

## CHAPTER 5.

### Of the modes of supplementing satisfaction—viz. indulgences and purgatory.

Divisions of the chapter,—

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2. Confutation by Leo and Augustine. Answer to two objections urged in support of them, sec. 3, 4. A profane love of filthy lucre on the part of the Pope. The origin of indulgences unfolded, sec. 5.
3. An examination of Popish purgatory. Its horrible impiety, sec. 6. An explanation of five passages of Scripture by which Sophists endeavor to support that dream, sec. 7, 8. Sentiments of the ancient Theologians concerning purgatory, sec. 10.

#### Sections.

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2. View of indulgences given by the Sophists. Their true nature. Refutation of them. Refutation confirmed by seven passages of Scripture.
3. Confirmed also by the testimony of Leo, a Roman Bishop, and by Augustine. Attempts of the Popish doctors to establish the monstrous doctrine of indulgences, and even support it by Apostolical authority. First answer.
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10. The doctrine of purgatory ancient, but refuted by a more ancient Apostle. Not supported by ancient writers, by Scripture, or solid argument. Introduced by custom and a zeal not duly regulated by the word of God. Ancient writers, as Augustine, speak doubtfully in commending prayer for the dead. At all events, we must hold by the word of God, which rejects this fiction. A vast difference between the more ancient and the more modern builders of purgatory. This shown by comparing them.

**1.** From this dogma of satisfaction that of indulgences takes its rise. For the pretence is, that what is wanting to our own ability is hereby supplied; and they go the insane length of defining them to be a dispensation of the merits of Christ, and the martyrs which the Pope makes by his bulls. Though they are fitter for hellebore than for argument,—and it is scarcely worth while to refute these frivolous errors, which, already battered down, begin of their own accord to grow antiquated, and totter to their fall;—yet, as a brief refutation may be useful to some of the unlearned, I will not omit it. Indeed, the fact that indulgences have so long stood safe and with impunity, and wantoned with so much fury and tyranny, may be regarded as a proof into how deep a night of ignorance mankind were for some ages plunged. They saw themselves insulted openly, and without disguise, by the Pope and his bull-bearers; they saw the salvation of the soul made the subject of a lucrative traffic, salvation taxed at a few pieces of money, nothing given gratuitously; they saw what was squeezed from them in the form of oblations basely consumed on strumpets, pimps and gluttony, the loudest trumpeters of indulgences being the greatest despisers; they saw the monster stalking abroad, and every day luxuriating with greater license, and that without end, new bulls being constantly issued, and new sums extracted. Still indulgences were received with the greatest reverence, worshipped, and bought. Even those who saw more clearly than others deemed them pious frauds, by which, even in deceiving, some good was gained. Now, at length, that a considerable portion of the world have begun to rethink themselves, indulgences grow cool, and gradually even begin to freeze, preparatory to their final extinction.

**2.** But since very many who see the vile imposture, theft, and rapine (with which the dealers in indulgences have hitherto deluded and sported with us), are not aware of the true source of the impiety, it may be proper to show not only what indulgences truly are, but also that they are polluted in every part.<sup>1</sup> They give the name of treasury of the Church to the merits of Christ, the holy Apostles and Martyrs. They pretend, as I have said, that the radical custody of

<sup>1</sup> French, "Il est expedient de montrer ici non seulement quelles sont les indulgences, comme ils en usent; mais du tout que c'est, à les prendre en leur propre et meilleure nature, sans quelque qualite ou vice accidental;"—it is expedient here to show not only what indulgences are as in use, but in themselves, taking them in their proper and best form, without any qualification or accidental vice.

the granary has been delivered to the Roman bishop, to whom the dispensation of these great blessings belongs in such a sense, that he can both exercise it by himself, and delegate the power of exercising it to others. Hence we have from the Pope at one time plenary indulgences, at another for certain years; from the cardinals for a hundred days, and from the bishops for forty. These, to describe them truly, are a profanation of the blood of Christ, and a delusion of Satan, by which the Christian people are led away from the grace of God and the life which is in Christ, and turned aside from the true way of salvation. For how could the blood of Christ be more shamefully profaned than by denying its sufficiency for the remission of sins, for reconciliation and satisfaction, unless its defects, as if it were dried up and exhausted, are supplemented from some other quarter? Peter's words are: "To him give all the prophets witness, that through his name whosoever believeth in him shall receive remission of sins," (Acts 10:43); but indulgences bestow the remission of sins through Peter, Paul, and the Martyrs. "The blood of Jesus Christ his Son cleanseth us from all sin," says John (1 John 1:7). Indulgences make the blood of the martyrs an ablution of sins. "He has made him to be sin (i.e. a satisfaction for sin) for us who knew no sin," says Paul (2 Cor. 5:21), "that we might be made the righteousness of God in him." Indulgences make the satisfaction of sin to depend on the blood of the martyrs. Paul exclaimed and testified to the Corinthians, that Christ alone was crucified, and died for them (1 Cor. 1:13). Indulgences declare that Paul and others died for us. Paul elsewhere says that Christ purchased the Church with his own blood (Acts 20:28). Indulgences assign another purchase to the blood of martyrs. "By one offering he has perfected for ever them that are sanctified," says the Apostle (Heb. 10:14). Indulgences, on the other hand, insist that sanctification, which would otherwise be insufficient, is perfected by martyrs. John says that all the saints "have washed their robes, and made them white in the blood of the Lamb," (Rev. 7:14). Indulgences tell us to wash our robes in the blood of saints.

**3.** There is an admirable passage in opposition to their blasphemies in Leo, a Roman Bishop (ad Palaestinos, Ep. 81). "Although the death of many saints was precious in the sight of the Lord (Ps. 116:15), yet no innocent man's slaughter was the propitiation of the world. The just received crowns did not give them; and the fortitude of believers produced examples of patience, not gifts of righteousness: for their deaths were for themselves; and none by his final end paid the debt of another, except Christ our Lord, in whom alone all are crucified—all dead, buried, and raised up." This sentiment, as it was of a memorable nature, he has elsewhere repeated (Epist. 95). Certainly one could not desire a clearer confutation of this impious dogma. Augustine introduces the same sentiment not less appositely: "Although brethren die for brethren, yet no martyr's blood is shed for the remission of sins: this Christ did for us, and in this conferred upon us not what we should imitate, but what should make us grateful," (August. Tract. in Joann. 84). Again, in another passage: "As he alone became the Son of God and the Son of man, that he might make us to be with himself sons of God, so he alone, without any ill desert, undertook the penalty for us, that through him we mighty without good desert, obtain undeserved favor," (ad Bonif. Lib. 4, cap. 4). Indeed, as their whole doctrine is a patchwork of sacrilege and blasphemy, this is the most blasphemous of the whole. Let them acknowledge whether or not they hold the following dogmas: That the martyrs, by their death, performed more to God, and merited more than was necessary for themselves, and that they have a large surplus of merits which

may be applied to others; that in order that this great good may not prove superfluous, their blood is mingled with the blood of Christ, and out of both is formed the treasury of the Church, for the forgiveness and satisfaction of sins; and that in this sense we must understand the words of Paul: "Who now rejoice in my sufferings, and fill up that which is behind of the afflictions of Christ in my flesh for his body's sake, which is the Church," (Col. 1:24). What is this but merely to leave the name of Christ, and at the same time make him a vulgar saintling, who can scarcely be distinguished in the crowd? He alone ought to be preached, alone held forth, alone named, alone looked to, whenever the subject considered is the obtaining of the forgiveness of sins, expiation, and sanctification. But let us hear their propositions. That the blood of martyrs may not be shed without fruit, it must be employed for the common good of the Church. Is it so? Was there no fruit in glorifying God by death? in sealing his truth with their blood? in testifying, by contempt of the present life, that they looked for a better? in confirming the faith of the Church, and at the same time disabling the pertinacity of the enemy by their constancy? But thus it is. They acknowledge no fruit if Christ is the only propitiation, if he alone died for our sins, if he alone was offered for our redemption. Nevertheless, they say, Peter and Paul would have gained the crown of victory though they had died in their beds a natural death. But as they contended to blood, it would not accord with the justice of God to leave their doing so barren and unfruitful. As if God were unable to augment the glory of his servants in proportion to the measure of his gifts. The advantage derived in common by the Church is great enough, when, by their triumphs, she is inflamed with zeal to fight.

