishing us, or making us more approved, as in the case of Job. Seest thou that he came not to him, neither dared to be near him, but trembled and quaked? Why speak I of Job? When he leaped upon Judas, he dared not to seize on him wholly, and to enter into him, until Christ had severed him from the sacred band. He attacked him indeed from without, but he dared not enter in, but when he saw him cut off from that holy flock, he leaped upon him with

more than wolfish vehemence, and left him not till he had slain him with a double death.

These things are written for our admonition. What gain have we from knowing that one of the twelve was a traitor? what profit? what advantage? Much. For, when we know whence it was that he arrived at this deadly counsel, we are on our guard that we too suffer not the like. Whence came he to this? From the love of money. He was a thief. For thirty pieces of silver he betrayed his Lord. So drunken was he with the passion, he betrayed the Lord of the world for thirty pieces of silver. What can be worse than this madness? Him to whom nothing is equivalent, nothing is equal, "before whom the nations are as nothing" (Isaiah 40:15), Him did he betray for thirty pieces of silver. A grievous tyrant indeed is the love of gold, and terrible in putting the soul beside itself. A man is not so beside himself through drunkenness as through love of money, not so much from madness and insanity as from love of money.

For tell me, why didst thou betray Him? He called thee, when a man unmarked and unknown. He made thee one of the twelve, He gave thee a share in His teaching, He promised thee ten thousand good things, He caused thee to work wonders, thou wert sharer of the same table, the same journeys, the same company, the same intercourse, as the rest. And were not these things sufficient to restrain thee? For what reason didst thou betray Him? What hadst thou to charge Him with, O wicked one? Rather, what good didst thou not receive at His hands? He knew thy mind, and ceased not to do His part. He often said, "One of you shall betray Me." (Matthew 26:21.) He often marked thee, and yet spared thee, and though He knew thee to be such an one, yet cast thee not out of the band. He still bore with thee, He still honored thee, and loved thee, as a true disciple, and as one of the twelve, and last of all (oh, for thy vileness!), He took a towel, and with His own unsullied hands He washed thy polluted feet, and even this did not keep thee back. Thou didst steal the things of the poor, and that thou mightest not go on to greater sin, He bore this too. Nothing persuaded thee. Hadst thou been a beast, or a stone, wouldest thou not have been changed by these kindnesses towards thee, by these wonders, by these teachings? Though thou wast thus brutalized, yet still He called thee, and by wondrous works He drew thee, thou wast more senseless

than a stone, to Himself. Yet for none of these things didst thou become better.

Ye wonder perhaps at such folly of the traitor; dread therefore that which wounded him. He became such from avarice, from the love of money. Cut out this passion, for to these diseases does it give birth; it makes us impious, and causes us to be ignorant of God, though we have received ten thousand benefits at His hands. Cut it out, I entreat you, it is no common disease, it knoweth how to give birth to a thousand destructive deaths. We have seen his tragedy. Let us fear lest we too fall into the same snares. For this is it written, that we too should not suffer the same things. Hence did all the Evangelists relate it, that they might restrain us. Flee then far from it. Covetousness consisteth not alone in the love of much money, but in loving money at all. It is grievous avarice to desire more than we need. Was it talents of gold that persuaded the traitor? For thirty pieces of silver he betrayed his Lord. Do ye not remember what I said before, that covetousness is not shown in receiving much, but rather in receiving little things? See how great a crime he committed for a little gold, rather not for gold, but for pieces of silver.

It cannot, it cannot be that an avaricious man should ever see the face of Christ! This is one of the things which are impossible. It is a root of evils, and if he that possesses one evil thing, falls from that glory, where shall he stand who bears with him the root? He who is the servant of money cannot be a true servant of Christ. Christ Himself hath declared that the thing is impossible. “Ye cannot,” He says, “serve God and Mammon,” and, “No man can serve two masters” (Matthew 6:24), for they lay upon us contrary orders. Christ says, “Spare the poor”; Mammon says, “Even from the naked strip off the things they have.” Christ says, “Empty thyself of what thou hast”; Mammon says, “Take also what thou hast not.” Seest thou the opposition, seest thou the strife? How is it that a man cannot easily obey both, but must despise one? Nay, does it need proof? How so? Do we not see in very deed, that Christ is despised, and Mammon honored? Perceive ye not how that the very words are painful? How much more then the thing itself? But it does not appear so painful in reality, because we are possessed with the disease. Now if the soul be but a little cleansed of the disease, as long as it remains here, it can judge right; but when it departs elsewhere, and is seized by the fever, and is engaged in

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the pleasure of the thing, it hath not its perception clear, it hath not its tribunal uncorrupt. Christ says, “Whosoever he be of you that renounceth not all that he hath, he cannot be My disciple” (Luke 14:33); Mammon says, “Take the bread from the hungry.” Christ says, “Cover the naked” (Isaiah 58:7); the other says, “Strip the naked.” Christ says, “Thou shalt not hide thyself from thine own flesh,” (Isaiah 58:7) and those of thine own house; Mammon says, “Thou shall not pity those of thine own seed; though thou seest thy mother or thy father in want, despise them.” Why say I father or mother? “Even thine own soul,” he says, “destroy it also.” And he is obeyed! Alas! he who commands us cruel, and mad, and brutal things, is listened to rather than He who bids us gentle and healthful things! For this is hell appointed; for this, fire; for this, a river of fire; for this, a worm that dieth not.

I know that many hear me say these things with pain, and indeed it is not without pain I say them. But why need I say these things? I could wish the things concerning the kingdom to be ever my discourse, of the rest, of the waters of rest, of the green pastures, as the Scripture says, “He maketh me to lie down in green pastures, He leadeth me beside the still waters” (Psalm 23:2), there He maketh me to dwell. I could wish to speak of the place, whence “sorrow and sighing shall flee away.” (Isaiah 51:11.)

I could wish to discourse of the pleasures of being with Christ, though they pass all expression and all understanding. Yet would I speak of these things according to my power. But what shall I do? it is not possible to speak concerning a kingdom to one that is diseased and in fever; then we must needs speak of health. It is not possible to speak of honor to one that is brought to trial, for at that time his desire is that he be freed from judgment, and penalty, and punishment. If this be not effected, how shall the other be? It is for this cause that I am continually speaking of these things, that we may the sooner pass over to those other. For this cause does God threaten hell, that none may fall into hell, that we all may obtain the kingdom; for this cause we too make mention continually of hell, that we may thrust you onward towards the kingdom, that when we have softened your minds by fear, we may bring you to act worthily of the kingdom. Be not then displeased at the heaviness of our words, for the heaviness of these words lightens our souls from sin. Iron is heavy, and the hammer is heavy, but it forms vessels fit for use, both of gold and silver,

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and straightens things which are crooked and if it were not heavy, it would have no power to straighten the distorted substance. Thus too our heavy speech has power to bring the soul into its proper tone. Let us not then flee from heaviness of speech, nor the strokes it gives; the stroke is nor given that it may break in pieces or tear the soul, but to straighten it. We know how we strike, how by the grace of God we inflict the stroke, so as not to crush the vessel, but to polish it, to render it straight, and meet for the Master's use, to offer it glittering in soundness, skillfully wrought against that Day of the river of fire, to offer it having no need of that burning pile. For if we expose not ourselves to fire here, we must needs be burned there, it cannot be otherwise; "For the day of the Lord is revealed by fire." (1 Corinthians 3:13.) Better is it that ye be burned for a little space by our words, than for ever in that flame. That this will indeed be so, is plain, and I have ofttimes given you reasons which cannot be gain-said. We ought truly to be persuaded from the Scriptures, but forasmuch as some are contentious, we have also brought forward many arguments from reason. Nothing binders that I now mention them, and what were they? God is just. We all acknowledge this, both Greeks and Jews, and Heretics, and Christians. But many sinners have had their departure without punishment, many righteous men have had their departure after suffering ten thousand grievous things. If then God be just, where will He reward their good to the one, and their punishment to the other, if there be no hell, if there be no resurrection? This reason then do ye constantly repeat to them and to yourselves, and it will not suffer you to disbelieve the resurrection, and whoso disbelieves not the resurrection will take care to live with all heed so as to obtain eternal happiness, of which may we all be counted worthy, by the grace and lovingkindness of our Lord Jesus Christ, with whom, etc.

HOMILY 7

PHILIPPIANS 2:5-11

"Have this mind in you which was also in Christ Jesus: who, being in the form of God, counted it not a prize to be on an equality with God; but emptied Himself, taking upon Him the form of a servant, being made in the likeness of men: and being found in fashion as a man, He humbled Himself, becoming obedient unto death, yea, the death of the cross. Wherefore also God highly exalted Him, and gave Him the Name which is above every name: that in the Name of Jesus every knee should bow, of things in heaven, and things on earth, and things under the earth; and that every tongue should confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father."

I HAVE stated the views of the heretics. It is befitting that I now speak of what is our own. They say that the words, "He counted it not a prize," are of wrongfully seizing. We have proved, that this is altogether vapid and impertinent, for no man would exhort another to humility on such grounds, nor in this sort does he praise God, or even man. What is it then, beloved? Give heed to what I now say. Since many men think, that, when they are lowly, they are deprived of their proper right, and debased, Paul, to take away this fear, and to show that we must not be affected thus, says that God, the only begotten, who was in the form of God, who was no whit inferior to the Father, who was equal to Him, "counted it not a prize to be on an equality with God."

Now learn what this meaneth. Whatsoever a man robs, and takes contrary to his right, he dares not lay aside, from fear lest it perish, and fall from his possession, but he keeps hold of it continually. He who possesses some dignity which is natural to him, fears not to descend from that dignity, being assured that nothing of this sort will happen to him. As for example, Absalom usurped the government, and dared not afterwards to lay it aside. We will go to another example, but if example cannot present the whole matter to you, take it not amiss, for this is the nature of examples, they leave the greater part for the imagination to reason out. A man rebels against his sovereign, and usurps the kingdom: he dares not lay aside and hide the matter, for if he once hide it, straightway it is gone. Let us also

take another example; if a man takes anything violently, he keeps firm hold of it continually, for if he lay it down, he straightway loses it. And generally speaking, they who have aught by rapine are afraid to lay it by, or hide it, or not to keep constantly in that state which they have assumed. Not so they, who have possessions not procured by rapine, as Man, who possesses the dignity of being a reasonable being. But here examples fail me, for there is no natural preeminence amongst us, for no good thing is naturally our own; but they are inherent in the nature of God. What does one say then? That the Son of God feared not to descend from His right, for He thought not Deity a prize seized. He was not afraid that any would strip Him of that nature or that right, Wherefore He laid it aside, being confident that He should take it up again. He hid it, knowing that He was not made inferior by so doing. For this cause, Paul says not, "He seized not," but," He counted it not a prize"; He possessed not that estate by seizure, but it was natural, not conferred, it was enduring and safe. Wherefore he refused not to take the form of an inferior. The tyrant fears to lay aside the purple robe in war, while the king does it with much safety. Why so? because he holds his power not as a matter of seizure. He did not refuse to lay it aside, as one who had usurped it, but since He had it as His own by nature, since it could never be parted from Him, He hid it.

This equality with God He had not by seizure, but as his own by nature. Wherefore "He emptied Himself." Where be they who affirm, that He underwent constraint, that He was subjected? Scripture says, "He emptied Himself, He humbled Himself, and became obedient unto death." How did He empty Himself? By taking "the form of a servant, being made in the likeness of men, and being found in fashion as a man." It is written, "He emptied Himself" in reference to the text, "each counting other better than himself." Since had He been subjected, had He not chosen it of His own accord, and of His own free will, it would not have been an act of humility. For if He knew not that so it must be, He would have been imperfect. If, not knowing it, He had waited for the time of action, then would He not have known the season. But if He both knew that so it must be, and when it must be, wherefore should He submit to be subjected? To show, they say, the superiority of the Father. But this shows not the superiority of the Father, but His own inferiority. For is not the name of the Father sufficient to show the priority of the Father? For apart from Him, the son

has all the same things. For this honor is not capable of passing from the Father to the Son.

What then say the heretics? See, say they, He did not become man. The Marcionites, I mean. But why? He was “made in the likeness of man.” But how can one be “made in the likeness of men”? by putting on a shadow? But this is a phantom, and no longer the likeness of a man, for the likeness of a man is another man. And what wilt thou answer to John, when he says, “The Word became flesh”? (John 1:14.) But this same blessed one himself also says in another place, “in the likeness of sinful flesh.” (Romans 8:3.)

“And being found in fashion as a man.” See, they say, both” in fashion,” and “as a man.” To be as a man, and to be a man in fashion, is not to be a man indeed. To be a man in fashion is not to be a man by nature. See with what ingenuousness I lay down what our enemies say, for that is a brilliant victory, and amply gained, when we do not conceal what seem to be their strong points. For this is deceit rather than victory. What then do they say? let me repeat their argument. To be a man in fashion is not to be a man by nature; and to be as a man, and in the fashion of a man, this is not to be a man. So then to take the form of a servant, is not to take the form of a servant. Here then is an inconsistency; and wherefore do you not first of all solve this difficulty? For as you think that this contradicts us, so do we say that the other contradicts you. He says not, “as the form of a servant,” nor “in the likeness of the form of a servant,” nor “in the fashion of the form of a servant,” but “He took the form of a servant.” What then is this? for there is a contradiction. There is no contradiction. God forbid! it is a cold and ridiculous argument of theirs. He took, say they, the form of a servant, when He girded Himself with a towel, and washed the feet of His disciples. Is this the form of a servant? Nay, this is not the form, but the work of a servant. It is one thing that there should be the work of a servant, and another to take the form of a servant. Why did he not say, He did the work of a servant, which were clearer? But nowhere in Scripture is “form” put for “work,” for the difference is great: the one is the result of nature, the other of action. In common speaking, too, we never use “form” for “work.” Besides, according to them, He did not even take the work of a servant, nor even gird Himself. For if all was a mere shadow, there was no reality. If He had not real hands, how did He wash their feet? If He had not

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real loins, how did He gird Himself with a towel? and what kind of garments did he take? for Scripture says, “He took His garments.” (John 13:12.) So then not even the work is found to have really taken place, but it was all a deception, nor did He even wash the disciples. For if that incorporeal nature did not appear, it was not in a body. Who then washed the disciples’ feet?

Again, what in opposition to Paul of Samosata? for what did he affirm? The very same. But it is no emptying of Himself, that one who is of human nature, and a mere man, should wash his fellow-servants. For what we said against the Arians, we must repeat against these too, for they differ not from one another, save by a little space of time; both the one and the other affirm the Son of God to be a creature. What then shall we say to them? If He being a man washed man, He emptied not, He humbled not Himself. If He being a man seized not on being equal with God, He is not deserving of praise. That God should become man, is great, unspeakable, inexpressible humility; but what humility is there in that one, who was a man should do the works of men? And where is the work of God ever called “the form of God”? for if he were a mere man, and was called the form of God by reason of His works, why do we not do the same of Peter, for he wrought greater deeds than Christ Himself? Why say you not of Paul, that he had the form of God? Why did not Paul give an example of himself, for he wrought a thousand servile works, and did not even refuse to say, “For we preach not ourselves, but Christ Jesus as Lord, and ourselves as your servants for Jesus’ sake.” (2 Corinthians 4:5.)

These are absurdities and trifles! Scripture says, He “emptied Himself.” How did He empty Himself? tell me. What was His emptying? what His humiliation? was it because He wrought wonders? This both Paul and Peter did, so that this was not peculiar to the Son. What then means, “Being made in the likeness of men”? He had many things belonging to us, and many He had not; for instance, He was not born of wedlock. He did no sin. These things had He which no man has. He was not what he seemed only, but He was God also; He seemed to be a man, but He was not like the mass of men. For He was like them in flesh. He means then, that He was not a mere man. Wherefore he says, “in the likeness of men.” For we indeed are soul and body, but He was God, and soul and body, wherefore he says, “in the likeness.” For lest when you hear hat He emptied Himself,

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you should think that some change, and degeneracy, and loss is here; he says, whilst He remained what He was, He took that which He was not, and being made flesh He remained God, in that He was the Word. (John 1:14.)

In this then He was like man, and for this cause Paul says, “and in fashion.” Not that His nature degenerated, nor that any confusion arose, but He became man in fashion. For when He had said that “He took the form of a servant,” he made bold to say this also, seeing that the first would silence all objectors; since when he says, “In the likeness of sinful flesh,” he says not that He had not flesh, but that that flesh sinned not, but was like to sinful flesh. Like in what? in nature, not in sin, therefore was His like a sinful soul. As then in the former case the term similarity was used, because He was not equal in everything, so here also there is similarity, because He is not equal in everything, as His not being born of wedlock, His being without sin, His being not a mere man. And he well said “as a man,” for He was not one of the many, but “as” one of the many. The Word who was God did not degenerate into man, nor was His substance changed, but he appeared as a man; not to delude us with a phantom, but to instruct us in humility. When therefore he says, “as a man,” this is what He means; since he calls Him a man elsewhere also, when he says, “there is one God, one Mediator also between God and men, Himself man, Christ Jesus.” (1 Timothy 2:5.)

Thus much against these heretics. I must now speak against such as deny that He took a soul. If “the form of God” is “perfect God,” then the “form of a servant” is “a perfect servant.” Again, against the Arians. Here concerning His divinity, we no longer find “He became,” “He took,” but “He emptied Himself, taking the form of a servant, being made in the likeness of men”; here concerning his humanity we find “He took, He became.” He became the latter, He took the latter; He was the former. Let us not then confound nor divide the natures. There is one God, there is one Christ, the Son of God; when I say” One,” I mean a union, not a confusion; the one Nature did not degenerate into the other, but was united with it.

“He humbled Himself, becoming obedient unto death, yea, the death of the cross.” See, says one, He voluntarily became obedient; he was not equal to Him whom He obeyed. O ye obstinate ones and unwise! This cloth not at

all lower Him. For we too become obedient to our friends, yet this has no effect. He became obedient as a Son to His Father; He fell not thus into a servile state, but by this very act above all others guarded his wondrous Sonship, by thus greatly honoring the Father. He honored the Father, not that thou shouldest dishonor Him, but that thou shouldest the rather admire Him, and learn from this act, that He is a true Son, in honoring His Father more than all besides. No one hath thus honored God. As was His height, such was the correspondent humiliation which He underwent. As He is greater than all, and no one is equal to Him, so in honoring His Father, He surpassed all, not by necessity, nor unwillingly, but this too is part of His excellence; yea, words fail me. Truly it is a great and unspeakable thing, that He became a servant; that He underwent death, is far greater; but there is something still greater, and more strange; why? All deaths are not alike; His death scented to be the most ignominious of all, to be full of shame, to be accursed; for it is written, "Cursed is every one that hangeth on a tree." (Deuteronomy 21:23; Galatians 3:13.) For this cause the Jews also eagerly desired to slay Him in this manner, to make Him a reproach, that if no one fell away from Him by reason of His death, yet they might from the manner of His death. For this cause two robbers were crucified with Him, and He in the midst, that He might share their ill repute, and that the Scripture might be fulfilled, "And he was numbered with the transgressors." (Isaiah 53:12.) Yet so much the more doth truth shine forth, so much the more doth it become bright; for when His enemies plot such things against His glory, and it yet shines forth, so much the greater does the matter seem. Not by slaying Him, but by slaying Him in such sort did they think to make Him abominable, to prove Him more abominable than all men, but they availed nothing. And both the robbers also were such impious ones, (for it was afterward that the one repented,) that, even when on the cross, they reviled Him; neither the consciousness of their own sins, nor their present punishment, nor their suffering the same things themselves, restrained their madness. Wherefore the one spake to the other, and silenced him by saying, "Dost thou not even fear God, seeing thou art in the same condemnation?" (Luke 23:40.) So great was their wickedness. Wherefore it is written, "God also highly exalted Him, and gave Him the Name which is above every name." When the blessed Paul hath made mention of the flesh, he fearlessly speaks of all His humiliation. For until he had mentioned that He took the form of a servant,

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and while he was speaking of His Divinity, behold how loftily he doth it, (loftily, I say, according to his power; for he speaks not according to His own worthiness, seeing that he is not able). "Being in the form of God, He counted it not a prize to be equal with God." But when he had said, that He became Man, henceforth he fearlessly discourseth of His low estate, being confident that the mention of His low estate would not harm His Divinity, since His flesh admitted this.

Verse 9-11. *"Wherefore also God highly exalted Him, and gave Him the Name which is above every name: that in the Name of Jesus every knee should bow, of things in heaven, and things in earth, and things under the earth; and that every tongue should confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father."*

Let us say against the heretics, If this is spoken of one who was not incarnate, if of God the Word, how did He highly exalt Him? Was it as if He gave Him something more than He had before? He would then have been imperfect in this point, and would have been made perfect for our sakes. For if He had not done good deeds to us, He would not have obtained that honor! "And gave Him the Name." See, He had not even a name, as you say! But how, if He received it as His due, is He found here to have received it by grace, and as a gift? And that "the Name which is above every name": and of what kind, let us see, is the Name? "That at the Name of Jesus," saith He, "every knee should bow." They (the heretics) explain name by glory. This glory then is above all glory, and this glory is in short that all worship Him! But ye hold yourselves far off from the greatness of God, who think that ye know God, as He knoweth Himself, and from this it is plain, how far off ye are from right thoughts of God. And this is plain from hence. Is this, tell me, glory? Therefore before men were created before the angels or the archangels, He was not in glory. If this be the glory which is above every glory, for this is the name that is "above every name,") though He were in glory before, yet was He in glory inferior to this. It was for this then that He made the things that are, that He might be raised to glory, not from His own goodness, but because He required glory from us! See ye not their folly? see ye not their impiety?

Now if they had said this of Him that was incarnate, there had been reason, for God the Word allows that this be said of His flesh. It touches

not His divine nature, but has to do altogether with the dispensation. What means “of things in heaven, and things in the earth, and things under the earth “? It means the whole world, and angels, and men, and demons; or that both the just and the living and sinners,

“And every tongue,” should “confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father.” That is, that all should say so; and this is glory to the Father. Seest thou how wherever the Son is glorified, the Father is also glorified? Thus too when the Son is dishonored, the Father is dishonored also. If this be so with us, where the difference is great between fathers and sons, much more in respect of God, where there is no difference, doth honor and insult pass on to Him. If the world be subjected to the Son, this is glory to the Father. And so when we say that He is perfect, wanting nothing, and not inferior to the Father, this is glory to the Father, that he begat such a one. This is a great proof of His power also, and goodness, and wisdom, that He begat one no whit inferior, neither in wisdom nor in goodness. When I say that He is wise as the Father, and no whit inferior, this is a proof of the great wisdom of the Father; when I say that He is powerful as the Father, this is a proof of the Father’s power. When I say that He is good as the Father, this is the greatest evidence of His goodness, that He begat such (a Son), in no whir less or inferior to Himself. When I say that He begat Him not inferior in substance but equal, and not of another substance, in this I again wonder at God, His power, and goodness, and wisdom, that He hath manifested to us another, of Himself, such as Himself, except in His not being the Father. Thus whatsoever great things I say of the Son, pass on to the Father. Now if this small and light matter (for it is but a light thing to God’s glory that the world should worship Him) is to the glory of God, how much more so are all those other things?

