



COMMENTARIES ON '1 CORINTHIANS'

ST. JOHN CHRYSOSTOM

Chapter 14

Follow after love, yet desire earnestly spiritual gifts; but rather that ye may prophesy. (1 Corinthians 14:1)

Thus, inasmuch as he had with exactness rehearsed unto them all the excellence of love, he exhorts them in what follows, with alacrity to lay hold of it. Wherefore also he said, "Follow after:" for he that is in chase beholds that only which is chased, and towards that he strains himself, and leaves not off until he lay hold of it. He that is in chase, when by himself he cannot, by those that are before him he doth overtake the fugitive, beseeching those who are near with much eagerness to seize and keep it so seized for him until he shall come up. This then let us also do. When of ourselves we do not reach unto love, let us bid them that are near her to hold her, till we come up with her, and when we have apprehended, no more let her go, that she may not again escape us. For continually she springs away from us, because we use her not as we ought, but prefer all things unto her. Therefore we ought to make every effort, so as perfectly to retain her. For if this be done, we require not henceforth much labor, nay rather scarce any; but taking our ease, and keeping holiday, we shall march on in the narrow path of virtue. Wherefore he saith, "Follow after her."

Then that they might not suppose that for no other end he brought in the discourse of charity, except that he might extinguish the gifts, he subjoins as follows;

Ver. 1. "Yet desire earnestly spiritual gifts; but rather that ye may prophesy."

Ver. 2. "For he that speaketh in a tongue, speaketh not unto men, but unto God: for no man understandeth; but in the Spirit he speaketh mysteries."

Ver. 3. "But he that prophesieth speaketh unto men edification, and exhortation, and comfort."

At this point he makes a comparison between the gifts, and lowers that of the tongues, showing it to be neither altogether useless, nor very profitable by itself. For in fact they were greatly puffed up on account of this, because the gift was considered to be a great one. And it was thought great because the Apostles received it first, and with so great display; it was not however therefore to be esteemed above all the others. Wherefore then did the Apostles receive it before the rest? Because they were to go abroad every where. And as in the time of building the tower the one tongue was divided into many; so then the many tongues frequently met in one man, and the same person used to discourse both in the Persian, and the Roman, and the Indian, and many other tongues, the Spirit sounding within him: and the gift was called the gift of tongues because he could all at once speak divers languages. See

accordingly how he both depresses and elevates it. Thus, by saying, “He that speaketh with tongues, speaketh not unto men, but unto God, for no man understandeth,” he depressed it, implying that the profit of it was not great; but by adding, “but in the Spirit he speaketh mysteries” he again elevated it, that it might not seem to be superfluous and useless and given in vain.

“But he that prophesieth speaketh unto men edification, and exhortation, and comfort.”

Seest thou by what he signifies the choice nature of this gift? i.e., by the common benefit? and how every where he gives the higher honor to that which tends to the profit of the many? For do not the former speak unto men also? tell me. But not so much “edification, and exhortation, and comfort.” So that the being powered by the Spirit is common to both, as well to him that prophesieth, as to him that speaketh with tongues; but in this, the one (he, I mean, who prophesieth) hath the advantage in that he is also profitable unto the hearers. For they who with tongues were not understood by them that had not the gift.

What then? Did they edify no man? “Yes,” saith he, “themselves alone:” wherefore also he adds,

Ver. 4. “He that speaketh in tongue edifieth himself.”

And how, if he know not what he saith? Why, for the present, he is speaking of them who understand what they say;—understand it themselves, but know not how to render it unto others.

“But he that prophesieth edifieth the Church.” Now as great as is the difference between a single person and the Church, so great is the interval between these two. Seest thou his wisdom, how he doth not thrust out the gift and make nothing of it, but signifies it to have some advantage, small though it be, and such as to suffice the possessor only?

Next, lest they should suppose that in envy to them he depresses the tongues, (for the more part had this gift,) to correct their suspicion he saith,

Ver. 5. “I would have you all speak with tongues, but rather that ye should prophesy: for greater is he that prophesieth than he that speaketh with tongues, except he interpret, that the Church may receive edifying.”

