



COMMENTARIES ON 'ROMANS'

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Chapter 12

Verse 1. *"I beseech you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, that ye present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable unto God, which is your reasonable service."*

After discoursing at large upon the love of God toward man, and pointing out His unspeakable concern for us, and unutterable goodness, which cannot even be searched into, he next puts it forward with a view of persuading those who have received the benefit to exhibit a conversation worthy of the gift. And though he is so great and good a person, yet he does not decline beseeching them, and that not for any enjoyment he was likely to get himself, but for that they would have to gain. And why wonder that he does not decline beseeching, where he is even putting God's mercies before them? For since, he means, it is from this you have those numberless blessings, from the mercies of God, reverence them, be moved to compassion by them. For they themselves take the attitude of suppliants, that you would show no conduct unworthy of them. I entreat you then, he means, by the very things through which ye were saved. As if any one who wished to make a person, who had had great kindnesses done him, show regard, was to bring him the benefactor himself as a suppliant. And what dost thou beseech? let me hear. "That ye would present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable unto God, which is your reasonable service." For when he had said sacrifice, to prevent any from thinking he bade them kill themselves, he forthwith added "living." Then to distinguish it from the Jewish, he calls it "holy, acceptable to God, your reasonable service." For theirs was a material one, and not very acceptable either. Since He saith, "Who hath required this at your hands?" (Isaiah 1:12.) And in sundry other passages He clearly throws them aside. For it was not this, but this with the other, that He looked to have presented. Wherefore he saith, "The sacrifice of praise shall glorify Me." And again, "I will praise the name of my God with a song, and this shall please him better than a bullock that putteth forth horns and hoofs." (Psalm 1. 23; 69:30, 31.) And so in another place He rejects it, and says, "Shall I eat the flesh of bulls, or drink goat's blood?" (ib. 50:13) and proceeds with, "Offer unto God a sacrifice of praise, and pay thy vows unto the Most High." (ib. 14.) So Paul also here bids us "present our bodies a living sacrifice." And how is the body, it may be said, to become a sacrifice? Let the eye look upon no evil thing, and it hath become a sacrifice; let thy tongue speak nothing filthy, and it hath become an offering; let thine hand do no lawless deed, and it hath become a whole burnt offering. Or rather this is not enough, but we must have good works also: let the hand do alms, the mouth bless them that cross one, and the hearing find leisure evermore for lections of Scripture. For sacrifice allows of no unclean thing: sacrifice is a first-fruit of the other actions. Let us then from our hands, and feet, and mouth, and all other members, yield a first-fruit unto God. Such a sacrifice is well pleasing, as that of the Jews was even unclean, for, "their sacrifices," it says, "are unto them as the bread of mourning." (Hosea 9:4.) Not so ours. That presented the thing sacrificed dead: this maketh the thing sacrificed to be living. For when we have mortified our members, then we shall be able to live. For the law of this sacrifice is new, and so the

sort of fire is a marvelous one. For it needeth no wood or matter under it; but our fire liveth of itself, and doth not burn up the victim, but rather quickeneth it. This was the sacrifice that God sought of old. Wherefore the Prophet saith, "The sacrifice of God is a broken spirit." (Psalm 51:17.) And the three Children offer this when they say, "At this time there is neither prince, or prophet, or leader, or burnt offering, or place to sacrifice before Thee, and to find mercy. Nevertheless, in a contrite heart and an humble spirit let us be accepted." (Song of 3 Ch. 15, 16.) And observe how great the exactness wherewith he useth each word. For he does not say, offer (Exodus 29:39 LXX.) your bodies as a sacrifice, but "present" them, as if he had said, never more have any interest in them. Ye have given them up to another. For even they that furnish (same word) the war-horses have no further interest in them. And thou too hast presented thy members for the war against the devil and for that dread battle-array. Do not let them down to selfish appliances. And he shows another thing also from this, that one must make them approved, if one means to present them. For it is not to any mortal being that we present them, but to God, the King of the universe; not to war only, but to have seated thereon the King Himself. For He doth not refuse even to be seated upon our members, but even greatly desireth it. And what no king who is but our fellow-servant would choose to do, that the Lord of Angels chooseth. Since then it is both to be presented (i.e. as for a King's use) and is a sacrifice, rid it of every spot, since if it have a spot, it will no longer be a sacrifice. For neither can the eye that looks lecherously be sacrificed, nor the hand be presented that is grasping and rapacious, nor the feet that go lame and go to play-houses, nor the belly that is the slave of self-indulgence, and kindleth lusts after pleasures, nor the heart that hath rage in it, and harlots' love, nor the tongue that uttereth filthy things. Hence we must spy out the spots on our body upon every side. For if they that offered the sacrifices of old were bid to look on every side, and were not permitted to offer an animal "that hath anything superfluous or lacking, or is scurvy, or scabbed" (Leviticus 22:22, 23), much more must we, who offer not senseless animals, but ourselves, exhibit more strictness, and be pure in all respects, that we also may be able to say as did Paul, "I am now ready to be offered, and the time of my departure is at hand." (2 Timothy 4:6.) For he was purer than any sacrifice, and so he speaks of himself as "ready to be offered." But this will be brought about if we kill the old man, if we mortify our members that are upon the earth, if we crucify the world unto ourselves. In this way we shall not need the knife any more, nor altar, nor fire, or rather we shall want all these, but not made with the hands, but all of them will come to us from above, fire from above, and knife also, and our altar will the breadth of Heaven be. For if when Elijah offered the visible sacrifice, a flame, that came down from above consumed the whole water, wood, and stones, much more will this be done upon thee. And if thou hast aught in thee relaxed and secular, and yet offerest the sacrifice with a good intention, the fire of the Spirit will come down, and both wear away that worldliness, and perfect the whole sacrifice. But what is "reasonable service?" It means spiritual ministry, conversation according to Christ. As then he that ministereth in the house of God, and officiateth, of whatever sort he may be, then collects himself (Ezek. 44:19), and becomes more dignified; so we ought to be minded all our whole life as serving and ministering. And this will be so, if every day you bring Him sacrifices, and become the priest of thine own body, and of the virtue of thy soul; as, for example, when you offer soberness, when alms-giving, when goodness and forbearance. For in doing this thou offerest "a reasonable service", that is, one without aught that is bodily, gross, visible. Having then raised the hearer by the names bestowed, and having shown that each man is a priest of his own flesh by his conversation, he mentions also the way whereby we may compass all this. What then is the way?