Let us then believe to His glory, let us live to His glory, for one is no use without the other; when we glorify Him rightly, but live not rightly, then do we especially insult Him, because we are enrolled under Him as a Master and Teacher, and yet despise Him, and stand in no dread of that fearful judgment seat. It is no wonder that the heathen live impurely; this merits not such condemnation. But that Christians, who partake in such great mysteries, who enjoy so great glory, that they should live thus impurely, this is worst of all, and unbearable. For tell me; He was obedient

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to the uttermost, wherefore He received the honor which is on high. He became a servant, wherefore He is Lord of all, both of Angels, and of all other. Let us too not suppose then that we descend from what is our due, when we humble ourselves. For thus may we be more highly exalted; and with reason; then do we especially become admirable. For that the lofty man is really low, and that the lowly man is exalted, the sentence of Christ sufficiently declares. Let us however examine the matter itself. What is it to be humbled? Is it not to be blamed, to be accused, and calumniated? What is it to be exalted? It is to be honored, to be praised, to be glorified. Well. Let us see how the matter is. Satan was an angel, he exalted himself. What then? was he not humbled beyond all other? has he not the earth as his place? is he not condemned and accused by all? Paul was a man, and humbled himself. What then? is he not admired? is he not praised? is he not lauded? is he not the friend of Christ? Wrought he not greater things than Christ? did he not ofttimes command the devil as a captive slave? did he not carry him about as an executioner? did he not hold him up to scorn? held he not his head bruised under his feet? did he not with much boldness beg of God that others too might do the same? Why am I saying? Absalom exalted himself, David humbled himself; which of the twain was raised up, which became glorious? For what could be a more evident proof of humility than these words which that blessed Prophet spoke of Shimei, "Let him curse, for the Lord hath bidden him." (2 Samuel 16:11.) And if you please, we will examine the very cases themselves. The Publican humbled himself, although the case can hardly be called humility; but how? He answered in a right-minded manner. The Pharisee exalted himself. What then? let us also examine the matters. Let there be two men, both rich, and highly honored, and elevated by wisdom and power, and other worldly advantages; then let one of them seek honor from all, let him be angry if he receive it not, let him require more than is due and exalt himself; let the other despise the whole matter, bear himself unkindly towards no one on this account, and evade honor when offered to him. For it is not possible to obtain glory any other way than by fleeing from glory, for as long as we pursue it, it flies from us, but when we flee from it, then it pursues us. If thou wouldest be glorious, do not desire glory. If thou wouldest be lofty, do not make thyself lofty. And further, all honor him who does not grasp at honor, but spurn him who seeks it. For the human race somehow or other is fond of contention, and leans to contrary feeling. Let us therefore

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despise glory, for thus we shall be enabled to become lowly, or rather to become exalted. Exalt not thyself, that thou mayest be exalted by another; he that is exalted by himself is not exalted by others, he who is humbled by himself is not humbled by others. Haughtiness is a great evil, it is better to be a fool than haughty; for in the one case, the folly is only a perversion of intellect, but in the other case it is still worse, and is folly joined with madness: the fool is an evil to himself; but the haughty man is a plague to others too. This misery comes of senselessness. One cannot be haughty-minded without being a fool; and he that is brimful of folly is haughty.

Listen to the Wise Man, who says, “I saw a man wise in his own conceit; there is more hope of a fool than of him.” (Proverbs 26:12.) Seest thou how it was not without reason I said that the evil of which I am speaking is worse than that of folly, for it is written, “There is more hope of a fool than of him”? Wherefore, Paul too said, “Be not wise in your own conceits.” (Romans 12:16.) Tell me what description of bodies do we say are in good health, those which are much inflated, and are inwardly full of much air and water, or those which are kept low, and have their surface such as marks restraint? It is manifest that we should choose the latter. So, too with the soul, that which is puffed up has a worse disease than dropsy, whilst that which is under restraint is freed from all evil. How great then are the good things which lowliness of mind bringeth to us! What wouldest thou have? Forbearance? freedom from anger? love to our fellow-men? soberness? attentiveness? All these good things spring from lowly-mindedness, and their contraries from haughtiness: the haughty man must needs be also insolent, a brawler, wrathful, bitter, sullen, a beast rather than a man. Art thou strong, and proud thereat? Thou shouldest rather be humble on this account. Why art thou proud for a thing of nought? For even a lion is bolder than thou, a wild boar is stronger, and thou art not even as a fly in comparison with them. Robbers too, and violaters of tombs, and gladiators, and even thine own slaves, and those perchance who are more stupid still, are stronger than thou. Is this then a fit subject for praise? Art thou proud of such a matter? Bury thyself for shame!

But art thou handsome and beautiful? This is the boast of crows! Thou art not fairer than the peacock, as regards either its color or its plumage; the bird beats thee in plumage, it far surpasseth thee in its feathers and in its

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color. The swan too is passing fair, and many other birds, with whom if thou art compared thou wilt see that thou art nought. Often too worthless boys, and unmarried girls, and harlots, and effeminate men have had this boast; is this then a cause for haughtiness? But art thou rich? Whence so? what hast thou? Gold, silver, precious stones! This is the boast of robbers also, of man-slayers, of those who work in the mines. That which is the labor of criminals becomes to thee a boast! But dost thou adorn and deck thyself out? Well, we may see horses also decked out, and among the Persians camels too, and as for men, all those who are about the stage. Art thou not ashamed to boast thyself of these things, if unreasoning animals, and slaves, and man-slayers, and effeminate, and robbers, and violaters of tombs, share with thee? Dost thou build splendid palaces? and what of this? Many jackdaws dwell in more splendid houses, and have more noble retreats. Dost thou not see how many, who were mad after money, have built houses in fields and desert places, that are retreats for jackdaws? But art thou proud on account of thy voice. Thou canst by no means sing with clearer and sweeter tones than the swan or the nightingale. Is it for thy varied knowledge of arts? But what is wiser than the bee in this; what embroiderer, what painter, what geometrician, can imitate her works? Is it for the fineness of thy apparel? But here the spiders beat thee. Is it for the swiftness of thy feet? Again the first prize is with unreasoning animals, the hare, and the gazelle, and all the beasts which are not wanting in swiftness of foot. Hast thou traveled much? Not more than the birds; their transit is more easily made, they have no need of provisions for the way, nor beasts of burden, for their wings are all-sufficient for them; this is their vessel, this their beast of burden, this their car, this is even their wind, in short, all that a man can name. But art thou clear sighted? Not as the gazelle; not as the eagle. Art thou quick of hearing? the ass is more so. Of scent? the hound suffers thee not to surpass him. Art thou a good provider? yet thou art inferior to the ant. Dost thou gather gold? Yet not as the Indian ants. Art thou proud because of thy health? Unreasoning creatures are far better than we both in habit of body, and in independence; they fear no poverty. “Behold the birds of the heaven, that they sow not, neither do they reap, nor gather into barns.” (Matthew 6:26.) “And surely,” He means, “God has not created the irrational animals superior to ourselves.” Dost thou mark what want of consideration is here? Dost thou observe the lack of all investigation? Dost thou observe the great advantage

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which we derive from an investigation of the points? He, whose mind is lifted up above all men, is found to be even lower than the irrational creatures.

But we will have pity upon him, and not follow his example; nor because the limits of our mortal nature are too narrow for his conceit of himself, will we proceed to lower him to the level of the beasts that are without reason, but will lift him up from thence, not for his own sake, for he deserves no better fate, but that we may set forth the lovingkindness of God, and the honor which. He has vouchsafed us. For there are things, yes, there are things wherein the irrational animals have no participation with us. And of what sort are these? Piety, and a life based on virtue. Here thou canst never speak of fornicators, nor of effeminate persons, nor of murderers, for from them we have been severed. And what then is this which is found here? We know God, His Providence we acknowledge, and are embued with true philosophy concerning immortality. Here let the irrational animals give place. They cannot contend with us in these points. We live in self-command. Here the irrational animals have nothing in common with us. For, while coming behind all of them, we exercise dominion over them; for herein lies the superiority of our dominion, that, while coming behind them, we yet reign over them: that thou mightest be instructed that the cause of these things is, not thyself, but God who made thee, and gave thee reason. We set nets and toils for them, we drive them in, and they are at our mercy.

Self-command, a compliant temper, mildness, contempt of money, are prerogatives of our race; but since thou who art one o those blinded by presumption hast none of these, thou doest well in entertaining notions either above the level of mankind, or beneath the very irrational creatures. For this is the nature of folly and of audacity; it is either unduly elevated, or on the other hand it is equally depressed, never observing a proper proportion. We are equal to angels in this respect, that we have a Kingdom pledged to us, the choir, unto which Christ is joined. He that is a man may be scourged, yet does he not succumb. A man laughs at death, is a stranger to fear and trembling, he does not covet more than he has. So that they all who are not like this are beneath the irrational animals. For when in the things of the body thou wouldest have the advantage, but hast no advantage in the things that concern the soul, how art thou aught else than

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inferior to the irrational animals? For bring forward one of the vicious and unthinking, of those that are living in excess and to self. The horse surpasses him in warlike spirit, the boar in strength, the hare in swiftness, the peacock in grace, the swan in fineness of voice, the elephant in size, the eagle in keenness of sight, all birds in wealth. Whence then dost thou derive thy title to rule the irrational creatures? from reason? But thou hast it not? For whosoever ceases to make a due use of it, is again inferior to them; for when though possessing reason he is more irrational than they, it had been better if he had never from the first become capable of exercising reason. For it is not the same thing after having received dominion to betray the trust, as to let pass the season to receive it. That sovereign, who is below the level of his guards, had better never have had on the purple. And it is the very self-same thing in this case. Knowing then that without virtue we are inferior to the very irrational animals, let us exercise ourselves therein, that we may become men, yea rather angels, and that we may enjoy the promised blessings, through the grace and lovingkindness of our Lord Jesus Christ, with whom, etc.

HOMILY 8

PHILIPPIANS 2:12-16

"So then, my beloved, even as ye have always obeyed, not as in my presence only, but now much more in my absence, work out your own salvation with fear and trembling; for it is God which worketh in you both to will and to work for His good pleasure. Do all things without murmurings and disputings: that ye may be blameless and harmless, children of God without blemish in the midst of a crooked and perverse generation, among whom ye are seen as lights in the world, holding forth the word of life; that I may have whereof to glory in the day of Christ."

THE admonitions which we give ought to be accompanied with commendations; for thus they become even welcome, when we refer those whom we admonish to that measure of zeal which they have themselves exhibited; as Paul, for instance, did here; and observe with what singular discretion; "So then, my beloved," he says; he did not say simply "be obedient," not until he had first commended them in these words, "even as ye have always obeyed"; i.e. "it is not other men, but your own selves, whom I bid you take example by." "Not as in my presence only, but much more in my absence." And why, "much more in my absence"? "Ye seemed perhaps at that time to be doing everything out of respect to me, and from a principle of shame, but that is no longer so; if then ye make it evident that ye now strive more earnestly, it is also made evident that neither then was it done out of consideration to me, but for God's sake." Tell me, what wouldest thou? "not that ye give heed to me, but that ye ' work out your own salvation with fear and trembling'"; for it is impossible for one, who lives devoid of fear, to set forth any high or commanding example; and he said not merely "with fear," but "and with trembling," which is an excessive degree of fear. Such fear had Paul. and therefore he said, I fear "lest having preached to others, I myself should be rejected." (1 Corinthians 9:27.) For if without the aid of fear temporal things can never be achieved, how much less spiritual matters; for I desire to know, who ever learnt his letters without fear? who has become a proficient in any art, without fear? But if, when the devil does not lie in the way, where indolence is the only obstacle, so much of fear is necessary merely in order

that we may master that indolence which is natural to us; where there is so fierce a war, so great hindrances, how can we by any possibility be saved without fear?

And how may this fear be produced? If we but consider that God is everywhere present, heareth all things, seeth all things, not only whatsoever is done and said, but also all that is in the heart, and in the depth of the soul, for He is "quick to discern the thoughts and intents of the heart" (Hebrews 4:12), if we so dispose ourselves, we shall not do or say or imagine aught that is evil. Tell me, if thou hadst to stand constantly near the person of a ruler, wouldest not thou stand there with fear? and how standing in God's presence, dost thou laugh and throw thyself back, and not conceive fear and dread? Let it never be that thou despisest His patient endurance, for it is to bring thee to repentance that He is longsuffering. Whenever thou eatest, consider that God is present, for He is present; whenever thou art preparing to sleep, or giving way to passion, if thou art robbing another, or indulging in luxury, or whatever thou art about, thou wilt never fall into laughter, never be inflamed with rage. If this be thy thought continually, thou wilt continually be in "fear and trembling," forasmuch as thou art standing beside the King. The architect, though he be experienced, though he be perfectly master of his art, yet stands with "fear and trembling," lest he fall down from the building. Thou too hast believed, thou hast performed many good deeds, thou hast mounted high: secure thyself, be in fear as thou standest, and keep a wary eye, lest thou fall thence. For manifold are the spiritual sorts of wickedness which aim to cast thee down. (Ephesians 6:12.) "Sense the Lord with fear," he says, "and rejoice unto Him with trembling." (Psalm 2:11.) And how is rejoicing compatible with "trembling"? Yet this, be assured, is the only rejoicing; for when we perform some good work, and such as beseemeth those who do anything "with trembling," then only do we rejoice. "Work out your own salvation with fear and trembling": he says not "work," but "work out," i.e. with much earnestness, with much diligence; but as he had said, "with fear and trembling," see how he relieves their anxiety: for what does he say? "It is God that worketh in you." Fear not because said, "with fear and trembling." I said it not with this view, that thou shouldest give up in despair, that thou shouldest suppose virtue to be somewhat difficult to be attained, but that thou mightest be led to

follow after it, and not spend thyself in vain pursuits; if this be the case, God will work all things. Do thou be bold; “for it is God that worketh in you.” If then He worketh, it is our part to bring a mind ever resolute, clenched and unrelaxed. “For it is God that worketh in you both to will and to work.” “If He does Himself work in us to will, how dost thou exhort us? for if He works Himself even the will, the words, which you speak to us, have no meaning, ‘that ye have obeyed’; for we have not ‘obeyed’; it is without meaning that thou sayest, ‘with fear and trembling’; for the whole is of God.” It was not for this that I said to you, “for it is He that worketh in you both to will and to work,” but my object was to relieve your anxiety. If thou wilt, in that case He will “work in thee to will.” Be not affrighted, thou art not-worsted; both the hearty desire and the accomplishment are a gift from Him: for where we have the will, thenceforward He will increase our will. For instance, I desire to do some good work: He has wrought the good work itself, and by means of it He has wrought also the will. Or he says this in the excess of his piety, as when he declares that our well-doings are gifts of grace.

As then, when he calls these gifts, he does not put us out of the pale of free will, but accords to us free will, so when he says, “to work in us to will,” he does not deprive us of free will, but he shows that by actually doing right we greatly increase our heartiness in willing. For as doing comes of doing, so of not doing comes not doing. Hast thou given an alms? thou art the more incited to give. Hast thou refused to give? thou art become so much the more disinclined. Hast thou practiced temperance for one day? Thou hast an incitement for the next likewise. Hast thou indulged to excess? Thou hast increased the inclination to self-indulgence. “When a wicked man cometh into the depth of vice, then he despises.” (Proverbs 18:3.) As, then, when a man cometh into the depth of iniquity, he turns a despiser; so when he cometh into the depth of goodness, he quickens his exertions. For as the one runs riot in despair, so the second, under a sense of the multitude of good things, exerts himself the more, fearing lest he should lose the whole. “For His good pleasure,” he says, that is, “for love’s sake,” for the sake of pleasing Him; to the end that what is acceptable to Him may take place; that things may take place according to His will. Here he shows, and makes it a ground of confidence, that He is sure to work in us, for it is His will that we live as He desires we should,

and if He desires it, He Himself both worketh in us to this end, and will certainly accomplish it; for it is His will that we live aright. Seest thou, how he does not deprive us of free will?

"Do all things without murmurings and disputings." The devil, when he finds that he has no power to withdraw us from doing right, wishes to spoil our reward by other means. For he has taken occasion to insinuate pride or vainglory, or if none of these things, then murmuring, or, if not this, misgivings. Now then see how Paul sweeps away all these. He said on the subject of humility all that he did say, to overthrow pride; he spoke of vainglory, that is, "not as in my presence only"; he here speaks of "murmuring and disputing." But why, I want to know, when in the case of the Corinthians he was engaged in uprooting this evil tendency, did he remind them of the Israelites, but here has said nothing of the sort, but simply charged them? Because in that case the mischief was already done, for which reason there was need of a more severe stroke and a sharper rebuke; but here he is giving admonitions to prevent its being done. Severe measures then were not called for in order to secure those that had not yet been guilty; as in leading them to humility he did not subjoin the instance in the Gospel, wherein the proud were punished, but laid the charge as from God's lips (Luke 16:23? 18:14?); and he addresses them as free, as children of pure birth, not as servants; for in the practice of virtue a rightminded and generous person is influenced by those who do well, but one of bad principles by those who do not do well; the one by the consideration of honor, the other of punishment. Wherefore also writing to the Hebrews, he said, bringing forward the example of Esau, "Who for one mess of meat sold his own birthright" (Hebrews 12:16); and again, "if he shrink back, my soul hath no pleasure in him." (Hebrews 10:38.) And among the Corinthians were many who had been guilty of fornication. Therefore he said, "Lest when I come again my God should humble me before you, and I should mourn for many that have sinned heretofore, and repented not of the uncleanness, and fornication, and lasciviousness which they committed. (2 Corinthians 12:21.) That ye may be blameless," says he, "and harmless"; i.e. irreproachable, unsullied; for murmuring occasions no slight stain. And what means "without disputing"? Is it good, or not good? Do not dispute, he says, though it be trouble, or labor, or any thing else whatever. He did not say, "that ye be not punished," for punishment

is reserved for the thing; and this he made evident in the Epistle to the Corinthians; but here he said nothing of the sort; but he says, “That ye may be blameless and harmless, children of God without blemish, in the midst of a crooked and perverse generation, among whom ye are seen as lights in the world, holding forth the word of life, that I may have whereof to glory in the day of Christ.” Observest thou that he is instructing these not to murmur? So that murmuring is left for unprincipled and graceless slaves. For tell me, what manner of son is that, who murmurs at the very time that he is employed in the affairs of his father and is working for his own benefit? Consider he says, that you are laboring for yourself, that it is for yourself that you are laying up; it is for those to murmur, when others profit by their labors, others reap the fruit, while they bear the burden; but he that is gathering for himself, why should he murmur? Because his wealth does not increase? But it is not so. Why does he murmur who acts of free-will, and not by constraint? It is better to do nothing than to do it with murmuring, for even the very thing itself is spoilt. And do you not remark that in our own families we are continually saying this; “it were better for these things never to be done, than to have them done with murmuring”? and we had often rather be deprived of the services some one owes us, than submit to the inconvenience of his murmuring. For murmuring is intolerable, most intolerable; it borders upon blasphemy. Otherwise why had those men to pay a penalty so severe? It is a proof of ingratitude; the murmurer is ungrateful to God, but whoso is ungrateful to God does thereby become a blasphemer. Now there were at that time, if ever, uninterrupted troubles, and dangers without cessation: there was no pause, no remission: innumerable were the horrors, which pressed upon them from all quarters; but now we have profound peace, a perfect calm.