**4.** How maliciously they wrest the passage in which Paul says, that he supplies in his body that which was lacking in the sufferings of Christ! (Col. 1:24). That defect or supplement refers not to the work of redemption, satisfaction, or expiation, but to those afflictions with which the members of Christ, in other words, all believers, behave to be exercised, so long as they are in the flesh. He says, therefore, that part of the sufferings of Christ still remains—viz. that what he suffered in himself he daily suffers in his members. Christ so honors us as to regard and count our afflictions as his own. By the additional words—for the Church, Paul means not for the redemptions or reconciliations or satisfaction of the Church, but for edification and progress. As he elsewhere says, "I endure all things for the elect's sakes, that they may also obtain the salvation which is in Christ Jesus with eternal glory" (2 Tim. 2:10). He also writes to the Corinthians: "Whether we be afflicted, it is for your consolation and salvation, which is effectual in the enduring of the same sufferings which we also suffer," (2 Cor. 1:6). In the same place he immediately explains his meaning by adding, that he was made a minister of the Church, not for redemption, but according to the dispensation which he received to preach the gospel of Christ. But if they still desire another interpreter, let them hear Augustine: "The sufferings of Christ are in Christ alone, as in the head; in Christ and the Church as in the whole body. Hence Paul, being one member says, 'I fill up in my body that which is behind of the sufferings of Christ.' Therefore O hearers whoever you be, if you are among the members of Christ, whatever you suffer from those who are not members of Christ, was lacking to the sufferings of Christ," (August. in Ps. 16). He elsewhere explains the end of the sufferings of the Apostles undertaken for Christ: "Christ is my door to you, because ye are the sheep of Christ purchased by his blood: acknowledge your price, which is not paid by me, but preached by me," (August. Tract. in Joann. 47). He afterwards

adds, "As he laid down his life, so ought we to lay down our lives for the brethren, to build up peace and maintain faith." Thus far Augustine. Far be it from us to imagine that Paul thought any thing was wanting to the sufferings of Christ in regard to the complete fulness of righteousness, salvation, and life, or that he wished to make any addition to it, after showing so clearly and eloquently that the grace of Christ was poured out in such rich abundance as far to exceed all the power of sin (Rom. 5:15). All saints have been saved by it alone, not by the merit of their own life or death, as Peter distinctly testifies (Acts 15:11); so that it is an insult to God and his Anointed to place the worthiness of any saint in any thing save the mercy of God alone. But why dwell longer on this, as if the matter were obscure, when to mention these monstrous dogmas is to refute them?

**5.** Moreover, to say nothing of these abominations, who taught the Pope to enclose the grace of Jesus Christ in lead and parchment, grace which the Lord is pleased to dispense by the word of the Gospel? Undoubtedly either the Gospel of God or indulgences must be false. That Christ is offered to us in the Gospel with all the abundance of heavenly blessings, with all his merits, all his righteousness, wisdom, and grace, without exception, Paul bears witness when he says, "Now then we are ambassadors for Christ, as though God did beseech you by us: we pray you in Christ's stead, be ye reconciled to God. For he has made him to be sin for us, who knew no sin; that we might be made the righteousness of God in him," (2 Cor. 5:20, 21). And what is meant by the fellowship (*koinoni'a*) of Christ, which according to the same Apostle (1 Cor. 1:9) is offered to us in the Gospel, all believers know. On the contrary, indulgences, bringing forth some portion of the grace of God from the armory of the Pope, fix it to lead, parchment, and a particular place, but dissever it from the word of God. When we inquire into the origin of this abuse, it appears to have arisen from this, that when in old times the satisfactions imposed on penitents were too severe to be borne, those who felt themselves burdened beyond measure by the penance imposed, petitioned the Church for relaxation. The remission so given was called indulgence. But as they transferred satisfactions to God, and called them compensations by which men redeem themselves from the justice of God, they in the same way transferred indulgences, representing them as expiatory remedies which free us from merited punishment. The blasphemies to which we have referred have been feigned with so much effrontery that there is not the least pretext for them.

**6.** Their purgatory cannot now give us much trouble, since with this ax we have struck it, thrown it down, and overturned it from its very foundations. I cannot agree with some who think that we ought to dissemble in this matter, and make no mention of purgatory, from which (as they say) fierce contests arise, and very little edification can be obtained. I myself would think it right to disregard their follies did they not tend to serious consequences. But since purgatory has been reared on many, and is daily propped up by new blasphemies; since it produces many grievous offenses, assuredly it is not to be connived at, however it might have been disguised for a time, that without any authority from the word of God, it was devised by prying audacious rashness, that credit was procured for it by fictitious revelations, the wiles of Satan, and that certain passages of Scripture were ignorantly wrested to its support. Although the Lord bears not that human presumption should thus force its way to the hidden recesses of his judgments; although

he has issued a strict prohibition against neglecting his voice, and making inquiry at the dead (Deut. 18:11), and permits not his word to be so erroneously contaminated. Let us grant, however, that all this might have been tolerated for a time as a thing of no great moment; yet when the expiation of sins is sought elsewhere than in the blood of Christ, and satisfaction is transferred to others, silence were most perilous. We are bound, therefore, to raise our voice to its highest pitch, and cry aloud that purgatory is a deadly device of Satan; that it makes void the cross of Christ; that it offers intolerable insult to the divine mercy; that it undermines and overthrows our faith. For what is this purgatory but the satisfaction for sin paid after death by the souls of the dead? Hence when this idea of satisfaction is refuted, purgatory itself is forthwith completely overturned.<sup>1</sup> But if it is perfectly clear, from what was lately said, that the blood of Christ is the only satisfaction, expiation, and cleansing for the sins of believers, what remains but to hold that purgatory is mere blasphemy, horrid blasphemy against Christ? I say nothing of the sacrilege by which it is daily defended, the offenses which it begets in religion, and the other innumerable evils which we see teeming forth from that fountain of impiety.

**7.** Those passages of Scripture on which it is their wont falsely and iniquitously to fasten, it may be worth while to wrench out of their hands.<sup>2</sup> When the Lord declares that the sin against the Holy Ghost will not be forgiven either in this world or the world to come, he thereby intimates (they say) that there is a remission of certain sins hereafter. But who sees not that the Lord there speaks of the guilt of sin? But if this is so, what has it to do with their purgatory, seeing they deny not that the guilt of those sins, the punishment of which is there expiated, is forgiven in the present life? Lest, however, they should still object, we shall give a plainer solution. Since it was the Lord's intention to cut off all hope of pardon from this flagitious wickedness, he did not consider it enough to say, that it would never be forgiven, but in the way of amplification employed a division by which he included both the judgment which every man's conscience pronounces in the present life, and the final judgment which will be publicly pronounced at the resurrection; as if he had said, Beware of this malignant rebellion, as you would of instant destruction; for he who of set purpose endeavors to extinguish the offered light of the Spirit, shall not obtain pardon either in this life, which has been given to sinners for conversion, or on the last day when the angels of God shall separate the sheep from the goats, and the heavenly kingdom shall be purged of all that offends. The next passage they produce is the parable in Matthew: "Agree with thine adversary quickly, while thou art in the way with him; lest at any time the adversary deliver thee to the judge, and the judge deliver thee to the officer, and thou be cast into prison. Verily, I say unto thee, Thou shalt by no means come out thence, till thou hast paid the uttermost earthing," (Mt. 5:25, 26). If in this passage the judge means God, the adversary the devil, the officer an angel, and the prison purgatory, I give in at once. But if every man sees that Christ there intended to show to how many perils and evils those expose themselves who obstinately insist on their utmost right, instead of being satisfied with what is fair and equitable, that he might thereby the more strongly exhort his followers to concord, where, I ask, are we to find their purgatory?<sup>3</sup>

1 French. "Tellement que si on ote la fantaisie de satisfaire, leur purgatorie s'en va bas;"—so that if the fancy of satisfying is taken away, down goes their purgatory.