Verse 2. *"And be not fashioned after this world; but be ye transformed by the renewing of your mind."*

For the fashion of this world is groveling and worthless, and but for a time, neither bath ought of loftiness, or lastingness, or straightforwardness, but is wholly perverted. If then thou wouldest walk upright, figure not thyself after the fashion of this life present. For in it there is nought abiding or stable. And this is why he calls it a fashion; and so in another passage, “the fashion of this world passeth away.” (1 Corinthians 7:31.) For it hath no durability or fixedness, but all in it is but for a season; and so he calls it this age, hereby to indicate its liableness to misfortune, and by the word fashion its unsubstantialness. For speak of riches, or of glory, or beauty of person, or of luxury, or of whatever other of its seemingly great things you will, it is a fashion only, not reality, a show and a mask, not any abiding substance. But “be not thou fashioned after this, but be transformed,” he says, “by the renewing of your mind.” He says not change the fashion, but “be transformed”, to show that the world’s ways are a fashion, but virtue’s not a fashion, but a kind of real form, with a natural beauty of its own, lacking not the trickeries and fashions of outward things, which no sooner appear than they go to nought. For all these things, even before they come to light, are dissolving. If then thou throwest the fashion aside, thou wilt speedily come to the form. For nothing is more strengthless than vice, nothing so easily wears old. Then since it is likely that being men they would sin every day, he consoles his hearer by saying, “renew thyself” from day to day. This is what we do with houses, we keep constantly repairing them as they wear old, and so do thou unto thyself. Hast thou sinned today? hast thou made thy soul old? despair not, despond not, but renew it by repentance, and tears, and confession, and by doing of good things. And never fail of doing this. And how are we to do this?

“That ye may prove what is that good, and acceptable, and perfect will of God.”

Either he means by this, be renewed, that ye may learn what is more expedient for you, and what the will of God. Or rather, that ye can get so renewed if ye learn the things expedient, and what God may will. For if thou see this, and know how to distinguish the nature of things, thou art in possession of the whole way of virtue. And who, it may be said, is ignorant of what is expedient, and what is the will of God? They that are flurried with the things of this world, they that deem riches an enviable thing, they that make light of poverty, they that follow after power, they that are gaping after outward glory, they that think themselves great men when they raise fine houses, and buy costly sepulchers, and keep herds of slaves, and carry a great swarm of eunuchs about with them; these know not what is expedient for them, or what the will of God is. For both of these are but one thing. For God willeth what things are expedient for us, and what God willeth, that is also expedient for us. What then are the things which God willeth? to live in poverty, in lowliness of mind, in contempt of glory; in continency, not in self-indulgence; in tribulation, not in ease; in sorrow, not in dissipation and laughter; in all the other points whereon He hath given us laws. But the generality do even think these things of ill omen; so far are they from thinking them expedient, and the will of God. This then is why they never can come near even to the labors for virtue’s sake. For they that do not know so much even as what virtue may be, but reverence vice in its place, and take unto their bed the harlot instead of the modest wife, how are they to be able to stand aloof from the present world? Wherefore we ought above all to have a correct estimate of things, and even if we do not follow after virtue, to praise virtue, and even if we do not avoid vice, to stigmatize vice, that so far we may have our judgments uncorrupted. For so as we advance on our road, we shall be able to lay hold on the realities. This then is why he also bids you be renewed, “that ye may prove what is the will of God.” But here he seems to me to be attacking the Jews too, who cling to the Law. For the old dispensation was a will of God, yet not the ultimate purpose, but allowed owing to their feebleness. But that which is a perfect one, and well-pleasing, is the new conversation. So

too when he called it “a reasonable service,” it was to set it in contrast with that other that he gave it such a name.

Verse 3. *“For I say, through the grace given unto me, to every man that is among you, not to think of himself more highly than he ought to think, but to think soberly, according as God hath dealt to every man the measure of faith.”*

After saying above, “I beseech you by the mercies,” here he says again, “by the grace.” Observe the teacher’s lowliness of mind, observe a spirit quite subdued! He means to say that he is in no respect worthy to be trusted in such an exhortation and counsel. But at one time he takes the mercies of God along with him, at another His grace. It is not my word, he would say, that I am speaking, but one from God. And he does not say, For I say unto you by the wisdom of God, or, for I say unto you by the Law given of God, but, “by the grace,” so reminding them continually of the benefits done them, so as to make them more submissive, and to show that even on this account, they were under an obligation to obey what is here said. “To every man that is among you.” Not to this person and to that merely, but to the governor and to the governed, to the slave and to the free, to the unlearned and to the wise, to the woman and to the man, to the young and to the old. For the Law is common to all as being the Lord’s. And by this he likewise makes his language inoffensive, setting the lessons he gives to all, even to such as do not come under them. that those who do come under them may with more willingness accept such a reproof and correction. And what dost thou say? Let me hear. “Not to think more highly than he ought to think.” Here he is bringing before us the mother of good deeds, which is lowliness of mind, in imitation of his own Master. For as He, when He went up into the mountain, and was going to give a tissue of moral precepts, took this for his first beginning, and made this the foundation, in the words, “Blessed are the poor in spirit” (Matthew 5:3); so Paul too, as he has now passed from the doctrinal parts to those of a more practical kind, has taught us virtue in general terms, by requiring of us the admirable sacrifice; and being on the point of giving a more particular portrait of it, he begins from lowliness of mind as from the head, and tells us, “not to think more highly of one’s self than one ought to think,” (for this is His will), “but to think soberly.” But what he means is about this. We have received wisdom not that we should use it to make us haughty, but to make us sober-minded. And he does not say in order to be lowly in mind, but in order to sobriety, meaning by sobriety here not that virtue which contrasts with lewdness, nor the being free from intemperance, but being sober and healthful in mind. And the Greek name of it means keeping the mind safe. To show then that he who is not thus modest, cannot be sober either, that is, cannot be staid and healthful minded (because such an one is bewildered, and out, of his wits, and is more crazed than any madman), he calls lowliness of mind, soberness of mind.

“According as God hath dealt to every man the measure of faith. For since having gifts given them had made many unreasonably elated, both with these and with the Corinthians, see how he lays open the cause of the disease, and gradually removes it. For after saying that we should think soberly, he proceeds, “according as God hath dealt to every man the measure of faith,” meaning here the gift by faith: and by using the word “dealt,” he solaces him who had the less, and humbles him who had the greater share. For if God dealt it, and it is no achievement of thine, why think highly of thyself? But if any one says that faith here does not mean the gift, this would only the more show that he was humbling the vain boasters. For if that which is the cause of the gift, that faith by which miracles are wrought, be itself from God, on what ground dost thou think highly of thyself? If He had not come, or been incarnate,

then the things of faith would not have fared well either. And it is from hence that all the good things take their rise. But if it is He that giveth it, He knoweth how He dealeth it. For He made all, and taketh like care of all. And as His giving came of His love towards man, so doth the quantity which He giveth. For was He Who had shown His goodness in regard to the main point, which is the giving of the gift, likely to neglect thee in regard to the measure? For had He wished to do thee dishonor, then He had not given them at all. But if to save thee and to honor thee was what He had in view (and for this He came and distributed such great blessings), why art thou confounded and disturbed, and abusest thy wisdom to foolishness, making thyself more disgraceful than one who is by nature so? For being foolish by nature is no ground of complaint. But being foolish through wisdom, is at once bereaving one's self of excuse, and running into greater punishment.