Wherefore then murmur? Because thou art poor? Yet think of Job. Or because sickness is thy lot? What then if, with the consciousness of as many excellencies and as high attainments as that holy man, thou hadst been so afflicted? Again reflect on him, how that for a long time he never ceased to breed worms, sitting upon a dunghill and scraping his sores; for the account says that “(after a long time had passed,) then said his wife unto him, How long wilt thou persist, saying, Yet a little while I bide in expectation? Speak some word against the Lord, and die.” (Job 2:9, LXX.) But your child is dead? What then if thou hadst lost all thy children, and

that by an evil fate, as he did? For ye know, ye know well, that it is no slight alleviation to take our place beside the sick man, to close the mouth, to shut the eyes, to stroke the beard, to hear the last accents; but that just man Was vouchsafed none of these consolations, they all being overwhelmed at once. And what do I say? Hadst thou, thine own self, been bidden to slay and offer up thine own son, and to see the body consumed, like that blessed Patriarch, what then wouldst thou have felt whilst erecting the altar, laying on the wood, binding the child? But there are some who revile thee? What then would be thy feelings did thy friends, come to administer consolation to thee, speak like Job's? For, as it is, innumerable are our sins, and we deserve to be reproached; but in that case he who was true, just, godly, who kept himself from every evil deed, heard the contrary of those laid to his charge by his friends. What then, tell me, if thou hadst heard thy wife exclaiming in accents of reproach; "I am a vagabond and a servant, wandering from place to place, and from house to house, waiting until the sun goes down, that I may rest from the woes that encompass me." (Job 2:9, LXX.) Why dost thou speak so, O foolish woman? for is thine husband to blame for these things? Nay, but the devil. "Speak a word against God," she says, "and die"; — and if thereupon the stricken man had cursed and died, how wouldest thou be the better? — No disease you can name is worse than that of his, though you name ten thousand. It was so grievous, that he could no longer be in the house and under cover; such, that all men gave him up. For if he had not been irrecoverably gone, he would never have taken his seat without the city, a more pitiable object than those afflicted with leprosy; for these are both admitted into houses, and they do herd together; but he passing the night in the open air, was naked upon a dunghill, and could not even bear a garment upon his body. How so? Perhaps there would only have been an addition to his pangs. For "I melt the clods of the earth," he says, "while I scrape off my sore." (Job 7:5, LXX.) His flesh bred sores and worms in him, and that continually. Seest thou how each one of us sickens at the hearing of these things? but if they are intolerable to hear, is the sight of them more tolerable? and if the sight of them is intolerable, how much more intolerable to undergo them? And yet that righteous man did undergo them, not for two or three days, but for a long while, and he did not sin, not even with his lips. What disease can you describe to me like this, so exquisitely painful? for was not this worse than blindness? "I look on my

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food," he says, "as a fetid mass." (Job 6:7.) And not only this, but that which affords cessation to others, night and sleep, brought no alleviation to him, nay, were worse than any torture. Hear his words: "Why dost thou scare me with dreams, and terrify me through visions? If it be morning, I say, When will it be evening?" (Job 7:14, 4), and he murmured not. And there was not only this; but reputation in the eyes of the world was added; for they forthwith concluded him to be guilty of endless crimes, judging from all that he suffered. And accordingly this is the consideration, which his friends urged upon him; "Know therefore that God exacteth less of thee than thine iniquities deserve." (Job 11:6.) Wherefore he himself said, "But now they that are younger than I have me in derision, whose fathers I disdained to set with the dogs of my flock." (Job 30:1.) And was not this worse than many deaths? Yet though assaulted on all sides by a flood like this, when there raged around him a fearful storm, clouds, rain, lightnings, whirling winds, and waterspouts, he remained himself unmoved, seated as it were in the midst of this surge, thus awful and overwhelming, as in a perfect calm, and no murmur escaped him; and this before the gift of grace, before that aught was declared concerning a resurrection, before aught concerning hell and punishment and vengeance. Yet we, who hear both Prophets and Apostles and Evangelists speaking to us, and have innumerable examples set before us, and have been taught the tidings of a Resurrection, yet harbor discontent, though no man can say that such a fate as this has been his own. For if one has lost money, yet not all that great number of sons and daughters, or if he has, perchance it was that he had sinned; but for him, he lost them suddenly, in the midst of his sacrifices, in the midst of the service which he was rendering to God. And if any man has at one blow lost property to the same amount, which can never be, yet he has not had the further affliction of a sore all over his body, he has not scraped the humors that covered him; or if this likewise has been his fate, yet he has not had men to upbraid and reproach him, which is above all things calculated to wound the feelings, more than the calamities we suffer. For if when we have persons to cheer and console us in our misfortunes, and to hold out to us fair prospects, we yet despond, consider what it was to have men upbraiding him. If the words, "I looked for some to have pity, but there was no man, and for comforters, but I found none" (Psalm 69:20), describe intolerable misery, how great an aggravation to find revilers instead of comforters! "Miserable comforters

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are ye all" (Job 16:2), he says. If we did but revolve these subjects continually in our minds, if we well weighed them, no ills of this present time could ever have force to disturb our peace, when we turned our eyes to that athlete, that soul of adamant, that spirit impenetrable as brass. For as though he had born about him a body of brass or stone, he met all events with a noble and constant spirit.

Taking these things to heart, let us do everything "without murmuring and disputing." Is it some good work that thou hast before thee, and dost thou murmur? wherefore? art thou then forced? for that there are many about you who force you to murmur, I know well, says he. This he intimated by saying, "in the midst of a crooked and perverse generation"; but it is this that deserves admiration, that we admit no such feeling when under galling provocation. For the stars too give light in the night, they shine in the dark, and receive no blemish to their own beauty, yea they even shine the brighter; but when light returns, they no longer shine so. Thus thou too dost appear with the greater luster, whilst thou holdest straight in the midst of the crooked. This it is which deserves our admiration, the being "blameless "; for that they might not urge this plea, he himself set it down by anticipation. What means "holding fast the word of life"? i.e. "being destined to live, being of those that are gaining salvation." Observe how immediately he subjoins the rewards, which are in reserve. Lights [i.e. luminaries], he says, retain the principle of light; so do ye the principle of life. What means "the word of life"? Having the seed of life, i.e. having pledges of life, holding life itself, i.e. "having in yourselves the seed of life," this is what he calls "the word of life." Consequently the rest are all dead, for by these words he signified as much; for otherwise those others likewise would have held "the word of life." "That I may have whereof to glory," he says; what is this? I too participate in your good deeds, he says. So great is your virtue, as not only to save yourselves, but to render me illustrious. Strange kind of "boasting," thou blessed Paul! Thou art scourged, driven about, reviled for our sakes: therefore he adds," in the day of Christ, that I did not run," he says, "in vain, nor labored in vain," but I always have a right to glory, he means, that I did not run in vain.

"Yea, and if I am offered." He said not, "and if I die even," nor did he when writing to Timothy, for there, too, he has made use of the same expression, "For I am already being offered." (2 Timothy 4:6.) He is both consoling

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them about his own death, and instructing them to bear gladly the death that is for Christ's sake. I am become, he says, as it were a libation and a sacrifice. O blessed soul! His bringing them to God he calls a sacrifice. It is much better to present a soul than to present oxen. "If, then, over and above this offering," he says, "I add myself, my death as a libation, I rejoice." For this he implies, when he says, "Yea, and if I am offered upon the sacrifice and service, I joy and rejoice with you all; and in the same manner do ye also joy and rejoice with me." Why dost thou rejoice with them? Seest thou that he shows that it is their duty to rejoice? On the one hand then, I rejoice in being made a libation; on the other, I rejoice with you, in having presented a sacrifice; "and in the same manner do ye also joy and rejoice with me," that I am offered up; "rejoice with me, "who rejoice in myself." So that the death of the just is no subject for tears, but for joy. If they rejoice, we should rejoice with them. For it is misplaced for us to weep, while they rejoice. "But," it is urged, "we long for our wonted intercourse." This is a mere pretext and excuse; and that it is so, mark what he enjoins: "Rejoice with me, and joy." Dost thou miss thy wonted intercourse? If thou wert thyself destined to remain here, there would be reason in what thou sayest; but if after a brief space thou wilt overtake him who has departed, what is that intercourse which thou dost seek? for it is only when he is forever severed from him that a man misses the society of another, but if he will go the same way that thou wilt go, what is the intercourse which thou longest for? Why do we not bewail all that are upon foreign travel? Do we not just a little, and cease after the first or the second day? If thou longest for thy wonted intercourse with him, weep so far only. "It is no evil that I suffer," says he, "but I even rejoice in going to Christ, and do ye not rejoice." "Rejoice with me." Let us too rejoice when we see a righteous man dying, and yet more even when any of the desperately wicked; for the first is going to receive the reward of his labors, but the other has abated somewhat from the score of his sins. But it is said, perhaps he might have altered, had he lived. Yet God would never have taken him away, if there had been really a prospect of an alteration. For why should not He who orders all events for our salvation, allow him the opportunity, who gave promise of pleasing Him? If He leaves those, who never alter, much more those that do. Let then the sharpness of our sorrow be everywhere cut away, let the voice of lamentation cease. Let us thank God under all events; let us do all things without murmuring; let us

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be cheerful, and let us become pleasing to Him in all things, that we may also attain the good things to come, by the grace and loving-kindness of our Lord Jesus Christ, with whom, etc.

HOMILY 9

PHILIPPIANS 2:19-21

"But I hope in the Lord Jesus to send Timothy shortly unto you, that I also may be of good comfort, when I know your state. For I have no man likeminded, who will care truly for your state. For they all seek their own, not the things of Jesus Christ."

HE had said, "have fallen out unto the progress of the Gospel; so that my bonds became manifest in Christ throughout the whole praetorian guard." (Philippians 1:12, 13.) Again, "Yea, and if I am offered upon the sacrifice and service of your faith." (Philippians 2:17.) By these words he strengthened them. Perchance they might suspect that his former words were spoken just to comfort them. What then? "I send Timothy unto you," says he; for they desired to hear all things that concerned him. And wherefore said he not, "that ye may know my state," but, "that I may know yours"? Because Epaphroditus would have reported his state before the arrival of Timothy. Wherefore further on he says, "But I counted it necessary to send to you Epaphroditus, my brother (Philippians 2:25); but I wish to learn of your affairs. For it is likely that he had remained long time with Paul through his bodily weakness. So that he says, I wish to "know your state." See then how he refers everything to Christ, even the mission of Timothy, saying, "I hope in the Lord Jesus," that is, I am confident that God will facilitate this for me, that I too may be of good courage, when I know your state. As I refreshed you when ye heard the very things of me which ye had prayed for, that the Gospel had advanced, that its enemies were put to shame, that the means by which they thought to injure, rather made me rejoice; thus too do I wish to learn of your affairs, that I too may be of good courage when I know your state. Here he shows that they ought to rejoice for his bonds, and to be conformed to them, for they begat in him great pleasure; for the words, "that I too may be of good comfort," imply, just as you are.

Oh, what longing had he toward Macedonia He testifies the same to the Thessalonians, as when he says, "But we, brethren, being bereaved of you for a short season," etc. (1 Thessalonians 2:17.) And here he says, "I hope

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to send Timothy" that I may "know your state," which is a proof of excessive care: for when he could not himself be with them, he sent his disciples, as he could not endure to remain, even for a little time, in ignorance of their state. For he did not learn all things by revelation of the Spirit, and for this we can see some reason; for if the disciples had believed that it were so, they would have lost all sense of shame, but now from expectation of concealment, they were more easily corrected. In a high degree did he call their attention by saying, "that I too may be of good comfort," and rendered them more zealous, so that, when Timothy came he might not find any other state of things, and report it to him. He seems to have acted in like sort in his own person, when he delayed his coming to the Corinthians, that they might repent; wherefore he wrote, "to spare you I forbore to come to Corinth." (2 Corinthians 1:23.) For his love was manifested not simply in reporting his own state, but in his desire to learn of theirs; for this is the part of a soul which has a care of others, which takes thought for them, which is always wrestling for them.

At the same time too, he honors them by sending Timothy. "What sayest thou? dost thou send Timothy? and wherefore?" Because "I have no one likeminded"; that is, none of those whose care is like mine, none who "will care truly for you." (Philippians 2:20.) Had he then no one of those who were with him? No one likeminded, that is, who has yearnings and takes thought for you as I do. No one would lightly choose, he means, to make so long a journey for this purpose. Timothy is the one with me who loves you? For I might have sent others, but there was none like him. This then is that likemindedness, to love the disciples as the master loves them. "Who," says he, "will truly care for you," that is, as a father. "For they all seek their own, not the things of Jesus Christ" (Philippians 2:21), their own comfort, their own safety. This too he writes to Timothy. But why doth he lament such things as these? To teach us his hearers not to fall in like sort, to teach his hearers not to seek for remission from toil; for he who seeks remission from toil, seeks not the things that are Christ's, but his own. We ought to be prepared against every toil, against every distress.

Verse 22. *"Ye know the proof of him, that as a child serveth a father, so he served with me in furtherance of the Gospel."*

And that I speak not at random, “ye yourselves,” he says, “know, that as a child serveth a father, so he served with me in furtherance of the Gospel.” He presents then Timothy to them, and with reason, that he might enjoy much honor from them. This too he does when he writes to the Corinthians, and he says, “Let no man therefore despise him, for he worketh the work of the Lord as I also do.” (1 Corinthians 16:10.) This he said not as caring for him, but for those who receive him, that they might receive a great reward.

Verse 23. *“Him therefore,” he says, “I hope to send forthwith, so soon as I shall see how it will go with me,”*

that is, when I see where I stand, and what end my affairs will have.

Verse 24. *“But I trust in the Lord that I also myself shall come to you shortly.”*

I am not therefore sending him, as though I myself would not come, but that I may be of good courage when I know your state, that even in the mean time I may not be ignorant of it. “But I trust in the Lord,” says he. See how he makes all things depend on God, and speaks nothing of his own mind. That is, God willing.

Verse 25. *“But I counted it necessary to send to you Epaphroditus, my brother, and fellow-worker, and fellow-soldier.”*

And him too he sends with the same praises as Timothy, for he commended him on these two points; first, in that he loved them, when he says, “who will care truly for you”; and secondly, in that he had approved himself in the Gospel. And for the same reason, and in the same terms, he praises this man also: and how? By calling him a brother, and a fellow-worker, and not stopping at this point, but also “fellow-soldier,” he showed how he shared in his dangers, and testifies of him the same things which he testifies of himself. For “fellow-soldier” is more than “fellow-worker”; for perchance he gave aid in quiet matters, yet not so in wars and dangers; but in saying “fellow-soldier,” he showed this too.

Verse 25. *“To send to you your messenger, and minister to my needs”;*

that is, I give you your own, since I send to you him that is your own, or, perhaps, that is your Teacher. Again he adds many things concerning his love, in saying,

Verse 26, 27. *"Since he longed after you all, and was sore troubled, because ye had heard that he was sick. For indeed he was sick nigh unto death: but God had mercy on him; and not on him only, but on me also, that I might not have sorrow upon sorrow."*

Here he aims at a farther point, making it manifest, that Epaphroditus too was well aware, how he was beloved of them. And this is no light thing toward loving. You know how he was sick, he says; and he grieved that on his recovery he did not see you, and free you from the grief ye had by reason of his sickness. Here too he gives another reason for sending so late to them, not from any remissness, but he kept Timothy because he had no one else, (for, as he had written, he had "no one likeminded,") and Epaphroditus because of his sickness. He then shows that this was a long sickness, and had consumed much time, by adding, "for he was sick nigh unto death." You see how anxious Paul is to cut off from his disciples all occasion of slighting or contempt, and every suspicion that his not coming was because he despised them. For nothing will have such power to draw a disciple toward one, as the persuasion that his superior cares for him, and that he is full of heaviness on his account, for this is the part of exceeding love. Because "ye have heard," he says, "that he was sick; for he was sick nigh unto death." And that I am not making an excuse, hear what follows. "But God had mercy on him." What sayest thou, O heretic? Here it is written, that God's mercy retained and brought back again him who was on the point of departure. And yet if the world is evil, it is no mercy to leave a man in the evil. Our answer to the heretic is easy, but what shall we say to the Christian? for he perchance will question, and say, "if to depart and to be with Christ is far better," how saith he that he hath obtained mercy? I would ask why the same Apostle says, that "it is more needful to abide with you"? For as it was needful for him, so too for this man, who would hereafter depart to God with more exceeding riches, and greater boldness. Hereafter that would take place, even if it did not now, but the winning souls is at an end for those who have once departed thither. In many places too, Paul speaks according to the common habits of his hearers, and not every where in accordance with his own heavenly

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wisdom: for he had to speak to men of the world who still feared death. Then he shows how he esteemed Epaphroditus, and thence he gets for him respect, by saying, that his preservation was so useful to himself, that the mercy which had been shown to Epaphroditus reached him also. Moreover, without this the present life is a good; were it not so, why does Paul rank with punishment untimely deaths? as when he says, “For this cause many are weak and sickly among you, and not a few sleep” (1 Corinthians 11:30); for the future life is not (merely) better than an evil state, since (then) it were not good, but better than a good state.

“Lest I should have,” he says, “sorrow upon sorrow”; sorrow from his death in addition to that which sprung from his sickness. By this he shows how much he prized Epaphroditus.

Verse 28. *“I have sent him therefore the more diligently.”*

What means “more diligently”? It is, without procrastination, without delay, with much speed, having bidden him lay all aside, and to go to you, that he might be freed from heaviness; for we rejoice not on hearing of the health of those we love, so much as when we see them, and chiefly so when this happens contrary to hope, as it was in the case of Epaphroditus.

“I have sent him therefore the more diligently, that when ye see him again, ye may rejoice, and that I may be the less sorrowful.” How “less sorrowful”? Because if ye rejoice, I too rejoice, and he too joys at a pleasure of such sort, and I shall be “less sorrowful.” He said not sorrowless, but “less sorrowful,” to show that his soul never was free from sorrow: for he who said, “Who is weak, and I am not weak? who is made to stumble, and I burn not?” (2 Corinthians 11:29), when could such an one be free from sorrow? That is, this despondency I now cast off.

Verse 29. *“Receive him therefore in the Lord with all joy.”*

“In the Lord” either means spiritually and with much zeal, or rather “in the Lord” means God willing. Receive him in a manner worthy of saints, as saints should be received with all joy.

All this he does for their sakes, not for that of his messengers, for greater gain has the doer than the receiver of a good deed. “And such hold in honor,” that is, receive him in a manner worthy of saints.

Verse 30. *“Because for the work of Christ he came nigh unto death, hazarding his life, to supply that which was lacking in your service towards me.”*

This man had been publicly sent by the city of the Philippians, who had come as minister to Paul, and perchance bringing him some contribution, for toward the end of the Epistle he shows that he also brought him money, when he says, “Having received of Epaphroditus the things that came from you.” (Philippians 4:18.)

It is probable then, that on his arrival at the city of Rome, he found Paul in great and urgent peril, so that those who were accustomed to resort to him were unable safely to do so, but were themselves in peril by their very attendance; which is wont to happen chiefly in very great dangers, and the exceeding wrath of kings, (for when any one has offended the king, and is cast into prison, and is strictly guarded, then even his servants are debarred from access, which probably then befell Paul,) and that Epaphroditus, being of a noble nature, despised all danger, that he might go in unto him, and minister unto him, and do everything which need required. He therefore sets forth two facts, by which he gains for him their respect; the one, that he was in jeopardy well nigh unto death, he says, for my sake; the other, that in so suffering he was representing their city, so that the recompense for that his peril would be accounted to those who sent him, as if the city had sent him as their ambassador, so that a kind reception of him and approval of what he had done may rather be called a participation in the things that he had dared. And he said not, “for my sake,” but obtains the more credit for his words, by saying, “because for the work of God,” since he acted not for my sake, but for God’s sake “he was nigh unto death.” What then? though by the providence of God he died not, yet he himself regarded not his life, and gave himself up to any suffering that might befall him, so as not to remit his attendance on me. And if he gave himself up to death to attend on Paul, much more would he have endured this for the Gospel’s sake. Or rather, this also had been for the Gospel’s sake, even to have died for Paul. For we may bind about our brows the

crown of martyrdom, not only by refusing to sacrifice, but such causes as these also make death martyrdom, and if I may say something startling, these latter do so far more than the former. For he who dares to face death for the lesser cause, will much rather for the greater. Let us therefore, when we see the Saints in danger, regard not our life, for it is impossible without daring ever to perform any noble act, but need is that he who takes thought beforehand for his safety here, should fall from that which is to come.

“To supply,” he says, “your lack of service toward me.” What is this? the city was not present, but by sending him, it fulfilled through him all service toward me. He therefore supplied your lack of service, so that for this reason too he deserves to enjoy much honor, since, what ye all should have done, this hath he performed on your behalf. Here he shows that there is also a foregoing service rendered by those in safety to those in danger, for so he speaks of the lack, and the lack of service. Seest thou the spirit of the Apostle? These words spring not from arrogance, but from his great care towards them; for he calls the matter a “service” and a “lack,” that they may not be puffed up, but be moderate, nor think that they have rendered some great thing, but rather be humble-minded.

For we owe the saints a debt, and are not doing them a favor. For as supplies are due by those who are in peace and not engaged in war to such as stand in the army and fight (for these stand on their behoof), thus too is it here. For if Paul had not taught, who would have cast him into prison? Wherefore we ought to minister to the Saints. For is it not absurd to contribute to an earthly king, when engaged in war, all that he wants, as clothing and food, not according to his need alone, but abundantly, whilst to the King of Heaven, when engaged in war, and contending against far more bitter foes (for it is written. “our wrestling is not against flesh and blood”) (Ephesians 6:12), we will not supply urgent necessity? What folly is this! What ingratitude! What base love of gain! But, as it seems, the fear of man has greater force with us than hell, and the future torments. For this cause, in truth, all things are turned upside down; for political affairs are daily accomplished with much earnestness, and one must not be left behind, whilst of spiritual things there is no account taken at all; but the things which are demanded of us of necessity, and with compulsion, as though we were slaves, and against our wills, are laid down by us with much readiness, while such as are asked from willing minds, and as if from

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free men, are again deficient. I speak not against all, but against those who are behindhand with these supplies. For might not God have made these contributions compulsory? Yet He would not, for He has more care of you than of those whom you support. Wherefore He would not that you should contribute of necessity, since there is no recompense. And yet many of those who stand here are lower minded than the Jews. Consider how great things the Jews gave, tithes, first-fruits, tithes again, and again other tithes, and besides this thirteenths, and the shekel, and no one said, how much they devour; for the more they receive, the greater is the reward. They say not, They receive much, they are gluttons; which words I hear now from some. They for their part, while they are building houses, and buying estates, still think they have nothing; but if any priest is clothed in dress more bright than usual, and enjoys more than what is necessary for his sustenance, or has an attendant, that he may not be forced himself to act unbecomingly, they set the matter down for riches. And in truth we are rich even at this rate, and they admit it against their will; for we, though we have but little, are rich, whilst they, though they get everything about them, are poor.