2 Mt. 12:32; Mark 3:28; Luke 12:10; Mt. 5:25.

3 The French adds the following sentence: "Brief, que le passage soit regarde et prins en sa simple intelligence, et il n'y

8. They seek an argument in the passage in which Paul declares, that all things shall bow the knee to Christ, “things in heaven, and things in earth, and things under the earth,” (Phil. 2:10). They take it for granted, that by “things under the earth,” cannot be meant those who are doomed to eternal damnation, and that the only remaining conclusion is, that they must be souls suffering in purgatory. They would not reason very ill if, by the bending of the knee, the Apostle designated true worship; but since he simply says that Christ has received a dominion to which all creatures are subject, what prevents us from understanding those “under the earth” to mean the devils, who shall certainly be sisted before the judgment-seat of God, there to recognize their Judge with fear and trembling? In this way Paul himself elsewhere interprets the same prophecy: “We shall all stand before the judgment-seat of Christ. For it is written, As I live, saith the Lord, every knee shall bow to me, and every tongue shall confess to God,” (Rom. 14:10, 11). But we cannot in this way interpret what is said in the Apocalypse: “Every creature which is in heaven, and on the earth, and under the earth, and such as are in the sea, heard I saying, Blessing, and honor, and glory, and power, be unto him that sitteth upon the throne, and unto the Lamb, for ever and ever,” (Rev. 5:13). This I readily admit; but what kinds of creatures do they suppose are here enumerated? It is absolutely certain, that both irrational and inanimate creatures are comprehended. All, then, which is affirmed is, that every part of the universe, from the highest pinnacle of heaven to the very centre of the earth, each in its own way proclaims the glory of the Creator.

To the passage which they produce from the history of the Maccabees (1 Macc. 12:43), I will not deign to reply, lest I should seem<sup>1</sup> to include that work among the canonical books. But Augustine holds it to be canonical. First, with what degree of confidence? “The Jews,” says he, “do not hold the book of the Maccabees as they do the Law, the Prophets, and the Psalms, to which the Lord bears testimony as to his own witnesses, saying, Ought not all things which are written in the Law, and the Psalms, and the Prophets, concerning me be fulfilled? (Luke 24:44). But it has been received by the Church not uselessly, if it be read or heard with soberness.” Jerome, however, unhesitatingly affirms, that it is of no authority in establishing doctrine; and from the ancient little book, *De Expositione Symboli*; which bears the name of Cyprian, it is plain that it was in no estimation in the ancient Church. And why do I here contend in vain? As if the author himself did not sufficiently show what degree of deference is to be paid him, when in the end he asks pardon for any thing less properly expressed (2 Macc. 15:38). He who confesses that his writings stand in need of pardon, certainly proclaims that they are not oracles of the Holy Spirit. We may add, that the piety of Judas is commended for no other reason than for having a firm hope of the final resurrection, in sending his oblation for the dead to Jerusalem. For the writer of the history does not represent what he did as furnishing the price of redemption, but merely that they might be partakers of eternal life, with the other saints who had fallen for their country and religion. The act, indeed, was not free from superstition and misguided zeal; but it is mere fatuity to extend the legal sacrifice to us, seeing we are assured that the sacrifices then in use ceased on the advent of Christ.

9. But, it seems, they find in Paul an invincible support, which cannot be so easily overthrown. His words are, “Now if any man build upon this foundation gold, silver, precious stones, wood, hay, stubble; every man’s work shall be made manifest: for the day shall declare it, because it shall be revealed by fire; and the fire shall try every man’s work of what sort it is. If any man’s work shall be burnt, he shall suffer loss: but he himself shall be saved; yet so as by fire,” (1 Cor. 3:12-15). What fire (they ask) can that be but the fire of purgatory, by which the defilements of sin are wiped away, in order that we may enter pure into the kingdom of God? But most of the Fathers<sup>2</sup> give it a different meaning—viz. the tribulation or cross by which the Lord tries his people, that they may not rest satisfied with the defilements of the flesh. This is much more probable than the fiction of a purgatory. I do not, however, agree with them, for I think I see a much surer and clearer meaning to the passage. But, before I produce it, I wish they would answer me, whether they think the Apostle and all the saints have to pass through this purgatorial fire? I am aware they will say, no; for it were too absurd to hold that purification is required by those whose superfluous merits they dream of as applicable to all the members of the Church. But this the Apostle affirms; for he says, not that the works of certain persons, but the works of all will be tried.<sup>3</sup> And this is not my argument, but that of Augustine, who thus impugns that interpretation.<sup>4</sup> And (what makes the thing more absurd) he says, not that they will pass through fire for certain works, but that even if they should have edified the Church with the greatest fidelity, they will receive their reward after their works shall have been tried by fire. First, we see that the Apostle used a metaphor when he gave the names of wood, hay, and stubble, to doctrines of man’s device. The ground of the metaphor is obvious—viz. that as wood when it is put into the fire is consumed and destroyed, so neither will those doctrines be able to endure when they come to be tried. Moreover, every one sees that the trial is made by the Spirit of God. Therefore, in following out the thread of the metaphor, and adapting its parts properly to each other, he gave the name of fire to the examination of the Holy Spirit. For, just as silver and gold, the nearer they are brought to the fire, give stronger proof of their genuineness and purity, so the Lord’s truth, the more thoroughly it is submitted to spiritual examination, has its authority the better confirmed. As hay, wood, and stubble, when the fire is applied to them, are suddenly consumed, so the inventions of man, not founded on the word of God, cannot stand the trial of the Holy Spirit, but forthwith give way and perish. In fine, if spurious doctrines are compared to wood, hay, and stubble, because, like wood, hay, and stubble, they are burned by fire and fitted for destruction, though the actual destruction is only completed by the Spirit of the Lord, it follows that the Spirit is that fire by which they will be proved. This proof Paul calls the day of the Lord; using a term common in Scripture. For the day of the Lord is said to take place whenever he in some way manifests his presence to men, his face being specially said to shine when his truth is manifested. It has now been proved, that Paul has no idea of any other fire than the trial of the Holy Spirit. But how are those who suffer the loss of their works saved by fire? This it will not be difficult to understand, if we consider of what kind of persons he speaks. For he designates them builders of the Church, who, retaining the proper founda-

2 Chrysostom, Augustine, and others; see August, *Enchirid. ad Laurent. cap 68.*

3 The French adds, “auquel nombre universel sont enclos les Apostres;”—in which universal number the Apostles are included.

4 French, “l’exposition que font aujourd’hui nos adversaires;”—the exposition which our opponents give in the present day.

sera rien trouve de ce qu’ils pretendent;”—In short, let the passage be looked at and taken in its simple meaning, and there will be nothing found in it of what they pretend.

1 See August. *contra Secundum Gaudentii Epistolam, cap. 23.*

tion, build different materials upon it; that is, who, not abandoning the principal and necessary articles of faith, err in minor and less perilous matters, mingling their own fictions with the word of God. Such, I say, must suffer the loss of their work by the destruction of their fictions. They themselves, however, are saved, yet so as by fire; that is, not that their ignorance and delusions are approved by the Lord, but they are purified from them by the grace and power of the Holy Spirit. All those, accordingly, who have tainted the golden purity of the divine word with the pollution of purgatory must necessarily suffer the loss of their work.

**10.** But the observance of it in the Church is of the highest antiquity. This objection is disposed of by Paul, when, including even his own age in the sentence, he declares, that all who in building the Church have laid upon it something not conformable to the foundation, must suffer the loss of their work. When, therefore, my opponents object, that it has been the practice for thirteen hundred years to offer prayers for the dead, I, in return, ask them, by what word of God, by what revelation, by what example it was done? For here not only are passages of Scripture wanting, but in the examples of all the saints of whom we read, nothing of the kind is seen. We have numerous, and sometimes long narratives, of their mourning and sepulchral rites, but not one word is said of prayers.<sup>1</sup> But the more important the matter was, the more they ought to have dwelt upon it. Even those who in ancient times offered prayers for the dead, saw that they were not supported by the command of God and legitimate example. Why then did they presume to do it? I hold that herein they suffered the common lot of man, and therefore maintain, that what they did is not to be imitated. Believers ought not to engage in any work without a firm conviction of its propriety, as Paul enjoins (Rom. 14:23); and this conviction is expressly requisite in prayer. It is to be presumed, however, that they were influenced by some reason; they sought a solace for their sorrow, and it seemed cruel not to give some attestation of their love to the dead, when in the presence of God. All know by experience how natural it is for the human mind thus to feel.