Such then are those, who pride themselves upon their wisdom, and fall into the excess of recklessness. For recklessness of all things makes a person a fool. Wherefore the Prophet calls the barbarian by this name. But "the fool," he says, "shall speak folly." (Isaiah 32:6.) But that you may see the folly of him from his own words, hear what he says. "Above the stars of heaven will I place my throne, and I will be like the Most High." (ib. 14:14.) "I will take hold of the world as a nest, and as eggs that are left will I take them away." (ib. 10:14.) Now what can be more foolish than these words? And every instance of haughty language immediately draws on itself this reproach. And if I were, to set before you every expression of them that are reckless, you would not be able to distinguish whether the words are those of a reckless man or a fool. So entirely the same is this failing and that. And another of a strange nation says again, "I am God and not man" (Ezek. 28:2); and another again, "Can God save you, or deliver you out of my hand?" (Daniel 3:15.) And the Egyptian too, "I know not the Lord, neither will I let Israel go." (Exodus 5:2.) And the foolish body in the Psalmist is of this character, who hath "said in his heart, There is no God." (Psalm 14:1.) And Cain, "Am I my brother's keeper?" (Genesis 4:9.) Can you now distinguish whether the words are those of the reckless or those of the fool? For recklessness going out of due bounds, and being a departure from reason (whence its name *recklessness*, *ajpovnoia*), maketh men both fools and vainglorious. For likewise, "the beginning of wisdom is the fear of the Lord" (Prov. 9:10), so then the beginning of folly is surely not knowing the Lord. If then knowing be wisdom, and not knowing Him folly, and this ignorance come of haughtiness, (for the beginning of haughtiness is the not knowing of the Lord), then is haughtiness the extreme of folly. Such was Nabal, if not to Godward, at least toward man, having become senseless from his recklessness. But he afterwards died of fear. For when any falleth from the measure of wisdom, he becomes at once a coward and bold, his soul having been made feeble. For as the body when it loseth its proper tone having become out of condition, is a prey to any disease, thus too the soul when it hath lost its greatness of nature and lowly-mindedness, having gotten any feeble habit, becomes fearful, as well as bold and unreasonable, and loses its powers of self-consciousness. And he that has lost these, how is he to know things above himself? For as he that is seized with a frenzy, when he has so lost them, knoweth not even what is right before him; and the eye, when it is dimmed, darkeneth all the other members; so doth it happen with this recklessness. Wherefore these are more miserable than the mad, or than those silly by nature. For like them they stir laughter, and like them they are ill-tempered. And they are out of their wits as the others are, but they are not pitied as they are. And they are beside themselves, as are these, but they are not excused, as are these, but are hated only. And while they have the failings of either, they are bereaved of the excuse of either, being ridiculous not owing to their words only, but to their whole appearance also. For why, pray, dost thou stiffen up thy neck? or why walk on tiptoe? why knit up thy brows? why stick thy breast out? Thou canst not make one hair white or black, (Matthew 5:36) and thou goest with as lofty gait as if thou

couldst command everything. No doubt thou wouldst like to have wings, and not go upon the earth at all! No doubt thou wouldst wish to Be a prodigy! For hast thou not made thyself prodigious now, when thou art a man and triest to fly? or rather flying from within, and bloated in every limb? What shall I call thee to quit thee of thy recklessness? Shall I call thee ashes, and dust, and smoke, and pother? I have described thy worthlessness to be sure, but still I have not laid hold of the exact image I wanted. For I want to put their bloatedness before me, and all its emptiness. What image am I to find then which will suit with all this? To me it seems to be like tow in a blaze. For it seems to swell when lighted, and to lift itself up; but when it is submitted to a slight touch of the hand, it all tumbles down, and turns out to be more worthless than the veriest ashes. Of this sort are the souls of these men; that empty inflatedness of theirs even the commonest attack may humble and bring down. For he that behaves recklessly must of necessity be a thoroughly feeble person, since the height he has is not a sound one, but even as bubbles are easily burst, so are these men easily undone. But if thou dost not believe, give me a bold reckless fellow, and you will find him more cowardly than a hare even at the most trivial circumstance. For as the flame that rises from dry sticks is no sooner lighted than it becomes dust, but stiff logs do not by their nature easily kindle up, and then keep up their flame a long time burning; so souls that be stern and firm are not easily kindled or extinguished; but these men undergo both of these in a single moment. Since then we know this, let us practice humble-mindedness. For there is nothing so powerful as it, since it is stronger even than a rock and harder than adamant, and places us in a safety greater than that of towers and cities and walls, being too high for any of the artillery of the devil. As then recklessness makes men an easy prey even to ordinary occurrences, being, as I was saying, easier broken than a bubble, and rent more speedily than a spider's web, and more quickly dissolved than a smoke; that we then may be walking upon the strong rock, let us leave that and take to this. For thus in this life present we shall find rest, and shall in the world to come have every blessing, by the grace and love toward man, etc.

Verse 4, 5. *"For as we have many members in one body, and all members have not the same office; so we, being many, are one body in Christ, and every one members one of another."*

Again he uses the same ensample as he does to the Corinthians, and that to allay the same passion. For great is the power of the medicine, and the force of this illustration for the correcting of this disease of haughtiness. Why (he means) dost thou think highly of thyself? Or why again does another utterly despise himself? Are we not all one body, both great and small? When then we are in the total number but one, and members one of another, why dost thou by thy haughtiness separate thyself? Why dost thou put thy brother to shame? For as he is a member of thee, so art thou also of him. And it is on this score that your claims to honor are so equal. For he has stated two things that might take down their haughty spirit: one that we are members one of another, not the small of the great only, but also the great of the small; and another, that we are all one body. Or rather there are three points, since he shows that the gift was one of grace. "Therefore be not high-minded." For it was given thee of God; thou didst not take it, nor find it even. Hence too, when he touches upon the gifts, he does not say that one received more, and another less, but what? different. For his words are, "having then gifts," not less and greater, but, "differing." And what if thou art not appointed to the same office, still the body is the same. And beginning with gifts, he ends with a good deed; and so after mentioning prophecy, and ministry, and the like, he concludes with mercy, diligence, and succor. Since then it was likely that some would be virtuous, yet not have prophecy, he shows how that this too is a gift, and a much greater one than the other (as he shows in the Epistle to the Corinthians), and so much the greater, as that one has a

reward, the other is devoid of a recompense. For the whole is matter of gift and grace. Wherefore he saith,

Verse 6. *“Having then gifts differing according to the grace of God that is given unto us, whether prophecy, let us prophesy according to the proportion of faith.”*

Since then he had sufficiently comforted them, he wishes also to make them vie with each other, and labor more in earnest, by showing that it is themselves that give the grounds for their receiving more or less. For he says indeed that it is given by God (as when he says, “according as God hath dealt to every man the measure of faith;” and again, “according to the grace given unto us”) (Romans 12:3), that he may subdue the haughty. But he says also that the beginnings lie with themselves, to rouse the listless. And this he does in the Epistle to the Corinthians also, to produce both these emotions. For when he saith, “covet earnestly the gifts,” (1 Corinthians 12:31), he shows that they were themselves the cause of the differences in what was given. But when he says, “Now all these things worketh one and the selfsame Spirit, dividing to every man severally as he will” (ib. 11), he is proving that those who have received it ought not to be elated, so using every way open to him to allay their disorder. And this he does here also. And again, to rouse those who have fallen drowsy, he says, “Whether prophecy, let us prophesy according to the proportion of faith.” For though it is a grace, yet it is not poured forth at random, but framing its measure according to the recipients, it letteth as much flow as it may find the vessel of faith that is brought to be capable of.