How far shall our folly extend? does it not suffice to our punishment that we do no good deed, but must we add to it the punishment of evil speaking? For if what he has were your gifts, you lose your reward by upbraiding him for what you gave. In a word, if thou didst give it, why dost thou upbraid him? You have already born witness to his poverty, by saying that what he has are your gifts. Why then dost thou upbraid? Thou shouldest not have given, didst thou intend so to do. But dost thou speak thus, when another gives? It is then more grievous, in that when thou thyself hast not given, thou upbraidest for another man’s good deeds. How great reward thinkest thou those who are thus spoken of will receive? It is for God’s sake they thus suffer. How and wherefore? Had they so willed, they might have taken up a trader’s life, even though they received it not from their ancestors. For I hear many speaking thus at random, when we say that a certain man is poor. Had he willed, they say, he might have been rich, and then tauntingly add, His father, his grandfather, and I know not who was so; but now see what a robe he wears! But what? tell me, ought he to go about naked? You then start nice questionings on these points, but see lest thou thus speakest against thyself. Listen to that exhortation of

Christ, which says, “Judge not that ye be not judged.” (Matthew 7:1.) He might, it is true, if he had willed, have led a trader’s or a merchant’s life, and would surely not have lacked. But he would not. What then, says one, is he here profited? Tell me, what is he profited? Does he wear silken robes? Does he proudly clear his way through the forum with a troop of followers? Is he born along on horseback? Does he build houses, having where to dwell? If he act so, I too accuse him, and spare him not, but declare that he is unworthy of the priesthood. For how can he exhort others not to spend their time on these superfluities, who cannot advise himself? But if he has sufficient for support, is he therefore doing wrong? Would you have him lead a vagabond life, and beg? Wouldest not thou too, his disciple, be put to shame? But if thy father in the flesh did this, thou wouldest think shame of the thing. If thy spiritual father be compelled so to do, wilt thou not veil thy head, and even think thou art sinking into the earth? It is written, “A father’s dishonor is a reproach to the children.” (Ecclus. 3:11.) But what? Should he perish with famine? This were not like a pious man; for God willeth it not. But what do they straightway philosophize? It is written, say they, “Get you no gold, nor silver, nor brass in your purses, neither two coats, nor yet staves” (Matthew 10:9, 10), whilst these men have three or four garments, and beds well spread. I am forced now to heave a bitter sigh, and, but that it had been indecorous, I had wept too! How so? Because we are such curious searchers into the motes of others, while we feel not the beams in our own eyes. Tell me, why sayest thou not this to thyself? The answer is, Because the command is laid only on our Teachers. When then Paul says, “having food and covering we shall be therewith content” (1 Timothy 6:8), says he this only to Teachers? By no means, but to all men; and this is clear, if we will begin farther back. For what does he say? “Godliness with contentment is great gain (1 Timothy 6:6); for we brought nothing into this world, it is certain that neither can we carry anything out” (1 Timothy 6:7); he then straightway adds, “And having food and covering, we shall be therewith content; but they that desire to be rich, fall into a temptation and a snare, and many foolish and hurtful lusts.” (1 Timothy 6:8, 9.) You see that this is spoken to all; and how is it when he says again, “Make not provision for the flesh to fulfill the lusts thereof” (Romans 13:14), is not this said absolutely to all? and what when he says, “Meats for the belly, and the belly for meats, but God shall bring to nought both it and them” (1

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Corinthians 6:13); or what when he says, “But she that giveth herself to pleasure, is dead while she liveth” (1 Timothy 5:6), speaking of a widow. Is then the widow a Teacher? Has not he said himself, “But I permit not a woman to teach, nor to have dominion over a man”? (1 Timothy 2:12.) But if a widow, in old age, (and age has need of great attendance,) and a woman’s nature too, (for the woman’s sex, being weak, has need of more refreshment,) if then, where there is both the age and the nature, he suffers her not to live in luxury, but even says that she is dead, (for he did not simply forbid a life of luxury, but said, “she who giveth herself to luxury is dead while she liveth,”) and thus hath cut her off, (for she that is dead is cut off,) what indulgence then will any man have, who does those things, for which a woman and an aged one too is punished?

Yet no one gives a thought to these things, no one searches them out. And this I have been compelled to say, not from any wish to free the priests from these charges, but to spare you. They indeed suffer no harm at your hands, even if it is with cause and justice that they are thus charged of being greedy of gain; for, whether ye speak, or whether ye forbear, they must there give an account to the Judge, so that your words hurt them not at all; but if your words are false besides, they for their part gain by these false accusations, whilst ye hurt yourselves by these means. But it is not so with you; for be the things true, which ye bring against them, or be they false, ye speak ill of them to your hurt. And how so? If they be true, in that ye judge your Teachers, and subvert order, ye do it to your hurt. For if we must not judge a brother, much less a Teacher. But if they be false, the punishment and retribution is intolerable; for of “every idle word ye shall give account.” (Matthew 12:36.) For your sake then I thus act and labor.

But as I said, no one searches out these things, no one busies himself about these things, no one communes with himself on any of these things. Would ye that I should add still more? “Whosoever forsaketh not all that he hath, saith the Christ, is not worthy of Me.” (Luke 14:33; Matthew 10:37.) What when he says, “It is hard for a rich man to enter into the kingdom of heaven”? (Matthew 19:23; Mark 10:24.) What when he says again, “Woe unto you that are rich, for ye have received your consolation”? (Luke 6:24.) No one searches this out, no one bears it in mind, no one reasons with himself, but all sit as severe inquisitors on other men’s cases. Yet this

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is to make themselves sharers in the charges. But listen, that for your own sake I may free the priests from the charges, which ye say lie against them, for the persuasion that they transgress the law of God, inclines you not a little towards evil. Come then, let us examine this matter. Christ said, “Provide neither gold nor silver, neither two coats, neither shoes, nor girdle, nor yet staves.” (Matthew 10:9, 10.) What then? tell me, did Peter transgress this command? Surely he did so, in having a girdle and a garment, and shoes, for listen to the words of the Angel, “Gird thyself, and bind on thy sandals.” (Acts 12:8.) And yet he had no such great need of sandals, for at that season a man may go even unshod; their great use is in the winter, and yet he had them. What shall we say of Paul, when he writes thus to Timothy, “Do thy diligence to come before winter”? (2 Timothy 4:21.) He gives him orders too and says, “The cloak that I left at Troas with Carpus bring when thou comest, and the books, especially the parchments.” (2 Timothy 4:13.) See he speaks of a cloak, and no one can say that he had not another which he wore; for if he did not wear one at all, it were superfluous to order this one to be brought, and if he could not be without one to wear, it is clear he had a second.

What shall we say of his remaining “two whole years in his own hired dwelling”? (Acts 28:30.) Did then this chosen vessel disobey Christ? this man who said, “Yet I live; and yet no longer I, but Christ liveth in me” (Galatians 2:20), concerning whom Christ testified, saying, “He is a chosen vessel unto Me”? (Acts 9:15.) I ought to leave this difficulty with you, without supplying any solution to the question. I ought to exact of you this penalty for your negligence in the Scriptures, for this is the origin of all such difficulties. For we know not the Scriptures, we are not trained in the law of God, and so we become sharp inquirers into the faults of others, whilst we take no account of our own. I ought then to have exacted from you this penalty. But what shall I do? Fathers freely give to their sons many things beyond what is fitting: when their fatherly compassion is kindled, on seeing their child with downcast look, and wasted with grief, they themselves also feel sharper pangs than he, and rest not until they have removed the ground of his dejection.

So be it at least here, be ye at least dejected at not receiving, that ye may receive well. What then is it? They opposed not, far be it; but diligently followed the commands of Christ, for those commands were but for a

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season, and not enduring; and this I say not from conjecture, but from the divine Scriptures. And how? Luke relates that Christ said to His disciples, "When I sent you forth without purse, and wallet, and girdle, and shoes, lacked ye anything? And they said nothing. (Luke 22:35.) But for the future provide them." But tell me, what could he do? could he have but one coat? How then? If need was that this be washed, should he, because without it, stay at home? should he without it go abroad in an unbecoming manner, when need called? Consider what a thing it would have been that Paul, who made the circuit of the world with such great success, should remain at home for want of raiment, and thus hinder his noble work. And what if violent cold had set in, or rain had drenched it, or perhaps frozen in, how could he dry his raiment? must he again remain without it? And what if cold had deprived his body of strength? must he waste away with disease, and be unable to speak? For hear what be says to Timothy, to prove that they were not furnished with adamantine bodies, "Use a little wine for thy stomach's sake, and thine often infirmities." (1 Timothy 5:23.) And again, when he speaks of another, "I counted it necessary to send to you your messenger, and minister to my needs." (Philippians 2:25.) "For indeed he was sick, nigh unto death; but God had mercy on him, and not on him only, but on me also." (Philippians 2:27.) So that they were subject to every sort of sickness. What then? must they die? By no means. For what cause then did Christ at that time give them that command? To show His own power, and to prove that in after times He was able to do it, though He did it not. But wherefore did He not do it? They were much more admirable than the Israelites, whose shoes did not wax old, neither their garments, and that too whilst they were journeying through that desert where the glowing rays of the sun strike so hot, that they are capable of consuming even stones. (Ref. to Deuteronomy 29:5.) Why then did he do this? For thy sake. For since thou wouldest not remain in health, but be full of wounds, He gave you that which might serve for medicine. And this is hence manifest; could He not Himself have fed them? He that gave to thee, who wast an enemy with Him, would He not much more have given to Paul? He who gave to the Israelites, those murmurers, those fornicators, those idolaters, would He not much more have given to Peter, who spent all for His sake? He who suffered wicked men to possess aught, would He not much more have freely given to John, who for Him forsook even his father? Yet he would not: through your

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hands he feeds them, that you may be sanctified. And see the excess of His lovingkindness. He chose that His disciples should be in want, that thou mightest be a little refreshed.

For if He had freed them from all want, they would have been much more admirable, far more glorious. But then that which is to thee salvation would have been cut off. God willed not then that they should be admirable, that thou mightest be saved, but that they should rather be lowered. He hath suffered them to be less accounted of, that thou mightest be able to be saved. The Teacher who receiveth is not equally reverenced, but he who receives not is chiefly honored. But then in the latter case the disciple is not benefited, he is hindered of his fruit. Seest thou the wisdom of God who thus loveth man? For as He Himself sought not His own glory, nor had respect to Himself, but when He was in glory, chose to be dishonored for thy sake, thus too is it in the case of your Teachers. When they might have been highly reverenced, He preferred that they should be subject to contempt for thy sake, that thou mightest be able to profit, that thou mightest be able to be rich. For he is in want of the things of this life, that you may abound in things spiritual. If then He might have made them above all want, He showed that for thy sake He suffers them to be in want. Knowing then these things, let us turn ourselves to well doing, not to accusations. Let us not be overcurious about the failings of others, but take account of our own; let us reckon up the excellences of other men, while we bear in mind our faults; and thus shall we be well pleasing to God. For he who looks at the faults of others, and at his own excellences, is injured in two ways; by the latter he is carried up to arrogance, through the former he falls into listlessness. For when he perceives that such an one hath sinned, very easily will he sin himself; when he perceives that he hath in aught excelled, very easily becometh he arrogant. He who consigns to oblivion his own excellences, and looks at his failings only, whilst he is a curious enquirer of the excellences, not the sins, of others, is profited in many ways. And how? When he sees that such an one hath done excellently, he is raised to emulate the same; when he sees that he himself hath sinned, he is rendered humble and modest. If we act thus, if we thus regulate ourselves, we shall be able to obtain the good things which are promised, through the grace and lovingkindness of our Lord Jesus Christ, with whom, etc.

HOMILY 10

PHILIPPIANS 3:1-3

"Finally, my brethren, rejoice in the Lord. To write the same things to you, to me indeed is not irksome, but for you it is safe. Beware of the dogs, beware of the evil workers, beware of the concision. For we are the circumcision, who worship God in the spirit, and glory in Christ Jesus, and have no confidence in the flesh."

DEJECTION and care, whenever they strain the soul beyond due measure, bereave it of its native force. And therefore Paul relieves the Philippians, who were in great despondency, and they were in despondency because they did not know how matters were with Paul; they were in despondency because they thought that it was already over with him, because of the preaching, because of Epaphroditus. It is in giving them assurance on all these points that he introduces the words, "Finally, my brethren, rejoice." "You no longer have," he says, "cause for despondency. You have Epaphroditus, for whose sake you were grieved; you have Timothy; I am myself coming to you; the Gospel is gaining ground. What is henceforth wanting to you? Rejoice!"

Now he calls the Galatians indeed "children" (Galatians 4:19), but these "brethren." For when he aims either to correct anything or to show his fondness, he calls them "children"; but when he addresses them with greater honor, "brethren" is the title. "Finally, my brethren," he says, "rejoice in the Lord." He said rightly "in the Lord," not "after the world." for this is no rejoicing. These tribulations, he says, which are according to Christ bring joy. "To write the same things to you, to me indeed is not irksome, but for you it is safe. Beware of the dogs." Dost thou mark how he forbears to bring in the exhortation at the beginning? But after he had given them much commendation, after he had shown his admiration of them, then he does this, and again repeats his commendation. For this mode of speech seems to bear somewhat hard upon them. Wherefore he overshadows it on every side. But whom does he style "dogs"? There were at this place some of those, whom he hints at in all his Epistles, base and contemptible Jews, greedy of vile lucre and fond of power, who,

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desiring to draw aside many of the faithful, preached both Christianity and Judaism at the same time, corrupting the Gospel. As then they were not easily discernible, therefore he says, “beware of the dogs”: the Jews are no longer children; once the Gentiles were called dogs, but now the Jews. Wherefore? because as the Gentiles were strangers both to God and to Christ, even so are these become this now. And he shows forth their shamelessness and violence, and their infinite distance from the relation of children, for that the Gentiles were once called “dogs,” hear what the Canaanitish woman says, “Yea, Lord: for even the dogs eat of the crumbs which fall from their masters’ table.” (Matthew 15:27.) But that they might not have this advantage, since even dogs are at the table, he adds that, whereby he makes them aliens also, saying, “Beware of the evil workers”; he admirably expressed himself, “beware of the evil workers”; they work, he means, but for a bad end, and a work that is much worse than idleness, plucking up what is laid in goodly order.

“Beware,” he says, “of the concision.” The rite of circumcision was venerable in the Jews’ account, forasmuch as the Law itself gave way thereto, and the Sabbath was less esteemed than circumcision. For that circumcision might be performed the Sabbath was broken; but that the Sabbath might be kept, circumcision was never broken; and mark, I pray, the dispensation of God. This is found to be even more solemn than the Sabbath, as not being omitted at certain times. When then it is done away, much more is the Sabbath. Wherefore Paul makes a concision of the name, and says, “Beware of the concision”; and he did not say “that circumcision is evil, that it is superfluous,” lest he should strike the men with dismay, but he manages it more wisely, withdrawing them from the thing, but gratifying them with the word, nay, rather with the thing too, in a more serious way. But not so in the case of the Galatians, for since in that case the disease was great, he forthwith adopts the remedy of amputation with open front and with all boldness; but in this case, as they had done nothing of the sort, he vouchsafes them the gratification of the title, he casts out the others, and says, “Beware of the concision; for we are the circumcision” — how? — “who worship God in spirit, and have no confidence in the flesh.” He said not that” we test the one circumcision and the other, which is the better of the two”; but he would not even allow it a share in the name; but what does he say? That that circumcision is

"concision." Why? Because they do nothing but cut the flesh up. For when what is done is not of the law, it is nothing else than a concision and cutting up of the flesh; it was then either for this reason that he called it so, or because they were trying to cut the Church in twain; and we call the thing "cutting up" in those who do this at random, without aim and without skill. Now if you must seek circumcision, he says, you will find it among us, "who worship God in spirit," i.e. who worship spiritually.

For answer me, which is superior, the soul or the body? Evidently the former. Therefore that circumcision is also superior, or rather, no longer superior, but this is the only circumcision; for while the type stood, He rightly brought it forward in conjunction, writing, "For ye shall circumcise the foreskins of your hearts." (Jeremiah 4:4.) In the same way in the Epistle to the Romans he does away with it, saying, "for he is not a Jew which is one outwardly, neither is that circumcision which is outward in the flesh; but he is a Jew which is one inwardly, and circumcision is that of the heart, in the spirit, not in the letter." (Romans 2:28, 29.) And lastly, he takes from it the very name, "neither is it circumcision," he maintains; for the type while the reality is yet to come, is called this, but when the reality has come, it no longer retains the title. As in delineation, a man has drawn a king in outline; so long as the colors are not put on we say, Lo, there is the king, but when they are added, the type is lost in the reality, and ceases to show. And he said not, "for the circumcision is in us," but "we are the circumcision," and justly; for this is the Man, the circumcision in virtue, this is really the Man. And he did not say, "For among them is the concision"; for they themselves are henceforth in a condition of ruin and of wickedness. But no longer, says he, is circumcision performed in the body, but in the heart. "And have no confidence," says he, "in the flesh; though I myself might have confidence even in the flesh." (v. 4.) What does he call "confidence" here, and "in the flesh"? Boasting, boldness, a high tone. And he did well to add this; for if he had been of the Gentiles, and had condemned circumcision, and not only circumcision, but all those that adopted it out of place, it would have seemed that he was running it down, because he lacked the high ancestry of Judaism, as being a stranger to its solemn rites, and having no part therein. But as it is, he, who, though a sharer, yet blames them, will not therefore blame them as having no share in them, but as disowning them; not from ignorance, but

most especially from acquaintance with them. Accordingly observe what he says in his Epistle to the Galatians also; having been brought into a necessity of saying great things about himself, how even in these circumstances does he manifest nought but humility. “For ye have heard, of my manner of life in time past,” he says, n the Jews religion” (Galatians 1:13); and again here; “if any other man thinketh to have confidence in the flesh, I more.” (v. 4). And he immediately added, “a Hebrew of Hebrews. But “if any other man,” says he, showing the necessity, showing that it was on their account that he spoke. “If ye have confidence,” he says, I also say so, since I am silent. And observe the absence of all ungraciousness in the reproofs; by forbearing to do it by name, he gave even them the opportunity of retracing their steps. “If any one thinketh to have confidence”; and it was well to say “thinketh,” either inasmuch as they really had no such confidence, or as that confidence was no real confidence, for all was by necessity, and not of choice. “Circumcised on the eighth day”; and he sets down the first that wherein they chiefly boasted, viz. the ordinance of circumcision. “Of the stock of Israel.” He pointed out both these circumstances, that he was neither a proselyte, nor born of proselytes; or from his being circumcised on the eighth day, it follows that he was not a proselyte, and from his being of the stock of Israel, that he was not of proselyte parents. But that you may not imagine that he was of the stock of Israel as coming of the ten tribes, he says, “of the tribe of Benjamin.” So that he was of the more approved portion, for the place of the priests was in the lot of this tribe. “An Hebrew of Hebrews.” Because he was not a proselyte, but from of old, of distinguished Jews; for he might have been of Israel, and yet not “an Hebrew of Hebrews,” for many were already corrupting the matter, and were strangers to the language, being encircled by other nations; it is either this then, or the great superiority of his birth, that he shows. “According to the law a Pharisee.” He is coming now to the circumstances dependent on his own will; for all those things were apart from the will, for his being circumcised was not of himself, nor that he was of the stock of Israel, nor that he was of the tribe of Benjamin. So that, even among these he has a larger share, even though there were really many who partook with him. Where then are we to place the “rather”? Particularly herein that he was not a proselyte; for to be of the most distinguished tribe and sect, and this from his ancestors of old, was a thing which belonged not to many. But he comes to the things which

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are matters of choice, wherein we have the “rather.” “As touching the law, a Pharisee; as touching zeal, persecuting the Church.” But this is not sufficient; for it is possible to be a Pharisee even, and yet not very zealous. But this also he adds; behold the “rather.” “According to righteousness.” It is possible, however, to be adventurous, or to act thus from ambition, and not out of zeal for the law, as the chief priests did. Yet neither was this the case, but, “according to the righteousness which is in the law, found blameless.” If then both for purity of descent, and earnestness, and habits, and mode of life, I surpassed all, why have I renounced all those dignities, he asks, but because I found that the things of Christ are better, and better far? Wherefore he added; “howbeit what things were gain to me, these have I counted loss for Christ.” (v. 7.)

Such a course of life, so strictly regulated, and entered upon from earliest childhood, such unblemished extraction, such dangers, plots, labors, forwardness, did Paul renounce, “counting them but loss,” which before were “gain,” that he might “win Christ.” But we do not even contemn money, that we may “win Christ,” but prefer to fail of the life to come rather than of the good things of the present life. And yet this is nothing else than loss; for tell me now, let us examine in detail the conditions of riches, and see whether it be not loss accompanied with trouble, and without any gain. For tell me, what is the advantage of those stores of costly garments, what good do we gain when we are arrayed in them? None, nay, we are only losers. How so? Because even the poor man, in his cheap and threadbare clothing, does not bear the scorching in time of heat any wise worse than yourself; nay, rather he bears it better, for clothes that are threadbare and worn single allow more ease to the body, but not so with those which are new made, though they be finer than the spider’s web. Besides, you, from your excessive self-importance, wear even two and often three inner garments, and a cloak and girdle, and breeches too, but no one blames him if he wears but a single inner garment; so that he is the man that endures most easily. It is owing to this that we see rich men sweating, but the poor subject to nothing of the sort. Since then his cheap clothing, which is sold for a trifle, answers the same or even a better purpose to him, and those clothes, which oblige a man to pay down much gold, do only the same thing, is not this great superabundance so much loss? For it has added nothing in respect of its use and service, but your

purse is emptied of so much the more gold, and the same use and service. You who have riches have purchased for a hundred pieces of gold, or even more, but the poor man for a trifling sum of silver. Do you perceive the loss? No, for your pride will not let you see it. Would you have us make out this account in the case of the gold ornaments too, which men put alike about their horses and their wives? For besides the other evils, the possession of money makes fools of men; they account their wives and horses to be worthy of the same honor, and the ornamentation of both is the same; and they would make themselves finer by the same means as the very beasts that carry them, or as the very skins of the awnings, wherein they are born. What now is the use of decking out a mule or a horse with gold? or the lady, that has such a weight of gold and jewels about her person, what does she gain? “But the golden ornaments are never worn out,” he answers. Assuredly this also is said that in the baths and many places both precious stones and gold ornaments lose much of their value. But be it so, and grant that they are not injured, tell me, what is the gain? And how is it when they drop out, and are lost? is there no loss sustained? And how when they draw down upon you envy and intrigues? is there no loss then? For when they do the wearer no good, but rather inflame the eyes of the envious, and act as an incitement to the robber, do they not become loss? And again, say, when a man may use them for a serviceable purpose, but is unable on account of the extravagance of his wife, and is obliged to starve and to stint himself, that he may see her arrayed in gold, is it not a matter of loss? For it was on this account that goods have their name from use, not that we should use them thus like goldsmiths’ samples, but that we should do some good therewith; so then when love of gold does not allow this, is not the whole thing loss? for he that dares not use them forbears the use as if they were another’s property, and there is no use of them in any way.

Again, how is it when we erect splendid and spacious mansions, decorated with columns, marbles, porticos, arcades, and in every possible way, setting images and statues everywhere? Many indeed even call demons out of these, i.e. the images, but let us omit the examination of those points. What too is the meaning of the gilded ceiling? Does it not supply the same need as to him, whose house is on a moderate scale? “But there is great delight in it,” he says. Yes, for the first or second day, and afterwards,

none at all, but it stands merely for nothing. For if the sun does not strike us with wonder, from its being customary, much more do works of art fail, and we only look at them like things of clay. For tell me, what does a range of pillars contribute to make your dwelling superior to others, or the finest statues, or the gilding spread over the wall? Nothing; rather, these come of luxury and insolence, and overweening pride and folly; for everything there ought to be necessary and useful, not superfluous things. Do you see that the thing is loss? Do you see that it is superfluous and unprofitable? for if it supplies no further use or delight, (and it "does," in the course of time, bring satiety,) it is nothing else than loss, and vainglory is the hindrance, which will not let us see this.