Received custom too was a kind of torch, by which the minds of many were inflamed. We know that among all the Gentiles, and in all ages, certain rites were paid to the dead, and that every year lustrations were performed for their manes. Although Satan deluded foolish mortals by these impostures, yet the means of deceiving were borrowed from a sound principle—viz. that death is not destruction, but a passage from this life to another. And there can be no doubt that superstition itself always left the Gentiles without excuse before the judgment-seat of God, because they neglected to prepare for that future life which they professed to believe. Thus, that Christians might not seem worse than heathens, they felt ashamed of paying no office to the dead, as if they had been utterly annihilated. Hence their ill advised assiduity; because they thought they would expose themselves to great disgrace, if they were slow in providing funeral feasts and oblations. What was thus introduced by perverse rivalry, ever and anon received new additions, until the highest holiness of the Papacy consisted in giving assistance to the suffering dead. But far better and more solid comfort is furnished by scripture when it declares, “Blessed are the

dead that die in the Lord;” and adds the reason, “for they rest from their labors,” (Rev. 14:13). We ought not to indulge our love so far as to set up a perverse mode of prayer in the Church. Surely every person possessed of the least prudence easily perceives, that whatever we meet with on this subject in ancient writers, was in deference to public custom and the ignorance of the vulgar. I admit they were themselves also carried away into error, the usual effect of rash credulity being to destroy the judgment. Meanwhile the passages themselves show, that when they recommended prayer for the dead it was with hesitation. Augustine relates in his Confessions, that his mother, Monica, earnestly entreated to be remembered when the solemn rites at the altar were performed; doubtless an old woman’s wish, which her son did not bring to the test of Scripture, but from natural affection wished others to approve. His book, *De Cura pro Mortalis Agenda*, On showing Care for the Dead, is so full of doubt, that its coldness may well extinguish the heat of a foolish zeal. Should any one, in pretending to be a patron of the dead, deal merely in probabilities, the only effect will be to make those indifferent who were formerly solicitous.<sup>2</sup>

The only support of this dogma is, that as a custom of praying for the dead prevailed, the duty ought not to be despised. But granting that ancient ecclesiastical writers deemed it a pious thing to assist the dead, the rule which can never deceive is always to be observed—viz. that we must not introduce anything of our own into our prayers, but must keep all our wishes in subordination to the word of God, because it belongs to Him to prescribe what he wishes us to ask. Now, since the whole Law and Gospel do not contain one syllable which countenances the right of praying for the dead, it is a profanation of prayer to go one step farther than God enjoins. But, lest our opponents boast of sharing their error with the ancient Church, I say, that there is a wide difference between the two. The latter made a commemoration of the dead, that they might not seem to have cast off all concern for them; but they, at the same time, acknowledged that they were doubtful as to their state; assuredly they made no such assertion concerning purgatory as implied that they did not hold it to be uncertain. The former insist, that their dream of purgatory shall be received without question as an article of faith. The latter sparingly and in a perfunctory manner only commended their dead to the Lord, in the communion of the holy supper. The former are constantly urging the care of the dead, and by their importunate preaching of it, make out that it is to be preferred to all the offices of charity. But it would not be difficult for us to produce some passages from ancient writers,<sup>3</sup> which clearly overturn all those prayers for the dead which were then in use. Such is the passage of Augustine, in which he shows that the resurrection of the flesh and eternal glory is expected by all, but that rest which follows death is received by every one who is worthy of it when he dies. Accordingly, he declares that all the righteous, not less than the Apostles, Prophets, and Martyrs, immediately after death enjoy blessed rest. If such is their condition, what, I ask, will

1 French, “L’Ecriture raconte souventesfois et bien au long, comment les fideles ont pleure la mort de leurs parens, et comment ils les ont ensevelis; mais qu’ils ayent prie plour eux, il n’en est nouvelles;”—Scripture relates oftentimes and at great length, how the faithful lamented the death of their relations, and how they buried them: but that they prayed for them is never hinted at.

2 French, “Le liure qu’il ’a compose tout expres de cest argument, et qu’il a intitule. Du soin pour les morts, est enveloppee en tant de doutes, qu’il doit suffire pour refroidir ceux qui y auroyent devotion; pour le moins en voyant qu’il ne s’aide que de conjectures bien legeres et foibles, on verra qu’on ne se doit point fort empescher d’une chose où il n’y a nulle importance;”—The book which he has composed expressly on this subject, and which he has entitled, *Of Care for the Dead*, is enveloped in so many doubts, that it should be sufficient to cool those who are devoted to it; at least, as he supports his view only by very slight and feeble conjectures, it will be seen, that we ought not to trouble ourselves much with a matter in which there is no importance.

3 See August. Homil. in Joann. 49. De Civitate Dei. Lib. 21 cap. 13-24.

our prayers contribute to them?<sup>1</sup> I say nothing of those grosser superstitions by which they have fascinated the minds of the simple; and yet they are innumerable, and most of them so monstrous, that they cannot cover them with any cloak of decency. I say nothing, moreover, of those most shameful traffickings, which they plied as they listed while the world was stupefied. For I would never come to an end; and, without enumerating them, the pious reader will here find enough to establish his conscience.

## CHAPTER 6.

### The life of a Christian man. Scriptural arguments exhorting to it.

This and the four following chapters treat of the Life of the Christian, and are so arranged as to admit of being classed under two principal heads.

First, it must be held to be an universally acknowledged point, that no man is a Christian who does not feel some special love for righteousness, chap. 6. Secondly, in regard to the standard by which every man ought to regulate his life, although it seems to be considered in chap. 7 only, yet the three following chapters also refer to it. For it shows that the Christian has two duties to perform. First, the observance being so arduous, he needs the greatest patience. Hence chap. 8 treats professedly of the utility of the cross, and chap. 9 invites to meditation on the future life. Lastly, chap. 10 clearly shows, as in no small degree conducive to this end, how we are to use this life and its comforts without abusing them.

This sixth chapter consists of two parts,—

1. Connection between this treatise on the Christian Life and the doctrine of Regeneration and Repentance. Arrangement of the treatise, sec. 1-3.
2. Extremes to be avoided;
  - a. False Christians denying Christ by their works condemned, sec. 4.
  - b. Christians should not despair, though they have not attained perfection, provided they make daily progress in piety and righteousness.

#### Sections.

1. Connection between this chapter and the doctrine of Regeneration. Necessity of the doctrine concerning the Christian Life. The brevity of this treatise. The method of it. Plainness and unadorned simplicity of the Scripture system of morals.
2. Two divisions. First, Personal holiness.
  - a. Because God is holy.
  - b. Because of our communion with his saints.
3. Second division, relating to our Redemption. Admirable moral system of Scripture. Five special inducements or exhortations to a Christian Life.
4. False Christians who are opposed to this life censured

<sup>1</sup> The French of the latter clause of this sentence is “et toutesfois il y aura matiere assez ample de les pourmener en cette campagne, veu qu’ils n’ont nulle couleur pour jamais;”—and yet there is ample space to travel them over this field, seeing that they have no colour of excuse, but must be convicted of being the most villanous deceivers that ever were.

- a. They have not truly learned Christ.
  - b. The Gospel not the guide of their words or actions.
  - c. They do not imitate Christ the Master.
  - d. They would separate the Spirit from his word.
5. Christians ought not to despond: Provided
    - a. They take the word of God for their guide.
    - b. Sincerely cultivate righteousness.
    - c. Walk, according to their capacity, in the ways of the Lord.
    - d. Make some progress.
    - e. Persevere.

**1.** We have said that the object of regeneration is to bring the life of believers into concord and harmony with the righteousness of God, and so confirm the adoption by which they have been received as sons. But although the law comprehends within it that new life by which the image of God is restored in us, yet, as our sluggishness stands greatly in need both of helps and incentives it will be useful to collect out of Scripture a true account of this reformation lest any who have a heartfelt desire of repentance should in their zeal go astray. Moreover, I am not unaware that, in undertaking to describe the life of the Christian, I am entering on a large and extensive subject, one which, when fully considered in all its parts, is sufficient to fill a large volume. We see the length to which the Fathers in treating of individual virtues extend their exhortations. This they do, not from mere loquaciousness; for whatever be the virtue which you undertake to recommend, your pen is spontaneously led by the copiousness of the matter so to amplify, that you seem not to have discussed it properly if you have not done it at length. My intention, however, in the plan of life which I now propose to give, is not to extend it so far as to treat of each virtue specially, and expatiate in exhortation. This must be sought in the writings of others, and particularly in the Homilies of the Fathers.<sup>2</sup> For me it will be sufficient to point out the method by which a pious man may be taught how to frame his life aright, and briefly lay down some universal rule by which he may not improperly regulate his conduct. I shall one day possibly find time for more ample discourse, [or leave others to perform an office for which I am not so fit. I have a natural love of brevity, and, perhaps, any attempt of mine at copiousness would not succeed. Even if I could gain the highest applause by being more prolix, I would scarcely be disposed to attempt it],<sup>3</sup> while the nature of my present work requires me to glance at simple doctrine with as much brevity as possible. As philosophers have certain definitions of rectitude and honesty, from which they derive particular duties and the whole train of virtues; so in this respect Scripture is not without order, but presents a most beautiful arrangement, one too which is every way much more certain than that of philosophers. The only difference is, that they, under the influence of ambition, constantly affect an exquisite perspicuity of arrangement, which may serve to display their genius, whereas the Spirit of God, teaching without affectation, is not so perpetually observant of exact method, and yet by observing it at times sufficiently intimates that it is not to be neglected.