Verse 7. *“Or ministry, let us wait on our ministering.”*

Here he names a comprehensive thing. For the Apostleship even is called a ministry, and every spiritual work is a ministry. This is indeed a name of a peculiar office; however, it is used in a general sense. “Or he that teacheth, on teaching.” See with what indifference he places them, the little first and the great afterwards, again giving us the same lesson, not to be puffed up or elated.

Verse 8. *“Or he that exhorteth, on exhortation.”*

And this is a species of teaching too. For “if ye have any word of exhortation,” it says, “speak unto the people.” (Acts 13:15.) Then to show that it is no great good to follow after virtue unless this is done with the proper rule, he proceeds, “He that giveth”, “let him do it with simplicity.” For it is not enough to give, but we must do it with munificence also, for this constantly answereth to the name of simplicity. Since even the virgins had oil, still, since they had not enough, they were cast out from everything. “He that defendeth with diligence;” for it is not enough to do undertake the defense. “He that showeth mercy, with cheerfulness.” For it is not enough to show mercy, but it behooves us to do it with a largeness and an ungrudging spirit, or rather not with an ungrudging, but even with a cheerful and rejoicing one, for not grudging does not amount to rejoicing. And this same point, when he is writing to the Corinthians also, he insisted very strongly upon. For to rouse them to such largeness he said, “He that soweth sparingly shall reap also sparingly, and he which soweth bountifully shall reap also bountifully. (2 Corinthians 9:6.) But to correct their temper he added, “Not grudgingly or of necessity.” (ib. 7.) For both the shower of mercy ought to have, both ungrudgingness and pleasure. And why dost thou bemoan thyself of giving alms? Why dost thou grieve at showing mercy, and lose the advantage of the good deed? For if thou grievest thou dost not do mercy, but art cruel and inhuman. For if thou

grievest, how shalt thou be able to raise up him that is in sorrow? For it is much if he suspects no ill, even, when thou art giving with joyfulness. For since nothing seems to men such a disgrace as to be receiving from others, unless by an exceedingly cheerful look thou removest the suspicion, and showest that thou art receiving rather than giving, thou wilt even cast down the receiver rather than raise him up. This is why he says, "He that showeth mercy, with cheerfulness." For who that is receiving a kingdom, is of sad countenance? Who that is receiving pardon for his sins continueth of dejected look? Mind not then the expenditure of the money; but the increase that comes of that expenditure. For if he that soweth rejoiceth though sowing with uncertainty of return, much more should he do so that farms the Heaven. For in this way, even though thou give but little, thou wilt be giving much; even as how much soever thou givest with a sad countenance, thou wilt have made thy much a little. Thus the widow outweighed many talents by the two mites, for her spirit was large. And how is it possible, it may be said, for one that dwells with poverty in the extreme, and empties forth his all, to do this with a ready mind? Ask the widow, and thou wilt hear the way, and wilt know that it is not poverty that makes narrow circumstances, but the temper of a man that effects both this and its opposite. For it is possible even in poverty to be munificent, and in riches to be niggardly. Hence in giving he looks for simplicity, and in showing mercy for cheerfulness, and in patronizing for diligence. For it is not with money only that he wishes us to render every assistance to those in want, but both with words, and deeds, and in person, and in every other way. And after mentioning the chief kind of aiding, that which lies in teaching, namely, and that of exhorting (for this is a more necessary kind, in that it nurtures the soul), he proceeds to that by way of money, and all other means; then to show how these may be practiced aright, he bringeth in the mother of them, love.

Verse 9. For, *"Let love be without dissimulation,"* he says,

If thou hast this, thou wilt not perceive the loss of thy money, the labor of thy person, the toil of thy words, thy trouble, and thy ministering, but thou wilt bear all courageously, whether it be with person, or money, or word, or any other thing whatsoever, that thou art to assist thy neighbor. As then he doth not ask for giving only, but that with simplicity, nor aiding, but that with diligence, nor alms, but that with cheerfulness; so even love too he requires not alone, but that without dissimulation. Since this is what love is. And if a man have this, everything else follows. For he that showeth mercy does so with cheerfulness (for he is giving to himself): and he that aideth, aideth with diligence; for it is for himself he is aiding: and he that imparteth doth this with largeness; for he is bestowing it on himself, Then since there is a love even for ill things, such as is that of the intemperate, that of those who are of one mind for money, and for plunder's sake, and for revels and drinking clubs, he clears it of all these, by saying, "Abhor that which is evil." And he does not speak of refraining from it, but of hating it, and not merely hating it, but hating it exceedingly. For this word apois often of intensive force with him, as where he speaks of "earnest expectation, looking out for," "redemption." For since many who do not evil things still have a desire after them, therefore he says, "Abhor." For what he wants is to purify the thought, and that we should have a mighty enmity, hatred and war against vice. For do not fancy, he means, because I said, "Love one another," that I mean you to go so far as to cooperate even in bad actions with one another; for the law that I am laying down is just the reverse. Since it would have you an alien not from the action only, but even from the inclination towards vice; and not merely an alien from this same inclination, but to have an excessive aversion and hatred of it too. And he is not content with only this, but he also brings in the practice of virtue. "Cleave to that which is good."

He does not speak of doing only, but of being disposed too. For this the command to “cleave to” it indicates. So God, when He knit the man to the woman, said, “For he shall cleave to his wife.” (Genesis 2:24.) Then he mentions reasons why we ought to love one another.