Did Paul then forsake those things which he "counted gain," and shall not we even quit our loss, for Christ's sake? How long shall we be riveted to the earth? How long till we shall look up to heaven? Do ye not mark the aged, what little perception they have of the past? Do ye not mark those that are finishing their course, both men in age, and men in youth? Do ye not see persons in the midst of life bereft of them? Why are we so wedded to unstable objects? Why are we linked to things that are shifting? How long before we lay hold of the things that last? What would not the old give, were it granted them to divest themselves of their old age? How irrational then to wish to return to our former youth, and gladly to give everything for the sake of this, that we might become younger, and yet when it is ours to receive a youth that knows no old age, a youth too, which, joined with great riches, hath far more of spirit, to be unwilling to give up a little trifle, but to hold fast things that contribute not a whir to the present life. They can never rescue you from death, they have no power to drive away disease, to stay old age, or any one of those events, which happen by necessity and according to the law of nature. And do you still hold to them? Tell me, what do you gain? Drunkenness, gluttony, pleasures contrary to nature and various in kind, which are far worse torturers than the hardest masters.

These are the advantages which we gain from riches, nor is there one besides, since we are not so minded, for if we had had the mind, we might have won heaven itself for our inheritance by our riches. "So then riches are good," he says. It is not riches, but the will of the possessor that effects this, for because it is the will that does this, it is in the power even

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of a poor man to win heaven. For, as I have often said, God does not regard the amount of the gifts, but the will of the givers; it is possible even for one in poverty, who has given but little, to bear off all, for God requires a measure proportioned to our ability, neither will riches secure heaven to us, nor poverty, hell; but a good or a bad will, either one or the other. This then let us correct, this let us repossess, this let us regulate, and all will then be easy to us.

For as the artificer works the wood the same, whether his axe be of iron or of gold, or rather he does it the better with an implement of iron, so here too, the straight path of virtue is more easily kept in a state of poverty. For touching riches we read, “It is easier for a camel to go through a needle’s eye, than for a rich man to enter into the kingdom of Heaven.” (Matthew 19:24.) But He has made no such declarations about poverty; nay, the very reverse. “Sell thy goods, and give to the poor, and come follow Me” (v. 21); as if the act of following were to spring from the selling.

Never then let us flee from poverty as an evil, for it is the procurer of heaven. Again, let us never follow riches as a good; for they are the ruin of such as walk unwarily, but in everything directing our eyes to God, let us, as occasion requires, use those gifts which He has vouchsafed us, both strength of body, and abundance of money, and every other gift; for it is unnatural that we, who have our being for Him, should make these things serviceable to others, yet not to Him who has made us He formed thine eye: make it serviceable to Him, not to the devil. But how serviceable to Him? By contemplating His creatures and praising and glorifying Him, and by withdrawing it from all gaze at women. Did He make thy hands? Preserve them for His use, not for the devil, not putting them out for robbery and rapine, but for His commandments and for good deeds, for earnest prayers, for holding out help to the fallen. Hath He made thine ears? Give these to Him, and not to effeminate strains nor to disgraceful tales; but “let all thy communication be in the law of the Most High.” (Ecclus. 9:15.) For “stand,” he says, “in the multitude of the elders, and whoever is wise, cleave unto him.” (Ecclus. 6:34.) Did he make thy mouth? Let it do nought that is displeasing to Him, but sing psalms, hymns, and spiritual songs. “Let no corrupt speech proceed out of your mouth,” says the Apostle, “but such as is good for edifying as the need may be, that it

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may give grace to them that hear" (Ephesians 4:29); for edification and not for subversion, for fair words and not for evil speaking and plotting against other, but the very opposite. He hath made thy feet, not that thou shouldest run to do evil, but to do good. He made thy belly, not that thou shouldest cram it to bursting, but to practice lessons of wisdom. For the production of children, He implanted desire in thy mind, not for fornication, nor for adultery. He gave thee understanding, not to make of thee a blasphemer or a reviler, but that thou mightest be without falsehood. He gave us both money to be used on fitting occasion, and strength likewise to be used on fitting occasion. He instituted arts, that our present state of existence might be held together by them, not that we should separate ourselves from spiritual things, not that we should devote ourselves to the base arts but to the necessary ones, that we might minister to one another's good, and not that we should plot one against another. He gave us a roof, that it might afford shelter from the rain, and no more, not that it should be decked out with gold, while the poor man perishes with hunger. He gave clothing to cover us, not to make a display withal, not that things like these should have much gold lavished upon them, and that Christ should perish naked. He gave you a place of shelter, not that you should keep it to yourself, but to offer it to others also. He gave thee land, not that, cutting off the chief portion of it, you should spend the good gifts of God upon harlots, and dancers, and actors, and flute players, and harp players, but upon those that hunger and are in want. He gave you the sea to sail on, that you might not be wearied with journeying, not that you should pry into its depths, and bring up thence precious stones and all the other things of the same kind, nor that you should make this your business.

"Why then are there precious stones?" he says. Nay, do you tell me why these stones are such, and why one class are regarded as of great value, while the others are more useful? For these may be conducive to building, but those to no purpose; and these are stronger than those "But they," he says, "produce a beautiful effect." How so? it is a matter of fancy. Are they whiter? No, they are not whiter than pure white marble, nor nearly equal to it. But are they stronger? Not even this can be said for them. Well then, are they more useful? are they larger? Not even this. Whence then are they so admired, save from fancy? For if they are neither more beautiful,

(for we shall find others more shining and more white,) nor useful, nor stronger, whence came they to be so admired? Was it not from mere fancy? Why then did God give them? They were not His gift, but it is your own imagination that they are anything great. “How is it, then,” he answers, “that even the Scripture shows admiration of them?” So far it addresses itself to your fancy. As a master too in talking to a child often admires the same object as it does, when he desires to attract and engage it.

Why do you aim at finery in your clothing? He clothed thee with a garment and with sandals. But where is there any reason for these things? “The judgments of God,” he says, “are more to be desired than gold; yea than much fine gold.” (Psalm 19:10.) These, beloved, are of no use. Had they been of use, he would not have bidden us despise them. And for Holy Scripture, it speaks with reference to our notion, and this too is an instance of God’s lovingkindness. “Why then,” he asks, “did He give purple and the like?” These things are products of God’s gift. For He has willed by other things also to show forth His own riches. And He gave you corn too by itself; but from this you make many things, cakes and sweetmeats, of every sort and variety, having much enjoyment. Pleasure and vainglory give rise to all these inventions. It pleased you to set them before everything. For if a foreigner or a rustic, who was ignorant of the land, should put the question, and, seeing your admiration, were to say, “Why do you admire these?” What have you to say? that they are fair to look at? But not so. Let us then give up such notions; let us lay hold of the things that are truly real. These are not, but simply pass away, only flowing past like a river. Wherefore I charge you, let us take our stand upon the rock, that we both escape being easily turned about, and that we may obtain the good things to come, by the grace and lovingkindness of our Lord Jesus Christ, with whom, etc.

HOMILY 11

PHILIPPIANS 3:7-10

"Howbeit what things were gain to me, these have I counted loss for Christ. Yea verily, and I counted all things to be loss for the excellency of the knowledge of Christ Jesus my Lord: for whom I suffered the loss of all things, and do count them but dung, that I may gain Christ and be found in Him, not having a righteousness of mine own, even that which is of the law, but that which is through faith in Christ, the righteousness which is of God."

IN our contests with heretics, we must make the attack with minds in vigor, that they may be able to give exact attention. I will therefore begin nay present discourse where the last ended. And what was that? Having enumerated every Jewish boast, both those from his birth, and those that were from choice, he added, "Howbeit, what things were gain to me, these have I counted to be loss for the excellency of the knowledge of Christ Jesus my Lord; for whom I suffered the loss of all things, and do count them but dung, that I may gain Christ." Here the heretics spring to their attack: for even this comes of the wisdom of the Spirit, to suggest to them hopes of victory, that they may undertake the fight.

For if it had been spoken plainly, they would have acted here as they have done in other places, they would have blotted out the words, they would have denied the Scripture, when they were unable at all to look it in the face. But as in the case of fishes, that which can take them is concealed so that they may swim up, and does not lie open to view; this in truth hath come to pass here too. The Law, they say, is called "dung" by Paul, it is called "loss." He says, it was not possible to gain Christ except I "suffered" this "loss." All these things induced the heretics to accept this passage, thinking it to be favorable to them: but when they had taken it, then did he enclose them on all sides with his nets. For what do they themselves say? Lo! the Law is "loss," is "dung"; how then do ye say that it is of God? But these very words are favorable to the Law, and how they are so, shall be hence manifest. Let us attend accurately to his very words. He said not, The Law is loss: but "I counted it loss."

But when he spake of gain, he said not, I counted them, but "they were gain." But when he spake of loss he said," I counted": and this rightly; for the former was naturally so, but the latter became so, from my opinion. "What then? Is it not so?" says he. It is loss for Christ.

And how has the law become gain? And it was not *counted* gain, but was so. For consider how great a thing it was, to bring men, brutalized in their nature, to the shape of men. If the law had not been, grace would not have been given. Wherefore? Because it became a sort of bridge; for when it was impossible to mount on high from a state of great abasement, a ladder was formed. But he who has ascended has no longer need of the ladder; yet he does not despise it, but is even grateful to it. For it has placed him in such a position, as no longer to require it. And yet for this very reason, that he doth not require it, it is just that he should acknowledge his obligation, for he could not fly up. And thus is it with the Law, it hath led us up on high; wherefore it was gain, but for the future we esteem it loss. How? Not because it is loss, but because grace is far greater. For as a poor man, that was in hunger, as long as he has silver, escapes hunger, but when he finds gold, and it is not allowable to keep both, considers it loss to retain the former, and having thrown it away, takes the gold coin; so also here; not because the silver is loss, for it is not; but because it is impossible to take both at once, but it is necessary to leave one. Not the Law then is loss, but for a man to cleave to the Law, and desert Christ. Wherefore it is then loss when it leads us away from Christ. But if it sends us on to Him, it is no longer so. For this cause he saith "loss for Christ"; if for Christ, it is not so naturally. But why doth not the Law suffer us to come to Christ? For this very cause, he tells us, was it given. And Christ is the fulfilling of the Law, and Christ is the end of the Law. It doth suffer us if we will. "For Christ is the end of the Law." He who obeyeth the Law, leaves the Law itself. It suffers, if we take heed to it, but if we do not take heed, it suffers not. "Yea verily, and I have counted all things but loss." Why, he means, do I say this of the Law? Is not the world good? Is not the present life good? but if they draw me away from Christ, I count these things loss. Why? "for the excellency of the knowledge of Jesus Christ my Lord." For when the sun hath appeared, it is loss to sit by a candle: so that the loss comes by comparison, by the superiority of the other. You see that Paul makes a comparison from superiority, not from diversity of kind; for that which is

superior, is superior to somewhat of like nature to itself. So that he shows the connection of that knowledge by the same means, by which he draws the superiority from the comparison. “For whom I suffered the loss of all things, and do count them dung, that I may gain Christ.” It is not yet manifest, whether he speaks of the Law, for it is likely that he applies it to the things of this world. For when he says, “the things which were gain to me, those I have counted loss for Christ; yea verily,” he adds, “I count all things loss.” Although he said all things, yet it is things present; and if you wish it to be the Law too, not even so is it insulted. For dung comes from wheat, and the strength of the wheat is the dung, I mean, the chaff. But as the dung was useful in its former state, so that we gather it together with the wheat, and had there been no dung, there would have been no wheat, thus too is it with the Law.

Seest thou, how everywhere he calls it “loss,” not in itself, but for Christ. “Yea verily, and I count all things but loss.” Wherefore again? “For the excellency of the knowledge (of Him), for whom I suffered the loss of all things.” Again, “ wherefore too I count all things to be loss, that I may gain Christ.”

See how, from every point, he lays hold of Christ as his foundation, and suffers not the Law to be anywhere exposed, or receive a blow, but guards it on every side. “And that I may be found in Him, not having a righteousness of mine own, even that which is of the Law.” If he who had righteousness, ran to this other righteousness because his own was nothing, how much rather ought they, who have it not, to run to Him? And he well said, “a righteousness of mine own,” not that which I gained by labor and toil, but that which I found from grace. If then he who was so excellent is saved by grace, ranch more are you. For since it was likely they would say that the righteousness which comes from toil is the greater, he shows that it is dung in comparison with the other. For otherwise I, who was so excellent in it, would not have cast it away, and run to the other. But what is that other? That which is from the faith of God, i.e. it too is given by God. This is the righteousness of God; this is altogether a gift. And the gifts of God far exceed those worthless good deeds, which are due to our own diligence.

But what is “By faith that I may know Him”? So then knowledge is through faith, and without faith it is impossible to know Him. Why how? Through it we must “know the power of His resurrection.” For what reason can demonstrate to us the Resurrection? None, but faith only. For if the resurrection of Christ, who was according to the flesh, is known by faith, how can the generation of the Word of God be comprehended by reasoning? For the resurrection is less than the generation. Why? Because of that there have been many examples, but of this none ever; for many dead arose before Christ, though after their resurrection they died, but no one was ever born of a virgin. If then we must comprehend by faith that which is inferior to the generation according to the flesh, how can that which is far greater, immeasurably and incomparably greater, be comprehended by reason? These things make the righteousness; this must we believe that He was able to do, but how He was able we cannot prove. For from faith is the fellowship of His sufferings. But how? Had we not believed, neither should we have suffered: had we not believed, that “if we endure with Him, we shall also reign with Him” (2 Timothy 2:12), we should not have endured the sufferings. Both the generation and the resurrection is comprehended by faith. Seest thou, that faith must not be absolutely, but through good works; for he especially believes that Christ hath risen, who in like sort gives himself up to dangers, who hath fellowship with Him in His sufferings. For he hath fellowship with Him who rose again, with Him who liveth; wherefore he saith, “And may be found in Him, not having a righteousness of mine own, even that which is of the law, but that which is through faith in Christ, the righteousness which is of God by faith: that I may know Him, and the power of His resurrection, and the fellowship of His sufferings, becoming conformed unto His death; if by any means I may attain unto the resurrection from the dead.” He saith, being made conformable unto His death, i.e. having fellowship; whereas He suffered from men, thus I too; wherefore he said, “becoming conformed” and again in another place, “and fill up on my part that which is lacking of the afflictions of Christ in my flesh.” (Colossians 1:24.) That is, these persecutions and sufferings work the image of His death, for He sought not His own, but the good of many.

Therefore persecutions, and afflictions, and straits, ought not to disturb you, but ought even to make you glad, because through them we are

"conformed to His death." As if he had said, We are molded to His likeness; as he says in another place, where he writeth, "bearing about in the body the dying of the Lord Jesus." (2 Corinthians 4:10.) And this too comes from great faith. For we not only believe that He arose, but that after His resurrection also He hath great power: wherefore we travel the same road which He traveled, i.e. we become brethren to Him in this respect also. As if he had said, We become Christs in this respect. O how great is the dignity of sufferings! We believe that we become "conformed to His death" through sufferings! For as in baptism, we were "buried with the likeness of His death," so here, with His death. There did he rightly say, "The likeness of His death" (Romans 6:4, 5), for there we died not entirely, we died not in the flesh, to the body, but to sin. Since then a death is spoken of, and a death; but He indeed died in the body, whilst we died to sin, and there the Man died which He assumed, who was in our flesh, but here the man of sin; for this cause he saith, "the likeness of His death," but here, no longer the likeness of His death, but His death itself. For Paul, in his persecutions, no longer died to sin, but in his very body. Wherefore, he endured the same death. "If by any means," saith he, "I may attain unto the resurrection from the dead." What sayest thou? All men will have a share in that. "For we shall not all sleep, but we shall all be changed" (1 Corinthians 15:51), and shall all share not only in the Resurrection, but in incorruption. Some indeed to honor, but others as a means of punishment. If therefore all have a share in the Resurrection, and not in the Resurrection only, but also in incorruption, how said he," If by any means I may attain," as if about to share in some especial thing? "For this cause," saith he, "I endure these things, if by any means I may attain unto the resurrection from the dead." For if thou hadst not died, thou wouldest not arise. What is it then? Some great thing seems here to be hinted at. So great was it, that he dared not openly assert it, but saith, "If by any means." I have believed in Him and His resurrection, nay, moreover, I suffer for Him, yet I am unable to be confident concerning the Resurrection. What resurrection doth he here mention? That which leads to Christ Himself. I said, that I believed in "Him, and in the power of His resurrection," and that I "have fellowship with His sufferings," and that I "become conformed to His death." Yet after all these things I am by no means confident; as he said elsewhere, "Let him that thinketh he standeth, take heed lest he fall." (1 Corinthians 10:12.) And again, "I fear test by any

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means, after that I have preached to others, I myself should be rejected." (1 Corinthians 9:27.)

Verse 12. *"Not that I have already obtained, or am already made perfect: but I press on, if so be that I may apprehend that for which also I was apprehended by Christ Jesus."*

"Not that I have already obtained." What means "already obtained"? He speaks of the prize, but if he who had endured such sufferings, he who was persecuted, he "who had in him the dying of the Lord Jesus," was not yet confident about that resurrection, what can we say? What meaneth, "if I may apprehend"? What he before said, "If I may attain to the resurrection of the dead." (2 Corinthians 4:10.) If I may apprehend, he saith, His resurrection; i.e. if I may be able to endure so great things, if I may be able to imitate Him, if I may be able to become conformed to Him. For example, Christ suffered many things, He was spit upon, He was stricken, was scourged, at last He suffered what things he suffered. This is the entire course. Through all these things it is needful that men should endure the whole contest, and so come to His resurrection. Or he means this, if I am thought worthy to attain the glorious resurrection, which is a matter of confidence, in order to His resurrection. For if I am able to endure all the contests, I shall be able also to have His resurrection, and to rise with glory. For not as yet, saith he, am I worthy, but "I press on, if so be that I may apprehend." My life is still one of contest, I am still far from the end, I am still distant from the prize, still I run, still I pursue. And He said not, I run, but "I pursue." For you know with what eagerness a man pursues. He sees no one, he thrusts aside with great violence all who would interrupt his pursuit. He collects together his mind, and sight, and strength, and soul, and body, looking to nothing else than the prize. But if Paul, who so pursued, who had suffered so many things, yet saith, "if I may attain," what should we say, who have relaxed our efforts? Then to show that the thing is of debt, he saith, "For which also I was apprehended by Christ Jesus." I was, he saith, of the number of the lost, I gasped for breath, I was nigh dead, God apprehended me. For He pursued us, when we fled from Him, with all speed. So that he points out all those things; for the words, "I was apprehended," show the earnestness of Him who wishes to apprehend us, and our great aversion to Him, our wandering, our flight from Him.

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So that we are liable for a vast debt, and no one grieves, no one weeps, no one groans, all having returned to their former state. For as before the appearance of Christ we fled from God, so now also. For we can flee from God, not in place, for He is everywhere; and hear the Prophet, when he says, “Whither shall I go from Thy Spirit, or whither shall I flee from Thy presence”? (Psalm 139:7.) How then can we flee from God? Even as we can become distant from God, even as we can be removed afar off. “They that are far from Thee,” it says, “shall perish.” (Psalm 73:27.) And again, “Have not your iniquities separated between Me and you?” (Isaiah 59:2.) How then comes this removal, how comes this separation? In purpose and soul. for it cannot be in place. For how could one fly from Him who is everywhere present? The sinner then flies. This is what the Scripture saith, “The wicked fleeth when no man pursueth him.” (Proverbs 28:1.) We eagerly fly from God, although He always pursueth us. The Apostle hasted, that he might be near Him. We haste, that we may be far off.

Are not these things then worthy of lamentation? Are they not worthy of tears? Whither fliest thou, wretched and miserable man? Whither fliest thou from thy Life and thy Salvation? If thou fly from God, with whom wilt thou take refuge? If thou fly from the Light, whither wilt thou cast thine eyes? If thou fly from thy Life, whence wilt thou henceforth live? Let us fly from the enemy of our Salvation! Whensoever we sin we fly from God, we are as runaways, we depart to a foreign land, as he who consumed his paternal goods and departed into a foreign land, who wasted all his father’s substance, and lived in want. We too have substance from our Father; and what is this? He hath freed us from our sins; He hath freely given to us power, strength for works of virtue; He hath freely given to us readiness, patience; He hath freely given to us the Holy Ghost in our baptism; if we waste these things we shall henceforth be in want. For as the sick, as long as they are troubled with fevers, and badness of their juices, are unable to arise or work, or do anything, but if any one sets them free, and brings them to health, if they then work not, this comes from their own sloth; thus too is it with us. For the disease was heavy and the fever excessive. And we lay not upon a bed, but upon wickedness itself, cast away in crime, as on a dunghill, full of sores, and evil odors, squalid, wasting away, more like ghosts than men. Evil spirits encompassed us about, the Prince of this world deriding and assaulting us; the Only-

Begotten Son of God came, sent forth the rays of His Presence, and straightway dispelled the darkness. The King, who is on His Father's throne, came to us, having left His Father's throne. And when I say having left, think not of any removal, for He filleth the heavens and the earth, but I speak of the economy; He came to an enemy, who hated Him, who turned himself away, who could not endure to behold Him, who blasphemed Him every day. He saw him lying on a dunghill, eaten with worms, afflicted with fever and hunger, having every sort of disease; for both fever vexed him, which is evil desire; and inflammation lay heavy on him, this is pride; and gnawing hunger had hold of him, which is covetousness; and putrefying sores on every side, for this is fornication; and blindness of eyes, which is idolatry; and dumbness, and madness, which is to worship stocks and stones, and address them; and great deformity, for wickedness is this, foul to behold, and a most heavy disease. And he saw us speaking more foolishly than the mad, and calling stocks our God, and stones likewise; He saw us in such great guilt, he did not reject us; was not wroth, turned not away, hated us not, for He was a Master, and could not hate His own creation. But what does he do? As a most excellent physician, He prepareth medicines of great price, and Himself tastes them first. For He Himself first followed after virtue, and thus gave it to us. And He first gave us the washing, like some antidote, and thus we vomited up all our guilt, and all things took their flight at once, and our inflammation ceased, and our fever was quenched, and our sores were dried up. For all the evils which are from covetousness, and anger, and all the rest, were dissipated by the Spirit. Our eyes were opened, our ears were opened, our tongue spake holy words: our soul received strength, our body received such beauty and bloom, as it is like that he who is born a son of God should have from the grace of the Spirit; such glory as it is like that the new-born son of a king should have, nurtured in purple. Alas! How great nobility did He confer on us!