But “rather” and “greater,” do not mark opposition, but superiority. So that hence also it is evident that he is not disparaging the gift, but leading them to better things, displaying both his carefulness on their behalf, and a spirit free from all envy. For neither did he say, “I would that two or three,” but, “that ye all spake with tongues” and not this only, but also, “that ye prophesied;” and this rather than that; “for greater is he that prophesieth.” For since he hath established and proved it, he next proceeds also to assert it; not however simply, but with a qualification. Accordingly he adds, “except he interpret;” since if he be able to do this, I mean the interpreting, “he hath become equal unto the prophet,” so he speaks, “because then there are many who reap the advantage of it;” a thing to be especially observed, how this throughout, before all else, is his object,

Ver. 6. “But now, brethren, if I come unto you speaking with tongues, what shall I profit you, unless I speak to you either by way of revelation, or of knowledge, or of prophesying, or of teaching?”

“And why speak I,” saith he, “of the rest? Nay, let the person who speaketh with tongues be Paul: for not even so will any good come to the hearers.” And these things he saith to signify that he is seeking their profit, not bearing any grudge against them that have the gift; since not even in his own person doth he shrink from pointing out its unprofitableness. And indeed it is his constant way to work out the disagreeable topics in his own person: as in the beginning of the Epistle he said, “Who then is Paul? and who is Apollos? and who is Cephas?” This same then he doth also here, saying, “Not even I shall profit you, except I speak to you either by way of revelation, or of prophesying, or of knowledge, or of teaching.” And what he means is, “if I say not somewhat that can be made intelligible to you and that may be clear, but merely make display of my having the gift of tongues;—tongues which ye do not understand, ye will go away with no sort of profit. For how should you profit by a voice which ye understand not?”

Ver. 7. “Even things without life, giving a voice, whether pipe or harp, if they give not a distinction in the sounds, how shall it be known what is piped?”

“And why do I say,” saith he, “that in our case this is unprofitable, and that only useful which is clear and easy to be apprehended by the hearers? Since even in musical instruments without life one may see this: for whether it be pipe or harp, yet if it be struck or blown confusedly and unskilfully, without proper cadence or harmony, it will captivate none of the hearers. For even in these inarticulate sounds there is need of some distinctness: and if thou strike not or breathe into the pipe according to art, thou hast done nothing. Now if from things without life we require so much distinctness, and harmony, and appropriateness, and into those inarticulate sounds we strive and contend to infuse so much meaning, much more in men indued with life and reason, and in spiritual gifts, ought one to make significancy an object.

Ver. 8. “For if the trumpet give an uncertain voice, who shall prepare himself for war?”

Thus from things merely ornamental he carries on his argument to those which are more necessary and useful; and saith that not in the harp alone, but in the trumpet also one may see this effect produced. For in that also there are certain measures; and they give out at one time a warlike note, and at another one that is not so; and again sometimes it leads out to line of battle and at others recalls from it: and unless one know this, there is great danger. Which is just what he means, and the mischief of it what he is manifesting, when he saith, “who shall prepare himself for war?” So then, if it have not this quality, it is the ruin of all. “And what is this to us,” saith one? Truly it concerns you very especially; wherefore also he adds,

Ver. 9. “So also ye, unless ye utter by the tongue, speech easy to be understood, ye will be speaking into the air:” i.e., calling to nobody, speaking unto no one. Thus every where he shows its unprofitableness.

“But if it be unprofitable, why was it given?” saith one. So as to be useful to him that hath received it. But if it is to be so to others also, there must be added interpretation. Now this he saith, bringing them near to one another; that if a person himself have not the gift of interpretation, he may take unto him another that hath it, and make his own gift useful through him. Wherefore he every where points out its imperfection, that so he may bind them together. Any how, he that accounts it to be sufficient for itself, doth not so much commend it as disparage it, not suffering it to shine brightly by the interpretation. For

excellent indeed and necessary is the gift, but it is so when it hath one to explain what is spoken. Since the finger too is a necessary thing, but when you separate it from the other members, it will not be equally useful: and the trumpet is necessary, but when it sounds at random, it is rather an annoyance. Yea, neither shall any art come to light, without matter subject to it; nor is matter put into shape, if no form be assigned to it. Suppose then the voice to be as the subject-matter, but the distinctness as that form, which not being present, there will be no use in the material.