Verse 10. *“Be kindly affectioned one to another with brotherly love.”*

Ye are brethren, he means, and have come of the same pangs. Hence even on this head you ought to love one another. And this Moses said to those who were quarrelling in Egypt, “Ye are brethren, why do ye wrong one to another?” (Exodus 2:13.) When then he is speaking of those without, he says, “If it be possible, as much as in you lieth, live peaceably with all men.” (Romans 12:18.) But when he is speaking of his own, he says, “Be kindly affectioned one to another with brotherly love.” For in the other case he requires abstinence from quarrelling, and hatred, and aversion: but here loving too, and not merely loving, but the loving of relatives. For not only must one’s “love be without dissimulation,” but intense also, and warm, and glowing. Because, to what purpose would you love without fraud, and not love with warmth? Whence he says, “kindly affectioned one towards another, that is, be friends, and warm ones too. Do not wait to be loved by another, but leap at it thyself, and be the first to begin it. For so wilt thou reap the wages of his love also. Having mentioned the reason then why we ought to love one another, he tells us also the way in which the affection may grow unchangeable. Whence he proceeds, “In honor preferring one another.” For this is the way that affection is produced, and also when produced abideth. And there is nothing which makes friends so much, as the earnest endeavor to overcome one’s neighbor in honoring him. For what he had mentioned before comes of love, and love of honor, as honor does too of love. Then that we may not honor only, he looks for something besides, when he says,

Verse 11. *“Not backward in zeal.”*

For this also gendereth love when with honor we also show a readiness to protect: as there is nothing that makes men beloved so much as honor and forethought. For to love is not enough, but there must be this also: or rather this also comes of loving, as also loving has its warmth from this, and they are confirmative one of another. For there are many that love in mind, yet reach not forth the hand. And this is why he uses every means to build up love. And how are we to become “not backward in zeal?”

“Fervent in spirit.” See how in every instance he aims after higher degrees; for he does not say “give” only, but “with largeness;” nor “rule,” but do it “with diligence;” nor “show mercy,” but do it “with cheerfulness;” nor “honor,” but “prefer one another;” nor “love,” but do it “without dissimulation;” nor refrain from “evil” things, but “hate” them; nor hold to “what is good,” but “cleave” to it; nor “love,” but to do it “with brotherly affection;” nor be zealous, but be so without backwardness; nor have the “Spirit,” but have it “fervent,” that is, that ye may be warm and awakened. For if thou hast those things aforesaid, thou wilt draw the Spirit to thee. And if This abide with thee, It will likewise make thee good for those purposes, and all things will be easy from the Spirit and the love, while thou art made to glow from both sides. Dost thou not see the bulls that carry a flame upon their back, how nobody is able to withstand them? So thou also wilt be more than the devil can sustain, if thou takest both these flames. “Serving the Lord.” For it is possible to serve God in all these ways; in that whatever thou doest to thy brother passes on to thy Master, and as having been Himself benefited, He will reckon thy reward accordingly. See to what height he has raised the spirit of the man that worketh these things! Then to show how the flame of the Spirit might be kindled, he says,

Verse 12. *“Rejoicing in hope, patient in tribulation, continuing instant in prayer.”*

For all these things are fuel for that fire. For when he had required the expenditure of money and the labor of the person, and ruling, and zeal, and teaching, and other laborious occupations, he again supplies the wrestler with love, with the Spirit, through hope. For there is nothing which makes the soul so courageous and venturesome for anything as a good hope. Then even before the good things hoped for, he gives another reward again. For since hope is of things to come, he says, “patient in tribulation.” And before the things to come, in this life present thou wilt gain a great good from tribulation, that of becoming hardy and tried. And after this he affords them another help, when he says, “continuing instant in prayer.” When therefore love maketh things easy, and the Spirit assisteth, and hope lighteneth, and tribulation maketh thee tried and apt for bearing everything nobly, and thou hast along with these another very great weapon, to wit, “prayer” and the aidances that come of prayer, what further grievousness can there be in what he is enjoining? Surely none. You see how in every way he gives the wrestler firm footing and shows that the injunctions are perfectly easy. Consider again how he vindicates almsgiving, or rather not almsgiving absolutely, but that to the saints. For above when he says, “he that showeth mercy with cheerfulness,” he makes us open-handed to everybody. Here, however, it is in behalf of the faithful that he is speaking. And so he proceeds to say,”

Verse 13. *“Sharing with the necessity of the saints.”*

He does not say, Bestow upon, but “share with the necessity of the saints,” to show that they receive more than they give, that it is a matter of merchandise, because it is a community. Do you bring in money? They bring you in boldness toward God. “Given to hospitality.” He does not say doing it, but “given” to it, so to instruct us not to wait for those that shall ask it, and see when they will come to us, but to run to them, and be given to finding them.

Thus did Lot, thus Abraham. For he spent the whole day upon it, waiting for this goodly prey, and when he saw it, leaped upon it, and ran to meet them, and worshipped upon the ground, and said, “My Lord, if now I have found favor in Thy sight, pass not away from Thy servant.” (Genesis 18:3.) Not as we do, if we happen to see a stranger or a poor man, knitting our brows, and not deigning even to speak to them. And if after thousands of entreaties we are softened, and bid the servant give them a trifle, we think we have quite done our duty. But he did not so, but assumed the fashion of a suppliant and a servant, though he did not know who he was going to take under his roof. But we, who have clear information that it is Christ Whom we take in, do not grow gentle even for this. But he both beseeches, and entreats, and falls on his knees to them, yet we insult those that come to us. And he indeed did all by himself and his wife, whereas we do it not even by our attendants. But if you have a mind to see the table that he set before them, there too you will see great bounteousness, but the bounteousness came not from excess of wealth, but of the riches of a ready will. Yet how many rich persons were there not then? Still none did anything of the kind. How many widows were there in Israel? Yet none showed hospitality to Elijah. How many wealthy persons again were there not in Elisha’s day? But the Shunamite alone gathered in the fruits of hospitality; as did Abraham also, whom beside his largeness and ready mind it is just especially to admire, on this ground, that when he had no knowledge who they were that had come, yet he so acted. Do not thou then be curious either: since for Christ thou dost receive him. And if thou art always so scrupulous, many a time wilt thou pass by a man of esteem, and lose thy reward from him.