We were born, we were nurtured, why do we again fly from our Benefactor? He then, who hath done all these things, giveth us strength too, for it was not possible, for a soul bowed down by the disease to endure it, did not He Himself give us the strength. He gave us remission of our sins. We devoured all things. He gave us strength, we wasted it. He gave us grace, we quenched it; and how? we consumed it upon nought that

was fitting, we used it for no useful end. These things have destroyed us, and what is more dreadful than all, when we are in a foreign country, and feeding on husks, we say not, Let us return to our Father, and say, “We have sinned against Heaven, and against Thee.” (Luke 15:18.) And that too, when we have so loving a Father, who eagerly desires our return. If we will only return to Him, He does not even bear to call in question our former deeds, only let us quit them. It is sufficient apology with Him, that we have returned. Not only He Himself calls not in question, but if another does so, He stops his mouth, though the accuser be one of good repute. Let us return! How long do we stand afar off? Let us perceive our dishonor, let us be sensible of our vileness. Sin makes us swine, sin brings famine to the soul; let us regain ourselves, and be sober again, and return to our former high birth, that we may obtain the good things which are to come, in Christ Jesus our Lord, with whom to the Father together with the Holy Spirit be glory, might, honor, now and ever and world without end.

HOMILY 12

PHILIPPIANS 3:13, 14

"Brethren, I count not myself yet to have apprehended: but one thing I do forgetting the things which are behind, and stretching forward to the things which are before, I press on toward the goal unto the prize of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus."

NOTHING so renders our real excellences vain and puffs them away, as to be remembering the good deeds we have done; for this produces two evils, it both renders us remiss, and raises us to haughtiness. Wherefore see how Paul, since he knew our nature to be easily inclined to remissness, though he had given great praise to the Philippians, now subdues their mind by many other things above, but chiefly by his resent words And what are they? "Brethren, I count not myself to have apprehended." But if Paul had not as yet apprehended, and is not confident about the Resurrection and things to come, hardly should they be so, who have not attained the smallest proportion of his excellence. That is, I consider that I have not as yet apprehended all virtue, as if one were speaking of a runner. Not as yet, saith he, have I completed all. And if in another place he saith, "I have fought the good fight" (2 Timothy 4:7), but here, "I count myself not as yet to have apprehended"; any one who reads carefully will well know the reason both of those, and of the present words; (for it is not necessary to dwell continually on the same point;) and that he spoke these words at a much earlier date, but the others near his death. But I am solely engaged on "one thing," says he, "in stretching forward to the things which are before." But "one thing," says he, "forgetting the things which are behind, and stretching forward to the things which are before, I press on toward the goal unto the prize of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus." For what made him reach forward unto the things which are before, was his forgetting the things that are behind. He then, who thinks that all is accomplished, and that nothing is wanting to him for the perfecting of virtue, may cease running, as having apprehended all. But he who thinks that he is still distant from the goal, will never cease running. This then we should always consider, even though we have wrought ten thousand good

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deeds; for if Paul, after ten thousand deaths, after so many dangers, considered this, how much more should we? For I fainted not, saith he, although I availed not, after running so much; nor did I despair, but I still run, I still strive. This thing only I consider, that I may in truth advance. Thus too we should act, we should forget our successes, and throw them behind us. For the runner reckons not up how many circuits he hath finished, but how many are left. We too should reckon up, not how far we are advanced in virtue, but how much remains for us. For what doth that which is finished profit us, when that which is deficient is not added? Moreover he did not say, I do not reckon up, but I do not even remember. For we thus become eager, when we apply all diligence to what is left, when we give to oblivion everything else. “Stretching forward,” saith he; before we arrive, we strive to obtain. For he that stretches forward is one who, though his feet are running, endeavors to outstrip them with the rest of his body, stretching himself towards the front, and reaching out his hands, that he may accomplish somewhat more of the course. And this comes from great eagerness, from much warmth; thus the runner should run with great earnestness, with so great eagerness, without relaxation. As far as one who so runs differs from him who lies supine, so far doth Paul differ from us. He died daily, he was approved daily, there was no season, there was no time in which his course advanced not. He wished not to take, but to snatch the prize; for in this way we may take it. He who giveth the prize standeth on high, the prize is laid up on high.

See how great a distance this is that must be run over! See how great an ascent! Thither we must fly up with the wings of the Spirit, otherwise it is impossible to surmount this height. Thither must we go with the body, for it is allowed. “For our citizenship is in heaven” (Philippians 3:20), there is the prize; seest thou the runners, how they live by rule, how they touch nothing that relaxes their strength, how they exercise themselves every day in the palaestra, under a master, and by rule? Imitate them, or rather exhibit even greater eagerness, for the prizes are not equal. many are those who would hinder you; live by rule: many are the things which relax your strength; make its feet agile: for it is possible so to do, it comes not naturally, but by our will. Let us bring it to lightness, lest our swiftness of foot be hindered by the weight of other things. Teach thy feet to be sure. for there are many slippery places, and if thou fallest, straightway thou

losest much. But yet if thou fall, rise up again. Even thus mayst thou obtain the victory. Never attempt slippery things, and thou wilt not fall; walk upon firm ground, up with thy head, up with thine eyes; these commands the trainers give to those who run. Thus thy strength is supported; but if thou stoopest downward, thou fallest, thou art relaxed. Look upward, where the prize is; the sight of the prize increaseth the determination of our will. The hope of taking it suffereth not to perceive the toils, it maketh the distance appear short. And what is this prize? No palm branch; but what? The kingdom of heaven, everlasting rest, glory together with Christ, the inheritance, brotherhood, ten thousand good things, which it is impossible to name. It is impossible to describe the beauty of that prize; he who hath it alone knoweth it, and he who is about to receive it. It is not of gold, it is not set with jewels, it is far more precious. Gold is mire, in comparison with that prize, precious stones are mere bricks in comparison with its beauty. If thou hast this, and takest thy departure to heaven, thou wilt be able to walk there with great honor; the angels will reverence thee, when thou bearest this prize, with much confidence wilt thou approach them all. “In Christ Jesus.” See the humility of his mind; this I do, saith he, “in Christ Jesus,” for it is impossible without an impulse from Him to pass over so vast an interval. we have need of much aid, of a mighty alliance; He hath willed that thou shouldest struggle below, on high He crowns thee. Not as in this world; the crown is not here, where the contest is; but the crown is in that bright place. See ye not, even here, that the most honored of the wrestlers and charioteers are not crowned in the course below, but the king calls them up, and crowns them there? Thus too is it here, in heaven thou receivest the prize.

Verse 15. *“Let us, therefore, as many as be perfect, be thus minded,” saith he. “And if in anything ye are otherwise minded, even this shall God reveal unto you.”*

What sort of thing? That we should “forget the things which are behind.” Wherefore it belongs to him who is perfect not to consider himself perfect. How therefore sayest thou, “as many as are perfect”? For tell me, are we minded as thou art? For if thou hast not attained nor art perfected, how dost thou command those that are perfect to be so minded as thou art, who art not yet perfect? Yea, for this, saith he, is perfection. And “if ye are in anything otherwise minded, even this shall God reveal unto you.” That is,

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if any one considers that he has attained all excellence. He puts them on their guard, not by speaking directly, but what saith he? “If in anything ye are otherwise minded, even this shall God reveal unto you.” See how humbly he saith this! God shall teach you, i.e. God shall persuade you, not teach you; for Paul was teaching, but God shall lead them on. And he said not, shall lead you on, but “shall reveal,” that this may rather seem to spring from ignorance. These words were spoken not concerning doctrines, but concerning perfection of life, and our not considering ourselves to be perfect, for he who considers that he hath apprehended all, hath nothing.

Verse 16. *“Only, whereunto we have already attained, by that same rule let us walk, let us mind the same thing.”*

“Only, whereunto we have attained.” What means this? Let us hold fast, he saith, that in which we have succeeded; love, concord, and peace: for in this we have succeeded. “Whereto we have attained: to walk by the same rule, to mind the same thing.” “Whereunto we have attained,” i.e. in this we have already succeeded. Seest thou, that he wills that his precepts should be a rule to us? And a rule admits neither addition, nor subtraction, since that destroys its being a rule. “By the same rule,” i.e. by the same faith, within the same limits.

Verse 17. *“Brethren, be ye imitators of me, and mark them which so walk even as ye have us for an ensample.”*

He had said above, “beware of dogs,” from such he had led them away; he brings them near to these whom they ought to imitate. If any one, saith he, wishes to imitate me, if any one wishes to walk the same road, let him take heed to them; though I am not present, ye know the manner of my walk, that is, my conduct in life. For not by words only did he teach, but by deeds too; as in the chorus, and the army, the rest must imitate the leader of the chorus or the army, and thus advance in good order. For it is possible that the order may be dissolved by sedition.

The Apostles therefore were a type, and kept throughout a certain archetypal model. Consider how entirely accurate their life was, so that they are proposed as an archetype and example, and as living laws. For what was said in their writings, they manifested to all in their actions. This is the best teaching; thus he will be able to carry on his disciple. But if he

indeed speaks as a philosopher, yet in his actions doth the contrary, he is no longer a teacher. For mere verbal philosophy is easy even for the disciple: but there is need of that teaching and leading which comes of deeds. For this both makes the teacher to be reverenced, and prepares the disciple to yield obedience. How so? When one sees him delivering philosophy in words, he will say he commands impossibilities; that they are impossibilities, he himself is the first to show, who does not practice them. But if he sees his virtue fully carried out in action, he will no longer be able to speak thus. Yet although the life of our teacher be careless, let us take heed to ourselves, and let us listen to the words of the prophet; "They shall be all taught of God." (Isaiah 54:13.) "And they shall teach no more every man his brother, saying, Know the Lord, for they shall all know me from the least of them to the greatest of them." (Jeremiah 31:34.) Hast thou a teacher who is not virtuous? Still thou hast Him who is truly a Teacher, whom alone thou shouldest call a Teacher. Learn from Him: He hath said, "Learn of Me, for I am meek." (Matthew 11:29.) Take not heed, then, to thy teacher, but to Him and to His lessons. Take thence thy examples, thou hast a most excellent model, to it conform thyself. There are innumerable models laid before thee in the Scriptures of virtuous lives; whichsoever thou wilt, come, and after the Master find it in the disciples. One hath shown forth through poverty, another through riches; for example, Elijah through poverty, Abraham through riches. Go to that example, which thou esteemest most easy, most befitting thyself to practice. Again, one by marriage, the other by virginity; Abraham by marriage, the other by virginity. Follow whichever thou wilt: for both lead to heaven. One shone forth by fasting, as John, another without fasting, as Job. Again, this latter had a care for his wife, his children, his daughters, his family, and possessed great wealth; the other possessed nothing but the garment of hair. And why do I make mention of family, or wealth, or money, when it is possible that even one in a kingdom should lay hold on virtue, for the house of a king would be found more full of trouble than any private family. David then shone forth in his kingdom; the purple and the diadem rendered him not at all remiss. To another it was entrusted to preside over a whole people, I mean Moses, which was a more difficult task, for there the power was greater, whence the difficulty too became greater. Thou hast seen men approved in wealth, thou hast seen them in poverty also, thou hast seen them in marriage, thou hast seen them in

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virginity too; on the contrary, behold some lost in marriage and in virginity, in wealth and in poverty. For example, many men have perished in marriage, as Samson, yet not from marriage, but from their own deliberate choice. Likewise in virginity, as the five virgins. In wealth, as the rich man, who disregarded Lazarus: in poverty, innumerable poor men even now are lost. In a kingdom, I can point to many who have perished, and in ruling the people. Wouldest thou see men saved in the rank of a soldier? there is Cornelius; and in the government of a household? there is the eunuch of the Ethiopian Queen. Thus is it universally. If we use our wealth as is fit, nothing will destroy us; but if not, all things will destroy us, whether a kingdom, or poverty, or wealth. But nothing will have power to hurt the man, who keeps well awake.

For tell me, was captivity any harm? None at all. For consider, I pray thee, Joseph, who became a slave, and preserved his virtue. Consider Daniel, and the Three Children, who became captives, and how much the more they shone forth, for virtue shineth everywhere, is invincible, and nothing can put hindrances in its way. But why make I mention of poverty, and captivity, and slavery; and hunger, and sores, and grievous disease? For disease is, more hard to endure than slavery. Such was Lazarus, such was Job, such was also Timothy, straitened by" often infirmities." (1 Timothy 5:23.) Thou seest that nothing can obtain the mastery over virtue; neither wealth, nor poverty, nor dominion, nor subjection, nor the preeminence in affairs, nor disease, nor contempt, nor abandonment. But having left all these things below, and upon the earth, it hastens towards Heaven. Only let the soul be noble, and nought can hinder it from being virtuous. For when he who works is in vigor, nothing external can hinder him; for as in the arts, when the artificer is experienced and persevering, and thoroughly acquainted with his art, if disease overtakes him, he still hath it; if he became poor, he still hath it; whether he hath his tools in his hand or hath them not, whether he works or worketh not, he loseth not at all his art: for the science of it is contained within him. Thus too the virtuous man, who is devoted to God, manifests his art, if you cast him into wealth, or if into poverty, if into disease, if into health, if into dishonor, if into great honor. Did not the Apostles work in every state, "By glory and dishonor, by good report and evil report"? (2 Corinthians 6:8.) This is an athlete, to be prepared for everything; for such is also the nature of virtue.

If thou sayest, I am not able to preside over many, I ought to lead a solitary life; thou offerest an insult to virtue, for it can make use of every state, and shine through all. only let it be in the soul. Is there a famine? or is there abundance? It shows forth its own strength, as Paul saith, “I know how to abound, and how to be in want.” (Philippians 4:12; Acts 28:30.) Was he required to work? He was not ashamed, but wrought two years. Was hunger to be undergone? He sank not under it, nor wavered. Was death to be born? He became not dejected, through all he exhibited his noble mind and art. Him therefore let us imitate, and we shall have no cause of grief: for tell me, what will have power to grieve such an one? Nothing. As long as no one deprives us of this art, this will be the most blessed of all men, even in this life as well as in that to come. For suppose the good man hath a wife and children, and riches, and great honor, with all these things he remaineth alike virtuous. Take them away, and again in like sort he will be virtuous, neither overwhelmed by his misfortunes, nor puffed up by prosperity, but as a rock standeth equally unmoved in the raging sea and in calm, neither broken by the waves nor influenced at all by the calm, thus too the solid mind stands firm both in calm and in storm. And as little children, when sailing in a ship, are tossed about, whilst the pilot sits by, laughing and undisturbed, and delighted to see their confusion; thus too the soul which is truly wise, when all others are in confusion, or else are inopportunely smiling at any change of circumstance, sits unmoved, as it were, at the tiller and helm of piety. For tell me, what can disturb the pious soul? Can death? This is the beginning of a better life. Can poverty? This helps her on toward virtue. Can disease? She regards not its presence. She regards neither ease, nor affliction; for being beforehand with it, she hath afflicted herself. Can dishonor? The world hath been crucified to her. Can the loss of children? She fears it not, when she is fully persuaded of the Resurrection. What then can surprise her? None of all these things. Doth wealth elevate her? By no means, she knoweth that money is nothing. Doth glory? She hath been taught that “all the glory of man is as the flower of grass.” (Isaiah 40:6.) Doth luxury? She hath heard Paul say, “She that giveth herself to pleasure is dead while she liveth.” (1 Timothy 5:6.) Since then she is neither inflamed nor cramped, what can equal such health as this?

Other souls, meanwhile, are not such, but change more frequently than the sea, or the cameleon, so that thou hast great cause to smile, when thou seest the same man at one time laughing, at another weeping, at one time full of care, at another beyond measure relaxed and languid. For this cause Paul saith, “Be not fashioned according to this world.” (Romans 12:2.) For we are citizens of heaven, where there is no turning. Prizes which change not are held out to us. Let us make manifest this our citizenship, let us thence already receive our good things. But why do we cast ourselves into the Euripus, into tempest, into storm, into foam? Let us be in calm. It all depends not on wealth, nor on poverty, nor honor, nor dishonor, nor on sickness, nor on health, nor on weakness, but on our own soul. If it is solid, and well-instructed in the science of virtue, all things will be easy to it. Even hence it will already behold its rest, and that quiet harbor, and, on its departure, will there attain innumerable good things, the which may we all attain, by the grace and love of our Lord Jesus Christ, with whom, to the Father, together with the Holy Spirit, be glory, dominion, honor, now and ever, and world without end. Amen.

HOMILY 13

PHILIPPIANS 3:18-21

"For many walk, of whom I told you often, and now tell you even weeping, that they are the enemies of the cross of Christ: whose end is perdition, whose God is the belly, and whose glory is in their shame, who mind earthly things. For our citizenship is in heaven; from whence also we wait for a Savior, the Lord Jesus Christ: who shall fashion anew the body of our humiliation, that it may be conformed to the body of his glory, according to the working whereby He is able even to subject all things unto Himself."

NOTHING is so incongruous in a Christian, and foreign to his character, as to seek ease and rest; and to be engrossed with the present life is foreign to our profession and enlistment. Thy Master was crucified, and dost thou seek ease? Thy Master was pierced with nails, and dost thou live delicately? Do these things become a noble soldier? Wherefore Paul saith, "Many walk, of whom I told you often, and now tell you even weeping, that they are the enemies of the cross of Christ." Since there were some who made a pretense of Christianity, yet lived in ease and luxury, and this is contrary to the Cross: therefore he thus spoke. For the cross belongs to a soul at its post for the fight, longing to die, seeking nothing like ease, whilst their conduct is of the contrary sort. So that even if they say, they are Christ's, still they are as it were enemies of the Cross. For did they love the Cross, they would strive to live the crucified life. Was not thy Master hung upon the tree? Do thou otherwise imitate Him. Crucify thyself, though no one crucify thee. Crucify thyself, not that thou mayest slay thyself, God forbid, for that is a wicked thing, but as Paul said, "The world hath been crucified unto me and I unto the world." (Galatians 6:14.) If thou lovest thy Master, die His death. Learn how great is the power of the Cross; how many good things it hath achieved, and doth still. how it is the safety of our life. Through it all things are done. Baptism is through the Cross, for we must receive that seal. The laying on of hands is through the Cross. If we are on journeys, if we are at home, wherever we are, the Cross is a great good, the armor of salvation, a shield which cannot be beaten down, a weapon to oppose the devil; thou bearest the Cross when thou art

at enmity with him, not simply when thou sealest thyself by it, but when thou sufferest the things belonging to the Cross. Christ thought fit to call our sufferings by the name of the Cross. As when he saith, “Except a man take up his cross and follow Me” (Matthew 16:24), i.e. except he be prepared to die.

But these being base, and lovers of life, and lovers of their bodies, are enemies of the Cross. And every one, who is a friend of luxury, and of present safety, is an enemy of that Cross in which Paul makes his boast: which he embraces, with which he desires to be incorporated. As when he saith, “I am crucified unto the world, and the world unto me.” But here he saith, “I now tell you weeping.” Wherefore? Because the evil was urgent, because such deserve tears. Of a truth the luxurious are worthy of tears, who make fat that which is thrown about them, I mean the body, and take no thought of that soul which must give account. Behold thou livest delicately, behold thou art drunken, today and tomorrow, ten years, twenty, thirty, fifty, a hundred, which is impossible; but if thou wilt, let us suppose it. What is the end? What is the gain? Nought at all. Doth it not then deserve tears, and lamentations, to lead such a life; God hath brought us into this course, that He may crown us, and we take our departure without doing any noble action. Wherefore Paul weepeth, where others laugh, and live in pleasure. So sympathetic is he: such thought taketh he for all men. “Whose God,” saith he, “is the belly.” For this have they a God! That is, “let us eat and drink!” Dost thou see, how great an evil luxury is? to some their wealth, and to others their belly is a God. Are not these too idolaters, and worse than the common? And their “glory is in their shame.” (1 Corinthians 15:32.) Some say it is circumcision. I think not so, but this is its meaning, they make a boast of those things, of which they ought to be ashamed. It is a fearful thing to do shameful actions; yet to do them, and be ashamed, is only half so dreadful. But where a man even boasts himself of them, it is excessive senselessness.

Do these words apply to them alone? And do those who are here present escape the charge? And will no one have account to render of these things? Does no one make a God of his belly, or glory in his shame? I wish, earnestly I wish, that none of these charges lay against us, and that I did not know any one involved in what I have said. But I fear lest the words have more reference to us than to the men of those times. For when one

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consumes his whole life in drinking and reveling, and expends some small trifle on the poor, whilst he consumes the larger portion on his belly, will not these words with justice apply to him? No words are more apt to call attention, or more cutting in reproof, than these: “Whose God is the belly, whose glory is in their shame.” And who are these? They, he says, who mind earthly things. “Let us build houses.” Where, I ask? On the earth, they answer. Let us purchase farms; on the earth again: let us obtain power; again on the earth: let us gain glory; again on the earth: let us enrich ourselves; all these things are on the earth. These are they, whose God is their belly; for if they have no spiritual thoughts, but have all their possessions here, and mind these things, with reason have they their belly for their God, in saying, “Let us eat and drink, for tomorrow we die.” And about thy body, thou grievest, tell me, that it is of earth, though thus thou art not at all injured. But thy soul thou draggest down to the earth, when thou oughtest to render even thy body spiritual; for thou mayest, if thou wilt. Thou hast received a belly, that thou mayest feed, not distend it, that thou mayest have the mastery over it, not have it as mistress over thee: that it may minister to thee for the nourishment of the other parts, not that thou mayest minister to it, not that thou mayest exceed limits. The sea, when it passes its bounds, doth not work so many evils, as the belly doth to our body, together with our soul. The former overfloweth all the earth, the latter all the body. Put moderation for a boundary to it, as God hath put the sand for the sea. Then if its waves arise, and rage furiously, rebuke it, with the power which is in thee. See how God hath honored thee, that thou mightest imitate Him, and thou wilt not; but thou seest the belly overflowing, destroying and overwhelming thy whole nature, and darest not to restrain or moderate it.

“Whose God,” he saith, “is their belly.” Let us see how Paul served God: let us see how gluttons serve their belly. Do not they undergo ten thousand such deaths? do not they fear to disobey whatever it orders? do not they minister impossibilities to it? Are not they worse than slaves? “But our citizenship,” says he, “is in Heaven.” Let us not then seek for ease here; there do we shine, where also our citizenship is. “From whence also,” saith he, “we wait for a Savior,” the Lord Jesus Christ: “who shall fashion anew the body of our humiliation, that it may be conformed to the body of his glory.” By little and little he hath carried us up. He saith,

"From Heaven" and "Our Savior," showing, from the place and from the Person, the dignity of the subject. "Who shall fashion anew the body of our humiliation," saith he. The body now suffereth many things: it is bound with chains, it is scourged, it suffereth innumerable evils; but the body of Christ suffered the same. This, then, he hinted at when he said, "That it may be conformed to the body of his glory." Wherefore the body is the same, but putteth on incorruption. "Shall fashion anew." Wherefore the fashion is different; or perchance he has spoken figuratively of the change.