<sup>2</sup> The French adds, “C’est a dire, sermons populaires;”—that is to say, popular sermons.

<sup>3</sup> The passage in brackets is omitted in the French.

**2.** The Scripture system of which we speak aims chiefly at two objects. The former is, that the love of righteousness, to which we are by no means naturally inclined, may be instilled and implanted into our minds. The latter is (see chap. 7), to prescribe a rule which will prevent us while in the pursuit of righteousness from going astray. It has numerous admirable methods of recommending righteousness.<sup>1</sup> Many have been already pointed out in different parts of this work; but we shall here also briefly advert to some of them. With what better foundation can it begin than by reminding us that we must be holy, because “God is holy?” (Lev. 19:1; 1 Pet. 1:16). For when we were scattered abroad like lost sheep, wandering through the labyrinth of this world, he brought us back again to his own fold. When mention is made of our union with God, let us remember that holiness must be the bond; not that by the merit of holiness we come into communion with him (we ought rather first to cleave to him, in order that, pervaded with his holiness, we may follow whither he calls), but because it greatly concerns his glory not to have any fellowship with wickedness and impurity. Wherefore he tells us that this is the end of our calling, the end to which we ought ever to have respect, if we would answer the call of God. For to what end were we rescued from the iniquity and pollution of the world into which we were plunged, if we allow ourselves, during our whole lives, to wallow in them? Besides, we are at the same time admonished, that if we would be regarded as the Lord’s people, we must inhabit the holy city Jerusalem (Isaiah rev. 8, et alibi); which, as he hath consecrated it to himself, it were impious for its inhabitants to profane by impurity. Hence the expressions, “Who shall abide in thy tabernacle? who shall dwell in thy holy hill? He that walketh uprightly, and worketh righteousness,” (Ps. 15:1, 2; 24:3, 4); for the sanctuary in which he dwells certainly ought not to be like an unclean stall.

**3.** The better to arouse us, it exhibits God the Father, who, as he hath reconciled us to himself in his Anointed, has impressed his image upon us, to which he would have us to be conformed (Rom. 5:4). Come, then, and let them show me a more excellent system among philosophers, who think that they only have a moral philosophy duly and orderly arranged. They, when they would give excellent exhortations to virtue, can only tell us to live agreeably to nature. Scripture derives its exhortations from the true source,<sup>2</sup> when it not only enjoins us to regulate our lives with a view to God its author to whom it belongs; but after showing us that we have degenerated from our true origin—viz. the law of our Creator, adds, that Christ, through whom we have returned to favour with God, is set before us as a model, the image of which our lives should express. What do you require more effectual than this? Nay, what do you require beyond this? If the Lord adopts us for his sons on the condition that our life be a representation of Christ, the bond of our adoption,—then, unless we dedicate and devote ourselves to righteousness, we not only, with the utmost perfidy, revolt from our Creator, but also abjure the Saviour himself. Then, from an enumeration of all the blessings of God, and each part of our salvation, it finds materials for exhortation. Ever since God exhibited himself to us as a Father, we must be convicted of extreme ingratitude if we do not in turn exhibit ourselves as his sons. Ever since Christ purified us by the laver of his blood, and communicated this

1 The French begins the sentence thus, “Quant est du premier point;”—As to the former point.

2 Mal. 1:6; Eph. 5:1; 1 John 3:1, 3; Eph. 5:26; Rom. 6:1-4; 1 Cor. 6:11; 1 Pet. 1:15, 19; 1 Cor. 6:15; John 15:3; Eph. 5:2, 3; Col. 3:1, 2; 1 Cor. 3:16, 5:17; 2 Cor. 6:16; 1 Thess. 5:23

purification by baptism, it would ill become us to be defiled with new pollution. Ever since he ingrafted us into his body, we, who are his members, should anxiously beware of contracting any stain or taint. Ever since he who is our head ascended to heaven, it is befitting in us to withdraw our affections from the earth, and with our whole soul aspire to heaven. Ever since the Holy Spirit dedicated us as temples to the Lord, we should make it our endeavour to show forth the glory of God, and guard against being profaned by the defilement of sin. Ever since our soul and body were destined to heavenly incorruptibility and an unfading crown, we should earnestly strive to keep them pure and uncorrupted against the day of the Lord. These, I say, are the surest foundations of a well-regulated life, and you will search in vain for any thing resembling them among philosophers, who, in their commendation of virtue, never rise higher than the natural dignity of man.

**4.** This is the place to address those who, having nothing of Christ but the name and sign, would yet be called Christians. How dare they boast of this sacred name? None have intercourse with Christ but those who have acquired the true knowledge of him from the Gospel. The Apostle denies that any man truly has learned Christ who has not learned to put off “the old man, which is corrupt according to the deceitful lusts, and put on Christ,” (Eph. 4:22). They are convicted, therefore, of falsely and unjustly pretending a knowledge of Christ, whatever be the volubility and eloquence with which they can talk of the Gospel. Doctrine is not an affair of the tongue, but of the life; is not apprehended by the intellect and memory merely, like other branches of learning; but is received only when it possesses the whole soul, and finds its seat and habitation in the inmost recesses of the heart. Let them, therefore, either cease to insult God, by boasting that they are what they are not, or let them show themselves not unworthy disciples of their divine Master. To doctrine in which our religion is contained we have given the first place, since by it our salvation commences; but it must be transfused into the breast, and pass into the conduct, and so transform us into itself, as not to prove unfruitful. If philosophers are justly offended, and banish from their company with disgrace those who, while professing an art which ought to be the mistress of their conduct, convert it into mere loquacious sophistry, with how much better reason shall we detest those flimsy sophists who are contented to let the Gospel play upon their lips, when, from its efficacy, it ought to penetrate the inmost affections of the heart, fix its seat in the soul, and pervade the whole man a hundred times more than the frigid discourses of philosophers?

**5.** I insist not that the life of the Christian shall breathe nothing but the perfect Gospel, though this is to be desired, and ought to be attempted. I insist not so strictly on evangelical perfection, as to refuse to acknowledge as a Christian any man who has not attained it. In this way all would be excluded from the Church, since there is no man who is not far removed from this perfection, while many, who have made but little progress, would be undeservedly rejected. What then? Let us set this before our eye as the end at which we ought constantly to aim. Let it be regarded as the goal towards which we are to run. For you cannot divide the matter with God, undertaking part of what his word enjoins, and omitting part at pleasure. For, in the first place, God uniformly recommends integrity as the principal part of his worship, meaning by integrity real singleness of mind, devoid of gloss and fiction, and to this is opposed a double mind; as if it had been said, that the spiritual

commencement of a good life is when the internal affections are sincerely devoted to God, in the cultivation of holiness and justice. But seeing that, in this earthly prison of the body, no man is supplied with strength sufficient to hasten in his course with due alacrity, while the greater number are so oppressed with weakness, that hesitating, and halting, and even crawling on the ground, they make little progress, let every one of us go as far as his humble ability enables him, and prosecute the journey once begun. No one will travel so badly as not daily to make some degree of progress. This, therefore, let us never cease to do, that we may daily advance in the way of the Lord; and let us not despair because of the slender measure of success. How little soever the success may correspond with our wish, our labour is not lost when to-day is better than yesterday, provided with true singleness of mind we keep our aim, and aspire to the goal, not speaking flattering things to ourselves, nor indulging our vices, but making it our constant endeavour to become better, until we attain to goodness itself. If during the whole course of our life we seek and follow, we shall at length attain it, when relieved from the infirmity of flesh we are admitted to full fellowship with God.