And yet he that receiveth one that is not of esteem, hath no fault found with him, but is even rewarded. For "he that receiveth a prophet in the name of a prophet, shall receive a prophet's reward." (Matthew 10:41.) But he who out of this ill-timed scrupulousness passeth one that should be admired, shall even suffer punishment. Do not then busy thyself with men's lives and doings. For this is the very extreme of niggardliness, for one loaf to be exact about a man's entire life. For if this person be a murderer, if a robber, or what not, does he therefore seem to thee not to deserve a loaf and a few pence? And yet thy Master causeth even the sun to rise upon him! And dost thou judge him unworthy of food even for a day? I will put another case to you besides. Now even if you were positively certain that he were laden with countless iniquities, not even then wouldest thou have an excuse for depriving him of this day's sustenance. For thou art the servant of Him Who said, "Ye know not what spirit ye are of." (Luke 9:55.) Thou art servant to Him Who healed those that stoned Him, or rather Who was crucified for them. And do not tell me that he killed another, for even if he were going to kill thee thyself, even then thou shouldest not neglect him when starving. For thou art a disciple of Him Who desired the salvation even of them that crucified Him Who said upon the Cross itself, "Father, forgive them, for they know not what they do." (Luke 23:34.) Thou art the servant of Him Who healed him that smote Him, Who upon the Cross itself crowned the man who had scorned Him. And what can equal this? For both the robbers at first scorned Him. Still to one of these He opened Paradise. And He bewails those who were upon the point of killing Him, and is troubled and confounded at seeing the traitor, not because He was going to be crucified, but because he was lost. He was troubled then as having foreknowledge of the hanging, and the punishment after the hanging. And though He knelt his wickedness, He bore with him to the last hour, and thrust not away the traitor, but even kissed him. Thy Master kisseth, and with His lips receiveth him who was on the very point of shedding His precious Blood. And dost thou count the poor not worthy even of a loaf, and reverencest not the Law which Christ laid down? Now by this He shows that we ought not to turn aside, not only from the poor, but not even from those that would lead us away to death. Do not tell me then, that so and so hath done me grievous mischief, but just consider what Christ did near the Cross itself, wishing to amend by His kiss the traitor by whom He was on the point of being betrayed. And see with how much power to shame him. For He says, "Judas, betrayest thou the Son of Man with a kiss?" (ib. 22:48.) Who is there He would not have softened? who is there that this address would not have made yielding? What beast? what adamant? yet not that wretched man. Do not then say, that such an one murdered such an one, and that is why I turn aside from him. For even if he were upon the point of thrusting a sword down into thee, and to plunge his hand into thy neck itself, kiss this very right hand! since even Christ kissed that mouth which wrought His death! And therefore do not thou either hate, but bewail and pity him that plotteth against thee. For such an one deserveth pity at our hands, and tears For we are the servants of Him Who kissed even the traitor (I will not leave off dwelling over that continually), and spoke words unto him more gentle than the kiss. For He did not even say, O thou foul and villainous traitor, is this the sort of recompense thou returnest us for so great a benefit? But in what words? "Judas;" using his own name, which is more like a person bemoaning, and recalling him, than one wroth at him. And he does not say, thy Teacher, thy Master, and Benefactor, but, "the Son of Man." For though He were neither Teacher nor Master, yet is it with One Who is so gently, so unfeignedly affected towards thee, as even to kiss thee at the time of betrayal, and that when a kiss too was the signal for the betrayal; is it with Him that thou playest the traitor's part? Blessed art Thou, O Lord what lowliness of mind, what forbearance hast Thou given us ensamples of! And to him He so behaved. But to those who came with staves and swords to Him, was it not so too? What can be more gentle than the words spoken to them? For when He had power to demolish them all in an instant, He did nothing of the kind, but as expostulating, addressed them in the words, "Why, are

ye come out as against a thief with swords and staves?" (Matthew 26:55.) And having east them down backwards (John 18:6), as they continued insensible, He of His own accord gave Himself up next, and forbore while He saw them putting manacles upon His holy hands, while He had the power at once to confound all things, and overthrow them. But dost thou even after this deal fiercely with the poor? And even were he guilty of ten thousand sins, want and famine were enough to soften down a soul ever so blunted. But thou standest brutalized, and imitating the rage of lions. Yet they never taste of dead bodies. But thou, while thou seest him a very corpse for distresses, yet leapest upon him now that he is down, and tearest his body by thine insults, and gatherest storm after storm, and makest him as he is fleeing to the haven for refuge to split upon a rock, and bringest a shipwreck about more distressing than those in the sea. And how wilt thou say to God, Have mercy upon me, and ask of Him remission of sins, when thou art insolent to one who hath done no sin, and callest him to account for this hunger and great necessity, and throwest all the brute beasts into the shade by thy cruelty. For they indeed by the compulsion of their belly lay hold of the food needful for them. But thou, when nothing either thrusts thee on or compels thee, devourest thy brother, bitest, and tearest him, if not with thy teeth, yet with words that bite more cuttingly. How then wilt thou receive the sacred Host, when thou hast empurpled thy tongue in human gore? how give the kiss of peace, with mouth gorged with war? Nay, how enjoy every common nourishment, when thou art gathering so much venom? Thou dost not relieve the poverty, why make it even more grinding? thou dost not lift up him that is fallen, why throw him down also? thou dost not remove despondency, why even increase it? thou givest no money, why use insulting words besides? Hast thou not heard what punishment they suffer that feed not the poor? to what vengeance they are condemned? For He says, "Depart to the fire prepared for the devil and his angels." (Matthew 25:41.) If then they that feed not are so condemned, what punishment are they to suffer, who besides not feeding, even insult? What punishment shall they undergo? what hell? That we kindle not so great evils against ourselves, whiles we have it in our power, let us correct this evil complaint also, and put a bridle on the tongue. And let us be so far from insulting, as even to invite them, both by words and actions, that by laying up much mercy for ourselves, we may obtain the blessings promised us. Which God grant that we may all attain unto by the grace and love towards man, etc.

Verse 14. *"Bless them which persecute you; bless, and curse not."*

After teaching them how they ought to be minded towards one another, and after joining the members closely into one, he next proceeds to lead them forth to the battle without, which he makes easier as from this point. For as he who hath not managed things well with those of his own side, will find more difficulty in arranging affairs with strangers, so he, that has practiced himself duly among these, will with the more ease have the advantage of those without also. Hence then Paul also as he goes on in his journey, after the one places the other, and says, "Bless them that persecute you." He did not say, be not spiteful or revengeful, but required something far better. For that a man that was wise might do, but this is quite an angel's part. And after saying "bless," he proceeds, "and curse not," lest we should do both the one and the ether, and not the former only. For they that persecute us are purveyors of a reward to us. But if thou art sober-minded, there will be another reward after that one, which thou wilt gain thyself. For he will yield thee that for persecution, but thou wilt yield thyself the one from the blessing of another, in that thou bringest forth a very great sign of love to Christ. For as he that curseth his persecutor, showeth that he is not much pleased at suffering this for Christ, thus he that blesseth showeth the greatness of his love. Do not then abuse him, that thou thyself mayest gain the greater

reward, and mayest teach him that the thing is matter of inclination, not of necessity, of holiday and feast, not of calamity or dejection. For this cause Christ Himself said, "Rejoice when men speak all manner of evil against you falsely." (Matthew 5:11.) Hence too it was that the Apostles returned with joy not from having been evil spoken of only, but also at having been scourged. (Acts 5:40, 41.) For besides what I have mentioned, there will be another gain, and that no small one, that you will make, both the abashing of your adversaries hereby, and instructing of them by your actions that you are traveling to another life; for if he see thee joyous, and elevated, from suffering ill, he will see clearly from the actions that thou hast other hopes greater than those of this life. So that if thou dost not so, but weepst and lamentest, how is he to be able to learn from that thou art tarrying for any other life? And besides this, thou wilt compass yet another thing. For provided he see thee not vexed at the affronts done thee, but even blessing him, he will leave harassing thee. See then how much that is good comes from this, both a greater reward for thyself and a less temptation, and he will forbear persecuting thee, and God too will be glorified: and to him that is in error thy endurance will be instruction in godliness. For this reason it was not those that insult us only, but even those that persecute us and deal despitefully with us, that he bade us requite with the contrary. And now he orders them to bless, but as he goes on, he exhorts them to do them good in deeds also.