He saith, "the body of our humiliation," because it is now humbled, subject to destruction, to pain, because it seemeth to be worthless, and to have nothing beyond that of other animals. "That it may be conformed to the body of his glory." What? shall this our body be fashioned like unto Him, who sitteth at the right hand of the Father, to Him who is worshipped by the Angels, before whom do stand the incorporeal Powers, to Him who is above all rule and power, and might? If then the whole world were to take up weeping and lament for those who have fallen from this hope, could it worthily lament? because, when a promise is given us of our body being made like to Him, it still departs with the demons. I care not for hell henceforth; whatever can be said, having fallen from so great glory, now and henceforth consider hell to be nothing to this falling away. What sayest thou, O Paul? To be made like unto Him? Yes, he answereth; then, lest you should disbelieve, he addeth a reason; "According to the working whereby He is able even to subject all things unto Himself." He hath power, saith he, to subject all things unto Himself, wherefore also destruction and death. Or rather, He doth this also with the same power. For tell me, which requireth the greater power, to subject demons, and Angels, and Archangels, and Cherubim, and Seraphim, or to make the body incorruptible and immortal? The latter certainly much more than the former; he showed forth the greater works of His power, that you might believe these too. Wherefore, though ye see these men rejoicing, and honored, yet stand firm, be not offended at them, be not moved. These our hopes are sufficient to raise up even the most sluggish and indolent.

Chapter 4:1: *"Wherefore," saith he, "my brethren, beloved and longed for, my joy and crown, so stand fast in the Lord, my beloved."*

"So." How? Unmoved. See how he addeth praise after exhortation, "my joy and my crown," not simply joy but glory too, not simply glory but my crown too. Which glory nought can equal, since it is the crown of Paul. "So stand fast in the Lord, my beloved," i.e. in the hope of God.

Verse 2, 3. *"I exhort Euodia, and exhort Syntyche, to be of the same mind in the Lord. Yea, I beseech thee also, true yokefellow, help these women."*

Some say Paul here exhorts his own wife; but it is not so, but some other woman, or the husband of one of them. "Help these women, for they labored with me in the Gospel, with Clement also, and the rest of my fellow-workers whose names are in the book of life." Seest thou how great a testimony he beareth to their virtue? For as Christ saith to his Apostles, "Rejoice not that the spirits are subject to you, but rejoice that your names are written in the book of life" (Luke 10:20); so Paul testifieth to them, saying, "whose names are in the book of life." These women seem to me to be the chief of the Church which was there, and he commendeth them to some notable man whom he calls his "yokefellow," to whom perchance he was wont to commend them, as to a fellow-worker, and fellow-soldier, and brother, and companion, as he doth in the Epistle to the Romans, when he saith, "I commend unto you Phebe our sister, who is a servant of the Church that is at Cenchrea." (Romans 16:1.) "Yokefellow;" either some brother of theirs, or a husband of hers; as if he had said, Now thou art a true brother, now a true husband, because thou hast become a Member. "For they labored with me in the Gospel." This protection came from home, not from friendship, but for good deeds. "Labored with me." What sayest thou? Did women labor with thee? Yes, he answereth, they too contributed no small portion. Although many were they who wrought together with him, yet these women also acted with him amongst the many. The Churches then were no little edified, for many good ends are gained where they who are approved, be they men, or be they women, enjoy from the rest such honor. For in the first place the rest were led on to a like zeal; in the second place, they also gained a by the respect shown; and thirdly, they made those very persons more zealous and earnest. Wherefore thou seest that Paul hath everywhere a care for this, and commendeth such men for consideration. As he saith in the Epistle to the Corinthians: "Who are the first-fruits of Achaia," (1 Corinthians 16:15.) Some say that the word "yokefellow," (Syzygus,) is a proper name. Well,

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what? Whether it be so, or no, we need not accurately enquire, but observe that he gives his orders, that these women should enjoy much protection.

All we have, saith he, is in the heavens, our Savior, our city, whatever a man can name: “whence,” saith he, “we wait for a Savior, the Lord Jesus Christ.” And this is an act of His kindness and love toward man. He Himself again cometh to us, he doth not drag us thither, but takes us, and so departs with us. And this is a mark of great honor; for if He came to us when we were enemies, much rather doth He now when we are become friends. He doth not commit this to the Angels, nor to servants, but Himself cometh to call us to His royal mansion. See, we also “shall be caught up in the clouds” (1 Thessalonians 4:17), doing him honor.

Who then is to be found “the faithful and wise servant”? Who are they that are deemed worthy of such good things? How miserable are those who fail! For if we were forever to weep, should we do aught worthy of the occasion? For were you to make mention of hells innumerable, you would name nothing equal to that pain which the soul sustaineth, when all the world is in confusion, when the trumpets are sounding, when the Angels are rushing forward, the first, then the second, then the third, then ten thousand ranks, are pouring forth upon the earth; then the Cherubim, (and many are these and infinite;) the Seraphim; when He Himself is coming, with His ineffable glory; when those meet Him, who had gone to gather the elect into the midst; when Paul and his companions, and all who in his time had been approved, are crowned, are proclaimed aloud, are honored by the King, before all His heavenly host. For if hell did not exist, how fearful a thing it is, that the one part should be honored, and the other dishonored! Hell, I confess, is intolerable, yea, very intolerable, but more intolerable than it is the loss of the Kingdom. Consider; if any king, or the son of a king, having taken his departure, and been successful in innumerable wars, and become the object of admiration, should with his army entire, return to any city, in his chariot, with his trophies, with his innumerable ranks of golden shields, with his spearmen, his body-guard all about him, whilst the whole city was adorned with crowns, whilst all the rulers of the world accompanied him, and all the soldiery of foreign nations followed him as captives, then prefects, satraps, and in the presence of all the rulers, and all that splendor, he should receive the citizens who meet him, and kiss them, and stretch forth his hand, and give them freedom of access, and converse

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with them, all standing around, as with friends, and tell them that all that journey was undertaken for their sake, and should lead them into his palace, and give them a share of it, even if the rest should not be punished, to how great punishment would not this be equal? But if in the case of men it were a bitter thing to fall away from this glory, much more is it so with God, when all the heavenly Powers are present with the King, when the demons, bound, and bowing down their heads, and the devil himself is led along in chains, and all military force that opposeth itself, when the Powers of the heavens, when He Himself, cometh upon the clouds.

Believe me, I am not even able to finish my words, from the grief which lays hold of my soul at this relation. Consider of how great glory we shall be deprived, when it is in our power not to be deprived of it. For this is the misery, that we suffer these things, when it is in our power not to suffer them. When he receiveth the one part and leadeth them to His Father in heaven, and rejecteth the other, whom Angels take and drag against their will, weeping, and hanging down their heads, to the fire of hell, when they have first been made a spectacle to the whole world, what grief, think you, is there? Let us then make haste, while there is time, and take great thought of our own salvation. How many things have we to say like the rich man? If any one would now suffer us, we would take counsel of the things that are profitable! But no one doth suffer us. And that we shall so say, is clear, not from him alone, but from many others. And that you may learn this, how many men have been in fevers, and said, if we recover, we shall never again fall into the same state. Many such words we shall then say, but we shall be answered as the rich man was, that there is a gulf, that we have received our good things here. (Luke 16:25, 26.) Let us groan then, I entreat you, bitterly, rather let us not only groan, but pursue virtue too; let us lament now, for salvation, that we may not then lament in vain. Let us weep now, and not weep then, at our evil lot. This weeping is of virtue, that of unprofitable repentance; let us afflict ourselves now, that we may not then; for it is not the same thing to be afflicted here and there. Here, thou art afflicted for a little time, or rather thou dost not perceive thy affliction, knowing that thou art afflicted for thy good. But there, the affliction is more bitter, because it is not in hope, nor for any escape, but without limit, and throughout.

But may we all be freed from this, and obtain remission. But let us pray and be diligent, that we may obtain the remission. Let us be diligent, I entreat; for if we are diligent, we prevail even through our prayer: if we pray earnestly, God grants our request; but if we neither ask Him, nor do earnestly aught of this sort, nor work, how is it possible that we should ever succeed? By sleeping? Not at all. For it is much if even by running, and stretching forth, and being conformed to His death, as Paul said, we shall be able to succeed, not to say sleeping. “If by any means I may attain,” saith he. But if Paul said, “If by any means I may attain,” what shall we say? For it is not possible by sleeping to accomplish even worldly business, not to say spiritual. By sleeping, not even from friends can anything be received, far less from God. Not even fathers honor them who sleep, far less doth God. Let us labor for a little time, that we may have rest for ever. We must at all events be afflicted. If we are not afflicted here, it awaits us there. Why choose we not to be afflicted here, that there we may have rest, and obtain the unspeakable blessings, in Christ Jesus, with whom, to the Father together with the Holy Spirit, be glory, power, and honor, now and ever, world without end. Amen.

HOMILY 14

PHILIPPIANS 4:4-7

"Rejoice in the Lord alway: again I will say, Rejoice. Let your forbearance be known unto all men. The Lord is at hand. In nothing be anxious; but in everything by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your requests be made known unto God. And the peace of God, which passeth all understanding, shall guard your hearts and your thoughts through Christ Jesus."

"BLESSED they that mourn," and "woe unto them that laugh" (Matthew 5:4; Luke 6:25), saith Christ. How then saith Paul, "Rejoice in the Lord alway"? "Woe to them that laugh," said Christ, the laughter of this world which ariseth from the things which are present He blessed also those that mourn, not simply for the loss of relatives, but those who are pricked at heart, who mourn their own faults, and take count of their own sins, or even those of others. This joy is not contrary to that grief, but from that grief it too is born. For he who grieveth for his own faults, and confesseth them, rejoiceth. Moreover, it is possible to grieve for our own sins, and yet to rejoice in Christ. Since then they were afflicted by their sufferings, "for to you it is given not only to believe in him, but also to stiffer for him" (Philippians 1:29), therefore he saith, "Rejoice in the Lord." For this can but mean, If you exhibit such a life that you may rejoice. Or when your communion with God is not hindered, rejoice. Or else the word "in" may stand for "with": as if he had said, with the Lord. "Alway; again I will say, Rejoice." These are the words of one who brings comfort; as, for example, he who is in God rejoiceth alway. Yea though he be afflicted, yea whatever he may suffer, such a man alway rejoiceth. Hear what Luke saith, that "they returned from the presence of the Council, rejoicing that they were counted worthy to be scourged for His name." (Acts 5:41.) If scourging and bonds, which seem to be the most grievous of all things, bring forth joy, what else will be able to produce grief in us?

“Again I will say, Rejoice.” Well hath he repeated. For since the nature of the things brought forth grief, he shows by repeating, that they should by all means rejoice.

“Let your forbearance be known unto all men.” He said above, “Whose God is the belly, and whose glory is in their shame,” and that they “mind earthly things.” (Philippians 3:19.) It was probable that they would be at enmity with the wicked; he therefore exhorted them to have nothing in common with them, but to use them with all forbearance, and that not only their brethren, but also their enemies and opposers. “The Lord is at hand, in nothing be anxious.” For why, tell me? do they ever rise in opposition? And if ye see them living in luxury, why are ye in affliction? Already the judgment is nigh; shortly will they give account of their actions. Are ye in affliction, and they in luxury? But these things shall shortly receive their end. Do they plot against you, and threaten you? “In nothing be anxious.” The judgment is already at hand, when these things shall be reversed. “In nothing be anxious.” If ye are kindly affected toward those who prepare evil against you, yet it shall not at last turn out to their profit. Already the recompense is at hand, if poverty, if death, if aught else that is terrible be upon you. “But in everything, by prayer and supplication, with thanksgiving, let your requests be made known unto God.” There is this for one consolation, “the Lord is at hand.” And again, “I will be with you alway, even unto the end of the world.” (Matthew 28:20.) Behold another consolation, a medicine which healeth grief, and distress, and all that is painful. And what is this? Prayer, thanksgiving in all things. And so He wills that our prayers should not simply be requests, but thanksgivings too for what we have. For how should he ask for future things, who is not thankful for the past? “But in everything by prayer and supplication.” Wherefore we ought to give thanks for all things, even for those which seem to be grievous, for this is the part of the truly thankful man. In the other case the nature of the things demands it; but this springs from a grateful soul, and one earnestly affected toward God. God acknowledgeth these prayers, but others He knoweth not. Offer up such prayers as may be acknowledged; for He disposeth all things for our profit, though we know it not. And this is a proof that it greatly profiteth, namely, that we know it not. “And the peace of God which pusseth all understanding shall guard your hearts and your thoughts in Christ Jesus.” What meaneth this?

"The peace of God" which He hath wrought toward men, surpasseth all understanding. For who could have expected, who could have hoped, that such good things would have come? They exceed all man's understanding, not his speech alone. For His enemies, for those who hated Him, for those who determined to turn themselves away, for these, he refused not to deliver up His Only Begotten Son, that He might make peace with us. This peace then, i.e. the reconciliation, the love of God, shall guard your hearts and your thoughts.

For this is the part of a teacher, not only to exhort, but also to pray, and to assist by supplication, that they may neither be overwhelmed by temptations, nor carried about by deceit. As if he had said, May He who hath delivered you in such sort as mind cannot comprehend, may He Himself guard you, and secure you, so that you suffer no ill. Either he means this, or that that peace of which Christ saith, "Peace I leave with you, My peace I give unto you" (John 14:27): this shall guard you, for this peace exceedeth all man's understanding. How? When he tells us to be at peace with our enemies, with those who treat us unjustly, with those who are at war and enmity toward us; is it not beyond man's understanding? But rather let us look to the former. If the peace surpasseth all understanding, much more doth God Himself, who giveth peace, pass all understanding, not ours only, but also that of Angels, and the Powers above. What meaneth "in Christ Jesus"? Shall guard us in Him, so that ye may remain firm, and not fall from His faith.

Verse 8. *"Finally, brethren, whatsoever things are honorable, whatsoever things are true, whatsoever things are just."*

What is "Finally "? It stands for, "I have said all." It is the word of one that is in haste, and has nothing to do with present things.

"Finally, brethren, whatsoever things are honorable, whatsoever things are true, whatsoever things are just, whatsoever things are pure, whatsoever things are lovely, whatsoever things are of good report, if there be any virtue, and if there be any praise, think on these things."

Verse 9. *"The things which ye both learned and received, and heard and saw in me."*

What meaneth, “whatsoever things are lovely “? Lovely to the faithful, lovely to God. “Whatsoever things are true.” Virtue is really true, vice is falsehood. For the pleasure of it is a falsehood, and its glory is falsehood, and all things of the world are falsehood. “Whatsoever things are pure.” This is opposed to the words “who mind earthly things.” “Whatsoever things are honorable.” This is opposed to the words “whose God is their belly.” “Whatsoever things are just,” i.e. saith he, “whatsoever things are of good report.” “If there be any virtue, if there be any praise.” Here he willeth them to take thought of those things too which regard men. “Think on these things,” saith he. Seest thou, that he desires to banish every evil thought from our souls; for evil actions spring from thoughts. “The things which ye both learned and received.” This is teaching, in all his exhortations to propose himself for a model. as he saith in another place, “even as ye have us for an ensample.” (Philippians 3:17.) And again here, “What things ye learned and received,” i.e. have been taught by word of mouth, “and heard and saw in me”: both in respect of my words and actions and conduct. Seest thou, how about everything he lays these commands on us? For since it was not possible to make an accurate enumeration of all things, of our coming in, and going out, and speech, and carriage, and intercourse (for of all these things it is needful that a Christian should have thought), he said shortly, and as it were in a summary, “ye heard and saw in me.” I have led you forward both by deeds and by words. “These things do,” not only in words, but do them also. “And the God of peace shall be with you,” i.e. ye shall be in a calm, in great safety, ye shall suffer nothing painful, nor contrary to your will. For when we are at peace with Him, and we are so through virtue, much more will He be at peace with us. For He who so loved us, as to show favor to us even against our will, will He not, if He sees us hastening toward Him, Himself yet much more exhibit His love toward us?

Nothing is such an enemy of our nature as vice. And from many things it is evident, how vice is at enmity with us, and virtue friendly toward us. What will ye? That I should speak of fornication? It makes men subject to reproach, poor, objects of ridicule, despicable to all, just as enemies treat them. Ofttimes it hath involved men in disease and danger; many men have perished or been wounded in behalf of their mistresses. And if fornication produces these things, much rather doth adultery. But doth almsgiving so?

By no means. But as a loving mother setteth her son in great propriety, in good order, in good report, and gives him leisure to engage in necessary work, thus alms-giving doth not release us nor lead us away from our necessary work, but even renders the soul more wise. For nothing is more foolish than a mistress.

But what willest thou? To look upon covetousness? It too treats us like an enemy. And how? It makes us hated by all. It prepareth all men to vaunt themselves against us; both those who have been treated unjustly by us, and those who have not, who share the grief of the former, and are in fear for themselves. All men look upon us as their common foes, as wild beasts, as demons. Everywhere are there innumerable accusations, plots against us, envyings, all which are the acts of enemies. But justice, on the contrary, makes all men friends, all men sociable, all men well disposed towards us, by all men prayers are made in our behalf; our affairs are in perfect safety, there is no danger, there is no suspicion. But sleep also fearlessly comes over us with perfect safety, no care is there, no lamenting.

How much better this sort of life is! And what? Is it best to envy, or to rejoice with one another? Let us search out all these things, and we shall find that virtue, like a truly kind mother, places us in safety, while vice is a treacherous thing, and full of danger. For hear the prophet, who saith, "The Lord is a stronghold of them that fear Him, and His covenant is to show them." (Psalm 25:14, Sept.) He feareth no one, who is not conscious to himself of any wickedness; on the contrary, he who liveth in crime is never confident, but trembles at his domestics, and looks at them with suspicion. Why say, his domestics? He cannot bear the tribunal of his own conscience. Not only those who are without, but his inward thoughts affect him likewise, and suffer him not to be in quiet. What then, saith Paul? Ought we to live dependent on praise? He said not, look to praise, but do praiseworthy actions, yet not for the sake of praise.

"Whatsoever things are true," for the things we have been speaking of are false. "Whatsoever things are honorable." That which is "honorable" belongs to external virtue, that which is "pure" to the soul. Give no cause of stumbling, saith he, nor handle of accusation. Because he had said, "Whatsoever things are of good report," lest you should think that he means only those things which are so in the sight of men, he proceeds, "if

there be any virtue, and if there be any praise, think on these things" — do these things. He wills us ever to be in these things, to care for these things, to think on these things. For if we will be at peace with each other, God too will be with us, but if we raise up war, the God of peace will not be with us. For nothing is so hostile to the soul as vice. That is, peace and virtue place it in safety. Wherefore we must make a beginning on our part, and then we shall draw God toward us.

God is not a God of war and fighting. Make war and fighting to cease, both that which is against Him, and that which is against thy neighbor. Be at peace with all men, consider with what character God saveth thee. "Blessed are the peacemakers, for they shall be called sons of God." (Matthew 5:9.) Such always imitate the Son of God: do thou imitate Him too. Be at peace. The more thy brother warreth against thee, by so much the greater will be thy reward. For hear the prophet who saith, "With the haters of peace I was peaceful." (Psalm 120:7, Sept.) This is virtue, this is above man's understanding, this maketh us near God; nothing so much delighteth God as to remember no evil. This sets thee free from thy sins, this looseth the charges against thee: but if we are fighting and buffeting, we become far off from God: for enmities are produced by conflict, and from enmity springs remembrance of evil.

Cut out the root, and there will be no fruit. Thus shall we learn to despise the things of this life, for there is no conflict, none, in spiritual things, but whatever thou seest, either conflicts or envy, or whatever a man can mention, all these spring from the things of this life. Every conflict hath its beginning either in covetousness, or envy, or vainglory. If therefore we are at peace, we shall learn to despise the things of the earth. Hath a man stolen our money? He hath not injured us, only let him not steal our treasure which is above. Hath he hindered thy glory? Yet not that which is from God, but that which is of no account. For this is no glory, but a mere name of glory, or rather a shame. Hath he stolen thy honor? Rather not thine but his own. For as he who committeth injustice doth not so much inflict as receive injustice, thus too he who plots against his neighbor, first destroyeth himself.

For "he who diggeth a pit for his neighbor, falleth into it." (Proverbs 26:27.) Let us then not plot against others, lest we injure ourselves. When

HOMILY 15

PHILIPPIANS 4:10-14

"But I rejoice in the Lord greatly, that now at length ye have revived your thought for me; wherein ye did indeed take thought, but ye lacked opportunity. Not that I speak in respect of want: for I have learned, in whatsoever state I am, therein to be content. I know how to be abused, and I know also how to abound: in everything and in all things have I learned the secret both to be filled and to be hungry, both to abound and to be in want. I can do all things in him that strengtheneth me. Howbeit, ye did well, that ye had fellowship with my affliction."

I HAVE ofttimes said, that almsgiving hath been introduced not for the sake of the receivers, but of the givers, for the latter are they which make the greatest gain. And this Paul shows here also. In what way? The Philippians had sent him somewhat, after a long time, and had committed the same to Epaphroditus. See then, how when he is about to send Epaphroditus as the bearer of this Epistle, he praises them, and shows that this action was for the need, not of the receiver, but of the givers. This he doth, both that they who benefited him may not be lifted up with arrogance, and that they may become more zealous in well-doing, since they rather benefit themselves; and that they who receive may not fearlessly rush forward to receive, lest they meet with condemnation. For "it is more blessed," He saith, "to give than to receive." (Acts 20:35.) Why then does he say, "I rejoice in the Lord greatly"? Not with worldly rejoicing, saith he, nor with the joy of this life, but in the Lord. Not because I had refreshment, but because ye advanced; for this is my refreshment. Wherefore he also saith "greatly"; since this joy was not corporeal, nor on account of his own refreshment, but because of their advancement.