## CHAPTER 7.

### A summary of the Christian life. Of self-denial.<sup>1</sup>

The divisions of the chapter are,—

1. The rule which permits us not to go astray in the study of righteousness, requires two things—viz. that man, abandoning his own will, devote himself entirely to the service of God; whence it follows, that we must seek not our own things, but the things of God, sec. 1, 2.
2. A description of this renovation or Christian life taken from the Epistle to Titus, and accurately explained under certain special heads, sec. 3 to end.

#### Sections.

1. Consideration of the second general division in regard to the Christian life. Its beginning and sum. A twofold respect. 1. We are not our own. Respect to both the fruit and the use. Unknown to philosophers, who have placed reason on the throne of the Holy Spirit.
2. Since we are not our own, we must seek the glory of God, and obey his will. Self-denial recommended to the disciples of Christ. He who neglects it, deceived either by pride or hypocrisy, rushes on destruction.
3. Three things to be followed, and two to be shunned in life. Impiety and worldly lusts to be shunned. Sobriety, justice, and piety, to be followed. An inducement to right conduct.
4. Self-denial the sum of Paul's doctrine. Its difficulty. Qualities in us which make it difficult. Cures for these qualities.
  - a. Ambition to be suppressed.
  - b. Humility to be embraced.
  - c. Candour to be esteemed.
  - d. Mutual charity to be preserved.

<sup>1</sup> On this and the three following chapters, which contain the second part of the Treatise on the Christian Life, see Augustine, *De Moribus Ecclesiae Catholicae*, and Calvin *de Scandalis*.

- e. Modesty to be sincerely cultivated.
5. The advantage of our neighbour to be promoted. Here self-denial most necessary, and yet most difficult. Here a double remedy.
  - a. The benefits bestowed upon us are for the common benefit of the Church.
  - b. We ought to do all we can for our neighbour. This illustrated by analogy from the members of the human body. This duty of charity founded on the divine command.
6. Charity ought to have for its attendants patience and kindness. We should consider the image of God in our neighbours, and especially in those who are of the household of faith. Hence a fourfold consideration which refutes all objections. A common objection refuted.
7. Christian life cannot exist without charity. Remedies for the vices opposed to charity.
  - a. Mercy.
  - b. Humility.
  - c. Modesty.
  - d. Diligence.
  - e. Perseverance.
8. Self-denial, in respect of God, should lead to equanimity and tolerance.
  - a. We are always subject to God.
  - b. We should shun avarice and ambition.
  - c. We should expect all prosperity from the blessing of God, and entirely depend on him.
9. We ought not to desire wealth or honours without the divine blessing, nor follow the arts of the wicked. We ought to cast all our care upon God, and never envy the prosperity of others.
10. We ought to commit ourselves entirely to God. The necessity of this doctrine. Various uses of affliction. Heathen abuse and corruption.

**1.** Although the Law of God contains a perfect rule of conduct admirably arranged, it has seemed proper to our divine Master to train his people by a more accurate method, to the rule which is enjoined in the Law; and the leading principle in the method is, that it is the duty of believers to present their "bodies a living sacrifice, holy and acceptable unto God, which is their reasonable service," (Rom. 12:1). Hence he draws the exhortation: "Be not conformed to this world: but be ye transformed by the renewing of your mind, that ye may prove what is that good, and acceptable, and perfect will of God." The great point, then, is, that we are consecrated and dedicated to God, and, therefore, should not henceforth think, speak, design, or act, without a view to his glory. What he hath made sacred cannot, without signal insult to him, be applied to profane use. But if we are not our own, but the Lord's, it is plain both what error is to be shunned, and to what end the actions of our lives ought to be directed. We are not our own; therefore, neither is our own reason or will to rule our acts and counsels. We are not our own; therefore, let us not make it our end to seek what may be agreeable to our carnal nature. We are not our own; there-

fore, as far as possible, let us forget ourselves and the things that are ours. On the other hand, we are God's; let us, therefore, live and die to him (Rom. 14:8). We are God's; therefore, let his wisdom and will preside over all our actions. We are God's; to him, then, as the only legitimate end, let every part of our life be directed. O how great the proficiency of him who, taught that he is not his own, has withdrawn the dominion and government of himself from his own reason that he may give them to God! For as the surest source of destruction to men is to obey themselves, so the only haven of safety is to have no other will, no other wisdom, than to follow the Lord wherever he leads. Let this, then be the first step, to abandon ourselves, and devote the whole energy of our minds to the service of God. By service, I mean not only that which consists in verbal obedience, but that by which the mind, divested of its own carnal feelings, implicitly obeys the call of the Spirit of God. This transformation (which Paul calls the renewing of the mind, Rom. 12:2; Eph. 4:23), though it is the first entrance to life, was unknown to all the philosophers. They give the government of man to reason alone, thinking that she alone is to be listened to; in short, they assign to her the sole direction of the conduct. But Christian philosophy bids her give place, and yield complete submission to the Holy Spirit, so that the man himself no longer lives, but Christ lives and reigns in him (Gal. 2:20).

**2.** Hence follows the other principle, that we are not to seek our own, but the Lord's will, and act with a view to promote his glory. Great is our proficiency, when, almost forgetting ourselves, certainly postponing our own reason, we faithfully make it our study to obey God and his commandments. For when Scripture enjoins us to lay aside private regard to ourselves, it not only divests our minds of an excessive longing for wealth, or power, or human favour, but eradicates all ambition and thirst for worldly glory, and other more secret pests. The Christian ought, indeed, to be so trained and disposed as to consider, that during his whole life he has to do with God. For this reason, as he will bring all things to the disposal and estimate of God, so he will religiously direct his whole mind to him. For he who has learned to look to God in everything he does, is at the same time diverted from all vain thoughts. This is that self-denial which Christ so strongly enforces on his disciples from the very outset (Mt. 16:24), which, as soon as it takes hold of the mind, leaves no place either, first, for pride, show, and ostentation; or, secondly, for avarice, lust, luxury, effeminacy, or other vices which are engendered by self love. On the contrary, wherever it reigns not, the foulest vices are indulged in without shame; or, if there is some appearance of virtue, it is vitiated by a depraved longing for applause. Show me, if you can, an individual who, unless he has renounced himself in obedience to the Lord's command, is disposed to do good for its own sake. Those who have not so renounced themselves have followed virtue at least for the sake of praise. The philosophers who have contended most strongly that virtue is to be desired on her own account, were so inflated with arrogance as to make it apparent that they sought virtue for no other reason than as a ground for indulging in pride. So far, therefore, is God from being delighted with these hunters after popular applause with their swollen breasts, that he declares they have received their reward in this world (Mt. 6:2), and that harlots and publicans are nearer the kingdom of heaven than they (Mt. 21:31). We have not yet sufficiently explained how great and numerous are the obstacles by which a man is impeded in the pursuit of rectitude, so long as he has not renounced himself. The old saying is true, There is a world of iniquity treasured up in the human soul.

Nor can you find any other remedy for this than to deny yourself, renounce your own reason, and direct your whole mind to the pursuit of those things which the Lord requires of you, and which you are to seek only because they are pleasing to Him.

**3.** In another passage, Paul gives a brief, indeed, but more distinct account of each of the parts of a well-ordered life: "The grace of God that bringeth salvation hath appeared to all men, teaching us that, denying ungodliness and worldly lusts, we should live soberly, righteously, and godly, in this present world; looking for that blessed hope, and the glorious appearance of the great God and our Saviour Jesus Christ; who gave himself for us, that he might redeem us from all iniquity, and purify to himself a peculiar people, zealous of good works," (Tit. 2:11-14). After holding forth the grace of God to animate us, and pave the way for His true worship, he removes the two greatest obstacles which stand in the way—viz. ungodliness, to which we are by nature too prone, and worldly lusts, which are of still greater extent. Under ungodliness, he includes not merely superstition, but everything at variance with the true fear of God. Worldly lusts are equivalent to the lusts of the flesh. Thus he enjoins us, in regard to both tables of the Law, to lay aside our own mind, and renounce whatever our own reason and will dictate. Then he reduces all the actions of our lives to three branches, sobriety, righteousness, and godliness. Sobriety undoubtedly denotes as well chastity and temperance as the pure and frugal use of temporal goods, and patient endurance of want. Righteousness comprehends all the duties of equity, in every one his due. Next follows godliness, which separates us from the pollutions of the world, and connects us with God in true holiness. These, when connected together by an indissoluble chain, constitute complete perfection. But as nothing is more difficult than to bid adieu to the will of the flesh, subdue, nay, abjure our lusts, devote ourselves to God and our brethren, and lead an angelic life amid the pollutions of the world, Paul, to set our minds free from all entanglements, recalls us to the hope of a blessed immortality, justly urging us to contend, because as Christ has once appeared as our Redeemer, so on his final advent he will give full effect to the salvation obtained by him. And in this way he dispels all the allurements which becloud our path, and prevent us from aspiring as we ought to heavenly glory; nay, he tells us that we must be pilgrims in the world, that we may not fail of obtaining the heavenly inheritance.