Verse 15. *"Rejoice with them that do rejoice, and weep with them that weep."*

Since it is possible to bless and not to curse, and yet not to do this out of love, he wishes us to be penetrated with the warmth of friendship throughout. And this is why he goes on in these words, that we are not only to bless, but even feel compassion for their pains and sufferings, whenever we happen to see them fallen into trouble. Yes, it will be said, but to join in the sorrows of mourners one can see why he ordered them, but why ever did he command them the other thing, when it is no such great matter? Aye, but that requires more of a high Christian temper, to rejoice with them that do rejoice, than to weep with them that weep. For this nature itself fulfills perfectly: and there is none so hard-hearted as not to weep over him that is in calamity: but the other requires a very noble soul, so as not only to keep from envying, but even to feel pleasure with the person who is in esteem. And this is why he placed it first. For there is nothing that ties love so firmly as sharing both joy and pain one with another. Do not then, because thou art far from difficulties thyself, remain aloof from sympathizing too. For when thy neighbor is ill-treated, thou oughtest to make the calamity thine own. Take share then in his tears, that thou mayest lighten his low spirits. Take share in his joy, that thou mayest make the joy strike deep root. and fix the love firmly, and be of service to thyself rather than to him in so doing, by thy weeping rendering thyself merciful, and by thy feeling his pleasure, purging thyself of envy and grudging. And let me draw your attention to Paul's considerateness. For he does not say, Put an end to the calamity, lest thou shouldest say in many cases that it is impossible: but he has enjoined the easier task, and that which thou hast in thy power. For even if thou art not able to remove the evil, yet contribute tears, and thou wilt take the worst half away. And if thou be not able to increase a man's prosperity, contribute joy, and thou wilt have made a great addition to it. Therefore it is not abstaining from envy only, but what is a much greater thing that he exhorts us to, namely, joining in the pleasure. For this is a much greater thing than not envying.

Verse 16. *"Be of the same mind one towards another. Mind not high things, but condescend to men of low estate."*

Here again he insists much upon lowliness of mind, the subject he had started this exhortation with. For there was a probability of their being full of high-mindedness, both on account of their city, and from sundry other causes; he therefore keeps drawing off the morbid matter, and lowers the inflammation. For there is nothing that makes such schisms in the Churches as vanity does. And what does he mean by, "Be of the same mind one towards another?" Has a poor man come into thy house? Be like him in thy bearing, do not put on any unusual pompous air on account of thy riches. There is no rich and poor in Christ. Be not then ashamed of him because of his external dress, but receive him because of his inward faith. And if thou seest him in sorrow, do not disdain to comfort him, nor if thou see him in prosperity, feel abashed at sharing his pleasure, and being gladdened with him, but be of the same mind in his case, that thou wouldest be of in thine own. For it says, "Be of the same mind one towards another." For instance, if thou thinkest thyself a great man, therefore think him so likewise. Dost thou suspect that he is mean and little? Well then, pass this same sentence upon thyself, and cast aside all unevenness. And how is this to be? By thy casting aside that reckless temper. Wherefore he proceeds: "Mind not high things, but condescend to men of low estate." That is, bring thyself down to their humble condition, associate with them, walk with them, do not be humbled in mind only, but help them also, and reach forth thy hand to them, not by means of others, but in thine own person, as a father taking care of a child, as the head taking care of the body. As he says in another place, "being bound with them that are in bonds." (Hebrews 13:3. But here he means by those of low estate not merely the lowly-minded, but those of a low rank, and which one is apt to think scorn of.

"Be not wise in your own conceits." This is, do not think that you can do for yourselves. Because the Scripture saith in another place besides, "Woe to them that are wise in their own eyes, and prudent in their own sight." (Isaiah 5:22.) And by this again, he secretly draws off recklessness, and reduces conceit and turgidity. For there is nothing that so elates men and makes them feel different from other people, as the notion that they can do by themselves. Whence also God hath placed us in need one of another, and though thou be wise thou wilt be in need of another: but if thou think that thou art not in need of him, thou wilt be the most foolish and feeble of men. For a man of this sort bares himself of all succor, and in whatever error he may run into, will not have the advantage either of correction or of pardon, and will provoke God by his recklessness, and will run into many errors. For it is the case, aye, and often too, that a wise man does not perceive what is needful, and a man of less shrewdness hits upon somewhat that is applicable. And this happened with Moses and his father-in-law, and with Saul and his servant, and with Isaac and Rebecca. Do not then suppose that you are lowered by needing another man for his exalts you the more, this makes you the stronger, and the brighter too, and the more secure.

Verse 17. *"Recompense to no man evil for evil."*

For if thou findest fault with another who plots against thee, why dost thou make thyself liable to this accusation? If he did amiss how comest thou not to shun imitating him? And observe how he puts no difference here but lays down one law for all. For he does not say, "recompense not evil" to the believer, but to "no man," be he heathen, be he contaminated, or what not. "Provide things honest in the sight of all men."

Verse 18. *"If it be possible, as much as lieth in you, live peaceably with all men."*

This is that: "let your light shine before men" (Matthew 5:16), not that we are to live for vanity, but that we are not to give those who have a mind for it a handle against us. Whence he says also in another place, "Give none offense, neither to the Jews, nor to the Gentiles, nor to the Church of God." (1 Corinthians 10:32.) And in what follows he limits his meaning well, by saying, "If it be possible." For there are cases in which it is not possible, as, for instance, when we have to argue about religion, or to contend for those who are wronged. And why be surprised if this be not universally possible in the case of other persons, when even in the case of man and wife he broke through the rule? "But if the unbelieving depart, let him depart." (1 Corinthians 7:15.) And his meaning is nearly as follows: Do thine own part, and to none give occasion of war or fighting, neither to Jew nor Gentile. But if you see the cause of religion suffering anywhere, do not prize concord above truth, but make a noble stand even to death. And even then be not at war in soul, be not averse in temper, but fight with the things only. For this is the import of "as much as in you lieth, be at peace with all men." But if the other will not be at peace, do not thou fill thy soul with tempest, but in mind be friendly as I said before, without giving up the truth on any occasion.