And see how, when he had gently rebuked them on account of the times that were passed, he quickly throweth a shadow over this, and teacheth them constantly and always to remain in well doing. "Because at length," saith he. The words, "at length," show long time to have elapsed. "Ye have revived," as fruits which have shot forth, dried up, and afterwards shot

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forth. Here he showeth, that being at first blooming, then having faded, they again budded forth. So that the word “flourished again,” has both rebuke and praise. For it is no small thing, that he who hath withered should flourish again. He showeth also, that it was from indolence all this had happened to them. But here he signifies, that even in former time they were wont to be zealous in these things. Wherefore he addeth, “your thought for me, wherein ye did indeed take thought.” And lest you should think, that in other things too they had been more zealous, and had then withered, but in this thing alone, behold how he has added, “your thought for me.” I apply the words, “now at length,” only to this; for in other things it is not so.

Here some one may enquire, how when he had said, “It is more blessed to give than to receive” (Acts 20:25, 34); and, “These hands ministered to my necessities, and to them that were with me”; and again when writing to the Corinthians, “For it were good for me rather to die, than that any man should make my glorying void” (1 Corinthians 9:15); he suffereth his glorying to be made void? And how? By receiving. For if his glorying was, that he received not, how doth he now endure so to do? What is it then? Probably, he then did not receive on account of the false Apostles, “that wherein they glory” (2 Corinthians 11:12), saith he, “they may be found even as we.” And he said not “are,” but “glory”; for they received but secretly. Wherefore he said, “wherein they glory.” Wherefore he also said, “No man shall stop me of this glorying.” (2 Corinthians 11:10,) And he said not simply, shall not stop me, but what? “in the regions of Achaia.” And again, “I robbed other Churches, taking wages of them that I might minister unto you.” (2 Corinthians 11:8.) Here he showed that he did receive. But Paul indeed received rightly, having so great a work; if in truth he did receive. But they who work not, how can they receive? “Yet I pray,” saith one. But there is no work. For this may be done together with work. “But I fast.” Neither is this work. For see this blessed one, preaching in many places, and working too. “But ye lacked opportunity.” What meaneth lacked opportunity? It came not; saith he, of indolence, but of necessity. Ye had it not in your hands, nor were in abundance. This is the meaning of, “Ye lacked opportunity.” Thus most men speak, when the things of this life do not flow in to them abundantly, and are in short supply.

“Not that I speak in respect of want.” said, saith he, “now at length,” and I rebuked you, not seeking mine own, nor censuring you on this account, as if I were in want: for I sought it not on this account. Whence is this, O Paul, that thou makest no vain boasting? To the Corinthians he saith, “For we write none other things unto you, than what ye read or even acknowledge.” (2 Corinthians 1:13.) And in this case he would not have spoken to them so as to be convicted, he would not, had he been making boasts, have spoken thus. He was speaking to those who knew the facts, with whom detection, would have been a greater disgrace. “For I have learnt,” saith he, “in whatsoever state I am, therein to be content.” Wherefore, this is an object of discipline, and exercise, and care, for it is not easy of attainment, but very difficult, and a new thing. “In whatsoever state I am,” saith he, “therein to be content. I know how to be abased, and I know also how to abound. In everything and in all things have I learned the secret.” That is, I know how to use little, to bear hunger and want. “Both to abound, and to suffer need.” “But, says one, there is no need of wisdom or of virtue in order to abound.” There is great need of virtue, not less than in the other case. For as want inclines us to do many evil things, so too doth plenty. For many ofttimes, coming into plenty, have become indolent, and have not known how to bear their good fortune. Many men have taken it as an occasion of no longer working. But Paul did not so, for what he received he consumed on others, and emptied himself for them. This is to know. He was in nowise relaxed, nor did he exult at his abundance; but was the same in want and in plenty, he was neither oppressed on the one hand, nor rendered a boaster on the other. “Both to be filled,” saith he “and to be hungry, both to abound, and to be in want.” Many know not how to be full, as for example, the Israelites, “ate, and kicked” (Deuteronomy 32:15), but I am equally well ordered in all. He showeth that he neither is now elated, nor was before grieved: or if he grieved, it was on their account, not on his own, for he himself was similarly affected.

“In everything,” saith he, “and in all things I have learned the secret,” i.e. I have had experience of all things in this long time, and these things have all succeeded with me. But since boasting might seem to have a place here, see how quickly he checks up, and says, “I can do all things in Christ that strengtheneth me.” The success is not mine own, but His who has given

me strength. But since they who confer benefits, when they see the receiver not well affected toward them, but despising the gifts, are themselves rendered more remiss, (for they considered themselves as conferring a benefit and refreshment,) if therefore Paul despises the refreshment, they must necessarily become remiss, in order then that this may not happen, see how he healeth it again. By what he hath said above, he hath brought down their proud thoughts, by what followeth he maketh their readiness revive, by saying, “Howbeit ye did well, that ye had fellowship with my affliction.” Seest thou, how he removed himself, and again united himself to them. This is the part of true and spiritual friendship. Think not, saith he, because I was not in want, that I had no need of this act of yours. I have need of it for your sake. How then, did they share his afflictions? By this means. As he said when in bonds, “Ye all are partakers with me of grace.” (Philippians 1:7.) For it is grace to suffer for Christ, as he himself saith in another place, “For to you it is given from God not only to believe on Him, but also to suffer for Him.” (Philippians 1:29.) For since those former words by themselves might have made them regardless, for this cause he consoleth them, and receiveth them, and praiseth them again. And this in measured words. For he said not, “gave,” but “had fellowship,” to show that they too were profiled by becoming partakers of his labors. He said not, ye did lighten, but ye did communicate with my affliction, which was something more elevated. Seest thou the humility of Paul? seest thou his noble nature? When he has shown that he had no need of their gifts on his own account, he afterward uses freely such lowly words as they do who make a request; “since thou art wont to give.” For he refuseth neither to do, nor say anything. That is, “Think not that my words show want of shame, wherein I accuse you, and say, ‘ Now at length ye have revived,’ or are those of one in necessity; I speak not thus because I am in need, but why? From my exceeding confidence in you, and of this also ye yourselves are the authors.”

Seest thou how he sootheth them? How are ye the authors? In that ye hasted to the work before all the others; and have given me confidence to remind you of these things. And observe his elevation; he accuseth them not while they did not send, lest he should seem to regard his own benefit, but when they had sent, then he rebuked them for the time past, and they received it, for he could not seem after that to regard his own benefit.

Verse 15. *"Ye yourselves also know, ye Philippians, that in the beginning of the Gospel, when I departed from Macedonia, no Church had fellowship with me, in the matter of giving and receiving, but ye only."*

Lo, how great is his commendation! For the Corinthians and Romans are stirred up by hearing these things from him, whilst the Philippians did it without any other Church having made a beginning. For "in the beginning of the Gospel," saith he, they manifested such zeal towards the holy Apostle, as themselves first to begin, without having any example, to bear this fruit. And no one can say that they did these things because he abode with them, or for their own benefit; for he saith, "When I departed from Macedonia, no Church had fellowship with me, in the matter of giving and receiving, but ye only." What meaneth "receiving," and what "had fellowship "? Wherefore said he not, "no Church gave to me," but "had fellowship with me, in the matter of giving and receiving"? Because it is a case of communication. He saith, "If we sowed unto you spiritual things, is it a great matter if we shall reap your carnal things." (1 Corinthians 9:11.) And again, "That your abundance may be a supply to their want." (2 Corinthians 8:14.) How did they communicate? In the matter of giving carnal things, and receiving spiritual. For as they who sell and buy communicate with each other, by mutually giving what they have, (and this is communication,) so too is it here. For there is not anything more profitable than this trade and traffic. It is performed on the earth, but is completed in heaven. They who buy are on the earth, but they buy and agree about heavenly things, whilst they lay down an earthly price.

But despond not; heavenly things are not to be bought with money, riches cannot purchase these things, but the purpose of him who giveth the money, his true wisdom, his superiority to earthly things, his love toward man, his mercifulness. For if money could purchase it, she who threw in the two mites would have gained nothing great. But since it was not the money, but the purpose that availed, she received everything, who exhibited a full purpose of mind. Let us not then say, that the Kingdom can be bought with money; it is not by money, but by purpose of mind which is exhibited by the money. Therefore, will one answer, there is no need of money? There is no need of money, but of the disposition; if thou hast this, thou wilt be able even by two mites to purchase Heaven; where this is not, not even ten thousand talents of gold will be able to do that,

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which the two mites could. Wherefore? Because if thou who hast much throwest in but a small portion, thou gavest an alms indeed, but not so great as the Widow did; for thou didst not throw it in with the same readiness as she. For she deprived herself of all she had, or rather she deprived not, but gave it all as a free gift to herself Not for a cup of cold water hath God promised the kingdom, but for readiness of heart; not for death, but for purpose of mind. For indeed it is no great thing. For what is it to give one life? that is giving one man; but one man is not of worth enough.

Verse 16. *"For even in Thessalonica, ye sent once and again unto my need."*

Here again is great praise, that he, when dwelling in the metropolis, should be nourished by a little city. And lest, by always withdrawing himself from the supposition of want, he should, as I said at first, render them amiss, having previously shown by so many proofs that he is not in want, he here does it by one word only, by saying "needs." And he said not "my," but absolutely, — having a care of dignity. And not this only, but what followeth too, for since he was conscious that it was a very lowly thing, he again secures it, by adding as a correction,

Verse 17. *"Not that I seek for the gift."*

As he said above, "Not that I speak in respect of want"; that is stronger than this. For it is one thing, that he who is in want, should not seek, and another that he who is in want should not even consider himself to be in want. "Not that I seek for the gift," he says, "but I seek for the fruit, that increaseth to your account." Not mine own. Seest thou, that the fruit is produced for them? This say I for your sake, says he, not for my own, for your salvation. For I gain nothing when I receive, but the grace belongeth to the givers, for the recompense is yonder in store for givers, but the gifts are here consumed by them who receive. Again even his desire is combined with praise and sympathy.

When he had said, I do not seek, lest he should again render them remiss, he adds,

Verse 18. *"But I have all things and abound,"*

i.e. through this gift ye have filled up what was wanting, which would make them more eager. For benefactors, the wiser they are, the more do they seek gratitude from the benefited. That is, ye have not only filled up what was deficient in former time, but ye have gone beyond. For lest by these words he should seem to accuse them, see how he seals up all. After he had said, “Not that I seek for the gift,” and “Now at length”; and had shown that their deed was a debt, for this is meant by, “I have all,” then again he showeth, that they had acted above what was due, and saith, “I have all things and abound, I am filled.” I say not this at hazard, or only from the feeling of my mind, but why? “Having received of Epaphroditus the things that came from you, an odor of a sweet smell; a sacrifice acceptable, well pleasing to God.” Lo, whither he hath raised their gift; not I, he saith, received, but God through me. Wherefore though I be not in need, regard it not, for God had no need, and He received at their hands in such sort, that the Holy Scriptures shrunk not from saying, “God smelled a sweet savor” (Genesis 8:21), which denotes one who was pleased. For ye know, indeed ye know, how our soul is affected by sweet savors, how it is pleased, how it is delighted. The Scriptures therefore shrunk not from applying to God a word so human, and so lowly, that it might show to men that their gifts are become acceptable. For not the fat, not the smoke, made them acceptable, but the purpose of mind which offered them. Had it been otherwise, Cain’s offering too had been received. It saith then, that He is even pleased, and how He is pleased. For men could not without this have learned. He then, who hath no need, saith that He is thus pleased, that they may not become remiss by the absence of need. And afterward, when they had no care for other virtues, and trusted to their offerings alone, behold, how again he setteth them right by saying, “Will I eat the flesh of bulls, or drink the blood of goats?” (Psalm 1. 13.) This Paul also saith. “Not that I seek,” saith he, “for the gift.”

Verse 19. *“And may my God fulfill every. need of yours, according to His riches in glory, in Christ Jesus.”*

Behold how he invokes blessings upon them, as poor men do. But if even Paul blesseth those who give, much more let us not be ashamed to do this when we receive. Let us not receive as though we ourselves had need, let us not rejoice on our own account, but on that of the givers. Thus we too who receive shall have a reward, if we rejoice for their sake. Thus we shall

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not take it hardly, when men do not give, but rather shall grieve for their sake. So shall we render them more zealous, if we teach them, that not for our own sake do we so act; “but may my God” fulfill every need of yours, or every grace, or every joy. If the second be true, “every grace,” he meaneth not only the alms, which are of earth, but every excellency. If the first, “your every need,” which I think too should rather be read, this is what he means to show. As he had said, “ye lacked opportunity,” he here maketh an addition, as he doth in the Epistle to the Corinthians, saying, “And He that supplieth seed to the sower, may He supply bread for food, and multiply your seed for sowing, and increase the fruits of your righteousness.” (2 Corinthians 9:10.) He invokes blessings upon them, that they may abound, and have wherewith to sow. He blesseth them too, not simply that they might abound, but “according to His riches,” so that this too is done in measured terms. For had they been as he was, so truly wise, so crucified, he would not have done this; but since they were men that were handicraftsmen, poor, having wives, bringing up children, ruling their families, and who had given these very gifts out of small possessions, and had certain desires of the things of this world, he blesseth them appropriately. For it is not unseemly to invoke sufficiency and plenty upon those who thus use them. See too what he said. He said not, May He make you rich, and to abound greatly; but what said he? “May He fulfill every need of yours,” so that ye may not be in want, but have things for your necessities. Since Christ too, when He gave us a form of prayer, inserted also this in the prayer, when He taught us to say, “Give us this day our daily bread.” (Matthew 6:11.)

“According to His riches.” That is, according to His free gift, i.e. it is easy to Him, and possible, and quickly. And since I have spoken of need, do not think that he will drive you into straits. Wherefore he added, “according to his riches in glory in Christ Jesus.” So shall all things abound to you, that you may have them to His glory. Or, ye are wanting in nothing; (for it is written, “great grace was upon them all, neither was there any that lacked.”) (Acts 4:33.) Or, so as to do all things for His glory, as if he had said, that ye may use your abundance to His glory.

Verse 20. *“Now unto our God and Father be the glory for ever and ever. Amen.”*

For the glory of which he speaks belongs not only to the Son, but to the Father too, for when the Son is glorified, then is the Father also. For when he said, This is done to the glory of Christ, lest any one should suppose that it is to His glory alone, he continued, “Unto our God and Father be the glory,” that glory which is paid to the Son.

Verse 21. *“Salute every saint in Christ Jesus.”*

This also is no small thing. For it is a proof of great good will, to salute them through letters. “The brethren which are with me salute you.” And yet thou saidst that thou hast “no one like-minded, who will care truly for your state.” How then sayest thou now, “The brethren which are with me”? He either saith, “The brethren which are with me,” because he hath no one like-minded of those who are with him, (where he doth not speak of those in the city, for how were they constrained to undertake the affairs of the Apostles?) or that he did not refuse to call even those brethren.

Verse 22, 23. *“All the saints salute you, especially they that are of Caesar’s household. The grace of the Lord Jesus Christ be with your spirit.”*

He elevated them and strengthened them, by showing that his preaching had reached even to the king’s household. For if those who were in the king’s palace despised all things for the sake of the King of Heaven, far more ought they to do this. And this too was a proof of the love of Paul, and that he had told many things of them, and said great things of them, whence he had even led those who were in the palace to a longing for them, so that those who had never seen them saluted them. Especially because the faithful were then in affliction, his love was great. And those who were absent from each other were closely conjoined together as if real limbs. And the poor man was similarly disposed toward the rich, and the rich toward the poor, and there was no preeminence, in that they were all equally hated and cast out, and that for the same cause. For as, if captives taken from divers cities should arise and come to the same towns, they eagerly embrace each other, their common calamity binding them together; thus too at that time they had great love one toward another, the communion of their afflictions and persecutions uniting them.

MORAL. For affliction is an unbroken bond, the increase of love, the occasion of compunction and piety. Hear the words of David, “It is good for me that I have been afflicted, that I might learn Thy statutes.” (Psalm 119:71.) And again another prophet, who saith, “It is good for a man that he bear the yoke in his youth.” (Lamentations 3:27.) And again, “Blessed is the man whom Thou chastenest, O Lord.” (Psalm 94:12.) And another who saith, “Despise not the chastening of the Lord.” (Proverbs 3:11.) And “if thou come near to serve the Lord, prepare thy soul for temptation.” (Ecclus. 11:1.) And Christ also said to His disciples, “In the world ye shall have tribulation, but be of good cheer.” (John 16:33.) And again, “Ye shall weep and lament, but the world shall rejoice.” (John. 16:20.) And again, “Narrow and straitened is the way.” (Matthew 7:14.) Dost thou see how tribulation is everywhere lauded, everywhere assumed as needful for us? For if in the contests of the world, no one without this receiveth the crown, unless he fortify himself by toil, by abstinence from delicacies, by living according to rule, by watchings, and innumerable other things, much more so here. For whom wilt thou name as an instance? The king? Not even he liveth a life free from care, but one burdened with much tribulation and anxiety. For look not to his diadem, but to his sea of cares, by which the crown is produced for him. Nor look to his purple robe, but to his soul, which is darker than that purple. His crown doth not so closely bind his brow, as care doth his soul. Nor look to the multitude of his spearmen, but to the multitude of his disquietudes. For it is not possible to find a private house laden with so many cares as a king’s palace. Violent deaths are each day expected, and a vision of blood is seen as they sit down to eat and drink. Nor can we say how oft he is disturbed in the night season, and leaps up, haunted with visions. And all this in peace; but if war should overtake him, what could be more piteous than such a life as this! What evils has he from those that are his own, I mean, those who are under his dominion. Nay, and of a truth the pavement of a king’s house is always full of blood, the blood of his own relations. And if ye will, I will also relate some instances, and ye will presently know; chiefly old occurrences — but also some things that have happened in our own times — yet still preserved in memory. One, it is said, having suspected his wife of adultery, bound her naked upon mules, and exposed her to wild beasts, though she had already been the mother to him of many princes. What sort of life, think ye, could that man have lived? For he would not have broken

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out into such vengeance, had he not been deeply affected with that distress. Moreover, this same man slew his own son, or rather his brother did so. Of his sons, the one indeed slew himself when seized by a tyrant, and another put to death his cousin, his colleague in the kingdom, to which he had appointed him; and saw his wife destroyed by pessaries, for when she bore not, a certain wretched and miserable woman (for such indeed she was who thought to supply the gift of God by her own wisdom) gave her pessaries, and destroyed the queen, and herself perished with her. And this man is said to have also killed his own brother. Another again, his successor, was destroyed by noxious drugs, and his cup was to him no longer drink, but death. And his son had an eye put out, from fear of what was to follow, though he had done no wrong. It is not befitting to mention how another ended his life miserably. And after them, one was burnt, like some miserable wretch, amongst horses, and beams, and all sorts of things, and left his wife in widowhood. For it is not possible to relate the woes which he was compelled to undergo in his lifetime. when he rose up in revolt. And hath not he who now rules, from the time he received the crown, been in toil, in danger, in grief, in dejection, in misfortune, exposed to conspiracies? Such is not the kingdom of heaven, but after it is received, there is peace, life, joy delight. But as I said, life cannot be without pain. For if in the affairs of this world even he who is accounted most happy, if the king is burdened with so many misfortunes, what thinkest thou must be true of private life? I cannot say how many other evils there are! How many stories have ofttimes been woven on these subjects! For nearly all the tragedies of the stage, as well as the mythical stories, have kings for their subjects. For most of these stories are formed from true incidents, for it is thus they please. As for example, Thyestes' banquet, and the destruction to all that family by their misfortunes.

These things we know from the writers that are without: but if ye will, I will adduce instances from the Scripture too. Saul was the first king, and ye knew how he perished, after experiencing numberless ills. After him, David, Solomon, Abia, Hezekiah, Josiah, in like sort. For it is not possible, without affliction and toil, and without dejection of mind, to pass through the present life. But let us be cast down in mind, not for such things as these, for which kings grieve, but for those things, whence we (thus) have great gain. "For godly sorrow worketh repentance unto salvation, a

repentance which bringeth no regret." (2 Corinthians 7:10.) On account of these things we should be grieved, for these things we should be pained, for these things we should be pricked at heart; thus was Paul grieved for sinners, thus did he weep. "For out of much affliction and anguish of heart I wrote unto you in many tears." (2 Corinthians 2:4.) For when he had no cause of grief on his own account, he did so on account of others, or rather he accounted those things too to be his own, at least as far as grief went. Others were offended, and he burned; others were weak, and he was weak: such grief as this is good, is superior to all worldly joy. Him who so grieves I prefer to all men, or rather the Lord Himself pronounces them blessed, who so grieve, who are sympathizing. I do not so much admire him in dangers, or rather I do not admire him less for the dangers by which he died daily, yet this still more captivates me. For it came of a soul devoted to God, and full of affection: from the love which Christ Himself seeketh: from a brotherly and a fatherly sympathy, or rather, of one greater than both these. Thus we should be affected, thus weep; such tears as these are full of great delight; such grief as this is the ground of joy.

And say not to me: What do they for whom I grieve gain by my so doing? Though we no way profit them for whom we grieve, at all events we shall profit ourselves. For he who grieveth thus on account of others, much more will so do for himself; he who thus weepeth for the sins of others will not pass by his own transgressions unwept, or rather, he will not quickly sin. But this is dreadful, that when we are ordered so to grieve for them that sin, we do not even exhibit any repentance for our own sins, but when sinning remain without feeling, and have care for and take account of anything, rather than our own sins. For this cause we rejoice with a worthless joy, which is the joy of the world, and straightway quenched, and which brings forth griefs innumerable. Let us then grieve with grief which is the mother of joy, and let us not rejoice with joy which brings forth grief. Let us shed tears which are the seeds of great joy, and not laugh with that laughter, which brings forth the gnashing of teeth for us. Let us be afflicted with affliction, from which springs up ease, and let us not seek luxury, whence great affliction and pain is born. Let us labor a little time upon the earth, that we may have continual enjoyment in heaven. Let us afflict ourselves in this transitory life, that we may attain rest in that

which is endless. Let us not be remiss in this short life, lest we groan in that which is endless.

See ye not how many are here in affliction for the sake of worldly things? Consider that thou also art one of them, and bear thy affliction and thy pain, feeding on the hope of things to come. Thou art not better than Paul or Peter, who never obtained rest, who passed all their life in hunger and thirst and nakedness. If thou wouldest attain the same things with them, why journeyest thou along a contrary road? If thou wouldest arrive at that City, of which they have been deemed worthy, walk along the path which leadeth thither. The way of ease leadeth not thither, but that of affliction. The former is broad, the latter is narrow; along this let us walk, that we may attain eternal life in Christ Jesus our Lord, with whom, to the Father, together with the Holy Ghost, be honor, might, power, now and ever, and world without end. Amen.