**4.** Moreover, we see by these words that self-denial has respect partly to men and partly (more especially) to God (sec. 8-10). For when Scripture enjoins us, in regard to our fellow men, to prefer them in honour to ourselves, and sincerely labour to promote their advantages (Rom. 12:10; Phil. 2:3), he gives us commands which our mind is utterly incapable of obeying until its natural feelings are suppressed. For so blindly do we all rush in the direction of self-love, that every one thinks he has a good reason for exalting himself and despising all others in comparison. If God has bestowed on us something not to be repented of, trusting to it, we immediately become elated, and not only swell, but almost burst with pride. The vices with which we abound we both carefully conceal from others, and flatteringly represent to ourselves as minute and trivial, nay, sometimes hug them as virtues. When the same qualities which we admire in ourselves are seen in others, even though they should be superior, we, in order that we may not be forced to yield to them, maliciously lower and carp at them; in like manner, in the case of vices, not contented with severe and keen animad-

version, we studiously exaggerate them. Hence the insolence with which each, as if exempted from the common lot, seeks to exalt himself above his neighbour, confidently and proudly despising others, or at least looking down upon them as his inferiors. The poor man yields to the rich, the plebeian to the noble, the servant to the master, the unlearned to the learned, and yet every one inwardly cherishes some idea of his own superiority. Thus each flattering himself, sets up a kind of kingdom in his breast; the arrogant, to satisfy themselves, pass censure on the minds and manners of other men, and when contention arises, the full venom is displayed. Many bear about with them some measure of mildness so long as all things go smoothly and lovingly with them, but how few are there who, when stung and irritated, preserve the same tenor of moderation? For this there is no other remedy than to pluck up by the roots those most noxious pests, self-love and love of victory (*philoneiki'a kai' philauti'a*). This the doctrine of Scripture does. For it teaches us to remember, that the endowments which God has bestowed upon us are not our own, but His free gifts, and that those who plume themselves upon them betray their ingratitude. "Who maketh thee to differ," saith Paul, "and what hast thou that thou didst not receive? now if thou didst receive it, why dost thou glory, as if thou hadst not received it?" (1 Cor. 4:7). Then by a diligent examination of our faults let us keep ourselves humble. Thus while nothing will remain to swell our pride, there will be much to subdue it. Again, we are enjoined, whenever we behold the gifts of God in others, so to reverence and respect the gifts, as also to honour those in whom they reside. God having been pleased to bestow honour upon them, it would ill become us to deprive them of it. Then we are told to overlook their faults, not, indeed, to encourage by flattering them, but not because of them to insult those whom we ought to regard with honour and good will.<sup>1</sup> In this way, with regard to all with whom we have intercourse, our behaviour will be not only moderate and modest, but courteous and friendly. The only way by which you can ever attain to true meekness, is to have your heart imbued with a humble opinion of yourself and respect for others.

**5.** How difficult it is to perform the duty of seeking the good of our neighbour! Unless you leave off all thought of yourself and in a manner cease to be yourself, you will never accomplish it. How can you exhibit those works of charity which Paul describes unless you renounce yourself, and become wholly devoted to others? "Charity (says he, 1 Cor. 13:4) suffereth long, and is kind; charity envieth not; charity vaunteth not itself, is not puffed up, doth not behave itself unseemly, seeketh not her own, is not easily provoked," etc. Were it the only thing required of us to seek not our own, nature would not have the least power to comply: she so inclines us to love ourselves only, that she will not easily allow us carelessly to pass by ourselves and our own interests that we may watch over the interests of others, nay, spontaneously to yield our own rights and resign it to another. But Scripture, to conduct us to this, reminds us, that whatever we obtain from the Lord is granted on the condition of our employing it for the common good of the Church, and that, therefore, the legitimate use of all our gifts is a kind and liberal communication of them with others. There cannot be a surer rule, nor a stronger exhortation to the observance of it, than when we are taught that all the endowments which we possess are divine deposits entrusted to us for the very purpose of being distributed for the good of our neighbour. But Scripture proceeds still farther when it likens these endowments to the different

members of the body (1 Cor. 12:12). No member has its function for itself, or applies it for its own private use, but transfers it to its fellow-members; nor does it derive any other advantage from it than that which it receives in common with the whole body. Thus, whatever the pious man can do, he is bound to do for his brethren, not consulting his own interest in any other way than by striving earnestly for the common edification of the Church. Let this, then, be our method of showing good-will and kindness, considering that, in regard to everything which God has bestowed upon us, and by which we can aid our neighbour, we are his stewards, and are bound to give account of our stewardship; moreover, that the only right mode of administration is that which is regulated by love. In this way, we shall not only unite the study of our neighbour's advantage with a regard to our own, but make the latter subordinate to the former. And lest we should have omitted to perceive that this is the law for duly administering every gift which we receive from God, he of old applied that law to the minutest expressions of his own kindness. He commanded the first-fruits to be offered to him as an attestation by the people that it was impious to reap any advantage from goods not previously consecrated to him (Exod. 22:29; 23:19). But if the gifts of God are not sanctified to us until we have with our own hand dedicated them to the Giver, it must be a gross abuse that does not give signs of such dedication. It is in vain to contend that you cannot enrich the Lord by your offerings. Though, as the Psalmist says "Thou art my Lord: my goodness extendeth not unto thee," yet you can extend it "to the saints that are in the earth," (Ps. 16:2, 3); and therefore a comparison is drawn between sacred oblations and alms as now corresponding to the offerings under the Law.

**6.** Moreover, that we may not weary in well-doing (as would otherwise forthwith and infallibly be the case), we must add the other quality in the Apostle's enumeration, "Charity suffereth long, and is kind, is not easily provoked," (1 Cor. 13:4). The Lord enjoins us to do good to all without exception, though the greater part, if estimated by their own merit, are most unworthy of it. But Scripture subjoins a most excellent reason, when it tells us that we are not to look to what men in themselves deserve, but to attend to the image of God, which exists in all, and to which we owe all honour and love. But in those who are of the household of faith, the same rule is to be more carefully observed, inasmuch as that image is renewed and restored in them by the Spirit of Christ. Therefore, whoever be the man that is presented to you as needing your assistance, you have no ground for declining to give it to him. Say he is a stranger. The Lord has given him a mark which ought to be familiar to you: for which reason he forbids you to despise your own flesh (Gal. 6:10). Say he is mean and of no consideration. The Lord points him out as one whom he has distinguished by the lustre of his own image (Isaiah 58:7). Say that you are bound to him by no ties of duty. The Lord has substituted him as it were into his own place, that in him you may recognize the many great obligations under which the Lord has laid you to himself. Say that he is unworthy of your least exertion on his account; but the image of God, by which he is recommended to you, is worthy of yourself and all your exertions. But if he not only merits no good, but has provoked you by injury and mischief, still this is no good reason why you should not embrace him in love, and visit him with offices of love. He has deserved very differently from me, you will say. But what has the Lord deserved?<sup>2</sup> Whatever injury he has done you, when

<sup>2</sup> French, "Car si nous disons qu'il n'a merite que mal de nous; Dieu nous pourra demander quel mal il nous a fait, lui dont

he enjoins you to forgive him, he certainly means that it should be imputed to himself. In this way only we attain to what is not to say difficult but altogether against nature,<sup>1</sup> to love those that hate us, render good for evil, and blessing for cursing, remembering that we are not to reflect on the wickedness of men, but look to the image of God in them, an image which, covering and obliterating their faults, should by its beauty and dignity allure us to love and embrace them.