Verse 19. *"Dearly beloved, avenge not yourselves, but rather give place unto wrath. For it is written, Vengeance is mine; I will repay, saith the Lord."*

Unto what wrath? To the wrath of God. Now since what the injured man desires most to see is, himself having the pleasure of revenge, this very thing he gives him in full measure, that if thou dost not avenge thyself. he means, God will be thy avenger. Leave it then to Him to follow up thy wrongs. For this is the force of "give place unto wrath." Then to give further comfort, he brings the quotation forward also, and after winning him more thoroughly to himself in this way, he demands more Christian heroism of him, and says:

Verse 20, 21. *"If thine enemy hunger, feed him; if he thirst, give him to drink; for in so doing thou shalt heap coals of fire upon his head. Be not overcome of evil, but overcome evil with good."*

Why, he means, am I telling you that you must keep peace? for I even insist upon your doing kindness. For he says, "give him to eat, and give him to drink." Then as the command he gave was a very difficult and a great one, he proceeds: "for in so doing thou shalt heap coals of fire upon his head." And this he said both to humble the one by fear, and to make the other more ready-minded through hope of a recompense. For he that is wronged, when he is feeble, is not so much taken with any goods of his own as with the vengeance upon the person who has pained him. For there nothing so sweet as to see an enemy chastised. What he is longing for, then, that he gives him first, and when he has let the venom go, then he again gives advice of a higher tone, saying, "Be not overcome of evil." For he knew that if the enemy were a very brute, he would not continue an enemy when he had been fed. And if the man injured be of ever so little a soul, still when feeding him and giving him to drink, he will not himself even have any farther craving for his punishment. Hence, out of confidence in the result of the action, he does not simply threaten, but even dwells largely upon the vengeance. For he did not say, "thou shalt take vengeance" but, "thou shalt heap coals of fire upon his head." Then he further declares him victor, by saying, "be not overcome of evil, but overcome evil with good." And he gives a kind of gentle hint, that one is not to do it with that intention, since cherishing a grudge still would be "being overcome of evil." But he did not say it at once, as he did not find it advisable yet. But when he had disburdened the man of his anger, then he proceeded to say, "overcome evil with good." Since this would be a victory. For the

combatant is rather than the conqueror, not when he brings himself under to take the blows, but when he withdraws himself, and makes his antagonist waste his strength upon the air. And in this way he will not be struck himself, and will also exhaust the whole of the other's strength. And this takes place in regard to affronts also. For when you do affronts in return, you have the worse, not as overcome by a man, but what is far more disgraceful, by the slavish passion of anger. But if you are silent, then you will conquer, and erect a trophy without a fight, and will have thousands to crown you, and to condemn the slander of falsehood. For he that replies, seems to be speaking in return as if stung. And he that is stung, gives reason to suspect that he is conscious of being guilty of what is said of him. But if you laugh at it, by your laughing you do away with the sentence against you. And if you would have a clear proof of what has been said, ask the enemy himself, when he is most vexed? when you are heated, and insult him in return? or when you laugh at him as he insults you? and you will be told the last rather. For he too is not so much pleased with not being insulted in return, as he is vexed because his abuse was not able to gain any hold upon you. Did you never see men in a passion, how they make no great account of their own wounds, but rush on with much violence, and are worse than very wild boars for seeking the hurt of their neighbor, and look to this alone, and are more given to this than to being on their guard against getting harmed? When therefore thou deprivest him of that he desires most, thou bereavest him of everything, by holding him thus cheap, and showing him to be easy to be despised, and a child rather than a man; and thou indeed hast gained the reputation of a wise man, and him dost thou invest with the character of a noisome beast. This too let us do when we are struck, and when we wish to strike, let us abstain from striking again. But, would you give a mortal blow? "Turn to him the other cheek also" (Matthew 5:39), and thou wilt smite him with countless wounds. For they that applaud, and wonder at thee, are more annoying to him than men to stone him would be; and before them, his conscience will condemn him, and will exact the greatest punishment of him, and so he will go off with a confused look as if he had been treated with the utmost rigor. And if it is the estimation of the multitude that you look for, this too you will have in larger share. And in a general way we have a kind of sympathy with those who are the sufferers; but when we also see that they do not strike (several Mss. resist, ajntipivptonta") in return, but even give themselves up to it, we not only pity them, but even feel admiration for them.

Here then I find reason to lament, that we who might have things present, if we listened to Christ's Law as we should, and also attain to things to come, are cast out of both by not paying attention to what has been told us, but giving ourselves to unwarranted philosophizing about them. For He has given us laws upon all these points for our good, and has shown us what makes us have a good name, what brings us to disgrace. And if it was likely to have proved His disciples ridiculous He would not have enjoined this. But since this makes them the most notable of men namely, the not speaking ill, when we have ill spoken of us; the not doing ill when we have ill done us; this was His reason for enjoining it. But if this be so, much more the speaking of good when we have ill spoken of us, and the praising of those that insult us, and the doing good to those that plot against us, will make us so. This then was why He gave these laws. For He is careful for His own disciples, and knowing well what it is that maketh little or great. If then He both careth and knoweth, why dost thou quarrel with Him, and wish to go another road? For conquering by doing ill is one of the devil's laws. Hence in the Olympic games which were celebrated to him it is so that all the competitors conquer. But in Christ's race this is not the rule about the prize, for, on the contrary, the law is for the person smitten, and not for the person smiting, to be crowned. For such is the character of His race, it has all its regulations the other way; so that it is not in the victory only, but also in the way of the victory, that the marvel is the greater. Now when things which on the other side are signs of a victory, on this side he showeth to be productive of defeat, this is the power of

God, this the race of Heaven, this the theater of Angels. I know that ye are warmed thoroughly now, and are become as soft as any wax, but when ye have gone hence ye will spew it all out. This is why I sorrow, that what we are speaking of, we do not show in our actions, and this too though we should be greatest gainers thereby. For if we let our moderation be seen, we shall be invincible to any man; and there is nobody either great or small, who will have the power of doing us any hurt. For if any one abuseth thee, he has not hurt thee at all, but himself severely. And if again he wrong thee, the harm will be with the person who does the wrong. Did you never notice that even in the courts of law those who have had wrong done them are honored, and stand and speak out with entire freedom, but those who have done the wrong, are bowed down with shame and fear? And why do I talk of evil-speaking and of wrong? For were he even to whet his sword against thee, and to stain his right hand in thy life-blood, it is not thee that he hath done any harm to, but himself that he hath butchered. And he will witness what I say who was first taken off thus by a brother's hand. For he went away to the haven without a billow, having gained a glory that dieth not away; but the other lived a life worse than any death, groaning, and trembling, and in his body bearing about the accusation of what he had done. Let us not follow after this then, but that. For he that hath ill done him, has not an evil that taketh up its constant abode with him, since he is not the parent of it; but as he received it from others, he makes it good by his patient endurance. But he that doeth ill, hath the well of the mischief in himself. Was not Joseph in prison, but the harlot that plotted against him in a fine and splendid house? Which then wouldest thou wish to have been? And let me not hear yet of the requital, but examine the things that had taken place by themselves. For in this way thou wilt rate Joseph's prison infinitely above the house with the harlot in it. For if you were to see the souls of them both, you would find the one full of enlargement and boldness, but that of the Egyptian woman in straitness, shame, dejection, confusion, and great despondency. And yet she seemed to conquer; but this was no real victor. Knowing all this then, let us fit ourselves for bearing ills, even that we may be freed from bearing ills, and may attain to the blessings to come. Which that we may all attain to, God grant, by the grace and love toward man, etc.