**7.** We shall thus succeed in mortifying ourselves if we fulfil all the duties of charity. Those duties, however, are not fulfilled by the mere discharge of them, though none be omitted, unless it is done from a pure feeling of love. For it may happen that one may perform every one of these offices, in so far as the external act is concerned, and be far from performing them aright. For you see some who would be thought very liberal, and yet accompany every thing they give with insult, by the haughtiness of their looks, or the violence of their words. And to such a calamitous condition have we come in this unhappy age, that the greater part of men never almost give alms without contumely. Such conduct ought not to have been tolerated even among the heathen; but from Christians something more is required than to carry cheerfulness in their looks, and give attractiveness to the discharge of their duties by courteous language. First, they should put themselves in the place of him whom they see in need of their assistance, and pity his misfortune as if they felt and bore it, so that a feeling of pity and humanity should incline them to assist him just as they would themselves. He who is thus minded will go and give assistance to his brethren, and not only not taint his acts with arrogance or upbraiding but will neither look down upon the brother to whom he does a kindness, as one who needed his help, or keep him in subjection as under obligation to him, just as we do not insult a diseased member when the rest of the body labours for its recovery, nor think it under special obligation to the other members, because it has required more exertion than it has returned. A communication of offices between members is not regarded as at all gratuitous, but rather as the payment of that which being due by the law of nature it were monstrous to deny. For this reason, he who has performed one kind of duty will not think himself thereby discharged, as is usually the case when a rich man, after contributing somewhat of his substance, delegates remaining burdens to others as if he had nothing to do with them. Every one should rather consider, that however great he is, he owes himself to his neighbours, and that the only limit to his beneficence is the failure of his means. The extent of these should regulate that of his charity.

**8.** The principal part of self-denial, that which as we have said has reference to God, let us again consider more fully. Many things have already been said with regard to it which it were superfluous to repeat; and, therefore, it will be sufficient to view it as forming us to equanimity and endurance. First, then, in seeking the convenience or tranquillity of the present life, Scripture calls us to resign ourselves, and all we have, to the disposal of the Lord, to give him up the affections of our heart, that he may tame and subdue them. We have a frenzied desire, an infinite eagerness, to pursue wealth and honour, intrigue for power, accumulate riches, and collect all those

frivolities which seem conducive to luxury and splendour. On the other hand, we have a remarkable dread, a remarkable hatred of poverty, mean birth, and a humble condition, and feel the strongest desire to guard against them. Hence, in regard to those who frame their life after their own counsel, we see how restless they are in mind, how many plans they try, to what fatigues they submit, in order that they may gain what avarice or ambition desires, or, on the other hand, escape poverty and meanness. To avoid similar entanglements, the course which Christian men must follow is this: first, they must not long for, or hope for, or think of any kind of prosperity apart from the blessing of God; on it they must cast themselves, and there safely and confidently recline. For, however much the carnal mind may seem sufficient for itself when in the pursuit of honour or wealth, it depends on its own industry and zeal, or is aided by the favour of men, it is certain that all this is nothing, and that neither intellect nor labour will be of the least avail, except in so far as the Lord prospers both. On the contrary, his blessing alone makes a way through all obstacles, and brings every thing to a joyful and favourable issue. Secondly, though without this blessing we may be able to acquire some degree of fame and opulence (as we daily see wicked men loaded with honours and riches), yet since those on whom the curse of God lies do not enjoy the least particle of true happiness, whatever we obtain without his blessing must turn out ill. But surely men ought not to desire what adds to their misery.

**9.** Therefore, if we believe that all prosperous and desirable success depends entirely on the blessing of God, and that when it is wanting all kinds of misery and calamity await us, it follows that we should not eagerly contend for riches and honours, trusting to our own dexterity and assiduity, or leaning on the favour of men, or confiding in any empty imagination of fortune; but should always have respect to the Lord, that under his auspices we may be conducted to whatever lot he has provided for us. First, the result will be, that instead of rushing on regardless of right and wrong, by wiles and wicked arts, and with injury to our neighbours, to catch at wealth and seize upon honours, we will only follow such fortune as we may enjoy with innocence. Who can hope for the aid of the divine blessing amid fraud, rapine, and other iniquitous arts? As this blessing attends him only who thinks purely and acts uprightly, so it calls off all who long for it from sinister designs and evil actions. Secondly, a curb will be laid upon us, restraining a too eager desire of becoming rich, or an ambitious striving after honour. How can any one have the effrontery to expect that God will aid him in accomplishing desires at variance with his word? What God with his own lips pronounces cursed, never can be prosecuted with his blessing. Lastly, if our success is not equal to our wish and hope, we shall, however, be kept from impatience and detestation of our condition, whatever it be, knowing that so to feel were to murmur against God, at whose pleasure riches and poverty, contempt and honours, are dispensed. In shorts he who leans on the divine blessing in the way which has been described, will not, in the pursuit of those things which men are wont most eagerly to desire, employ wicked arts which he knows would avail him nothing; nor when any thing prosperous befalls him will he impute it to himself and his own diligence, or industry, or fortune, instead of ascribing it to God as its author. If, while the affairs of others flourish, his make little progress, or even retrograde, he will bear his humble lot with greater equanimity and moderation than any irreligious man does the moderate success which only falls short of what he wished; for he has a solace in which he can rest more tranquilly than at the

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nous tenons tout notre bien;”— For if we say that he has deserved nothing of us but evil, God may ask us what evil he has done us, he of whom we hold our every blessing.

<sup>1</sup> Mt. 5:44; 6:14; 18:35; Luke 17:3.

very summit of wealth or power, because he considers that his affairs are ordered by the Lord in the manner most conducive to his salvation. This, we see, is the way in which David was affected, who, while he follows God and gives up himself to his guidance, declares, “Neither do I exercise myself in great matters, or in things too high for me. Surely I have behaved and quieted myself as a child that is weaned of his mother,” (Ps. 131:1, 2).

**10.** Nor is it in this respect only that pious minds ought to manifest this tranquillity and endurance; it must be extended to all the accidents to which this present life is liable. He alone, therefore, has properly denied himself, who has resigned himself entirely to the Lord, placing all the course of his life entirely at his disposal. Happen what may, he whose mind is thus composed will neither deem himself wretched nor murmur against God because of his lot. How necessary this disposition is will appear, if you consider the many accidents to which we are liable. Various diseases ever and anon attack us: at one time pestilence rages; at another we are involved in all the calamities of war. Frost and hail, destroying the promise of the year, cause sterility, which reduces us to penury; wife, parents, children, relatives, are carried off by death; our house is destroyed by fire. These are the events which make men curse their life, detest the day of their birth, execrate the light of heaven, even censure God, and (as they are eloquent in blasphemy) charge him with cruelty and injustice. The believer must in these things also contemplate the mercy and truly paternal indulgence of God. Accordingly, should he see his house by the removal of kindred reduced to solitude even then he will not cease to bless the Lord; his thought will be, Still the grace of the Lord, which dwells within my house, will not leave it desolate. If his crops are blasted, mildewed, or cut off by frost, or struck down by hail,<sup>1</sup> and he sees famine before him, he will not however despond or murmur against God, but maintain his confidence in him; “We thy people, and sheep of thy pasture, will give thee thanks for ever,” (Ps. 79:13); he will supply me with food, even in the extreme of sterility. If he is afflicted with disease, the sharpness of the pain will not so overcome him, as to make him break out with impatience, and expostulate with God; but, recognising justice and lenity in the rod, will patiently endure. In short, whatever happens, knowing that it is ordered by the Lord, he will receive it with a placid and grateful mind, and will not contumaciously resist the government of him, at whose disposal he has placed himself and all that he has. Especially let the Christian breast eschew that foolish and most miserable consolation of the heathen, who, to strengthen their mind against adversity, imputed it to fortune, at which they deemed it absurd to feel indignant, as she was *a'skopos* (aimless) and rash, and blindly wounded the good equally with the bad. On the contrary, the rule of piety is, that the hand of God is the ruler and arbiter of the fortunes of all, and, instead of rushing on with thoughtless violence, dispenses good and evil with perfect regularity.

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<sup>1</sup> The French is, “Soit que ses bleds et vignes soyent gastees et destruites par gelee, gresle, ou autre tempeste;”— whether his corn and vines are hurt and destroyed by frost, hail, or other tempest.