Ver. 10. "There are, it may be, so many kinds of voices in the world, and no kind is without signification:" i.e., so many tongues, so many voices of Scythians, Thracians, Romans, Persians, Moors, Indians, Egyptians, innumerable other nations.

Ver. 11. "If then I know not the meaning of the voice, I shall be to him that speaketh a barbarian." "For suppose not," saith he, "that this happens only in our case; rather in all one may see this taking place: so that I do not say this to disparage the voice, but to signify that to me it is useless, as long as it is not intelligible." Next, that he may not render the accusation unpalatable, he makes his charge alike for the two, saying, "He shall be unto me a barbarian, and I to him." Not from the nature of the voice, but from our ignorance. Seest thou how by little and little he draws men to that which is akin to the subject. Which is his use to do, to fetch his examples from afar, and to end with what more properly belongs to the matter. For having spoken of a pipe and harp, wherein is much that is inferior and unprofitable, he comes to the trumpet, a thing more useful; next, from that he proceeds to the very voice itself. So also before, when he was discoursing to show that it was not forbidden the Apostles to receive, beginning first with husbandmen, and shepherds, and soldiers, then he brought the discourse on to that which is nearer to the subject, the priests in the old covenant.

But do thou, I pray, consider, how every where he hath given diligence to free the gift from censure, and to bring round the charge to the receivers of it. For he said not, "I shall be a barbarian," but, "unto him that speaketh, a barbarian." And again, he did not say, "he that speaketh shall be a barbarian," but "he that speaketh shall be a barbarian unto me."

"What then must be done?" saith he. Why, so far from disparaging, one ought to recommend and to teach it; as indeed himself also doth. Since after he had accused and rebuked it and shown its unprofitableness, he proceeds to counsel them; saying,

Ver. 12. "So also ye, since as ye are zealous of spiritual gifts, seek that ye may abound unto the edifying of the Church."

Seest thou his aim every where, how he looks to one thing continually and in all cases, the general utility, the profiting the Church; laying this down as a kind of rule? And he did not say, "that ye may obtain the gifts" but, "that ye may abound," i.e., that ye may even possess them in great plenitude. Thus, so far am I from wishing you not to possess them, that I even wish you to abound in them, only so that ye handle them with a view to the common advantage. And how is this to be done? This he adds, saying,

Ver. 13. "Wherefore let him that speaketh in a tongue pray that he may interpret."

Ver. 14. "For if I pray in a tongue, my spirit prayeth, but my understanding is unfruitful."

Ver. 15. "What is it then? I will pray with the spirit, and I will pray with the understanding also; I will sing with the spirit, and I will sing with the understanding also."

Here he shows that it is in their power to obtain the gift. For, "let him pray," saith he, i.e., "let him contribute his own part," since if thou ask diligently, thou wilt surely receive. Ask accordingly not to have the gift of tongue only, but also of interpretation, that thou mayest become useful unto all, and not shut up thy gift in thyself alone. "For if I pray in a tongue," saith he, "my spirit prayeth, but my understanding is unfruitful." Seest thou how by degrees bringing his argument to a point, he signifies that not to others only is such an one useless, but also to himself; if at least "his understanding is unfruitful?" For if a man should speak only in the Persian, or any other foreign tongue, and not understand what he saith, then of course to himself also will he be thenceforth a barbarian, not to another only, from not knowing the meaning of the sound. For there were of old many who had also a gift of prayer, together with a tongue; and they prayed, and the tongue spake, praying either in the Persian or Latin language, but their understanding knew not what was spoken. Wherefore also he said, "If I pray in a tongue, my spirit prayeth," i.e., the gift which is given me and which moves my tongue, "but my understanding is unfruitful."

What then may that be which is best in itself, and doth good? And how ought one to act, or what request of God? To pray, "both with the spirit," i.e., the gift, and "with the understanding." Wherefore also he said, "I will pray with the spirit, and I will pray with the understanding also: I will sing with the spirit, and I will sing with the understanding also."

He signifieth the same thing here also, that both the tongue may speak, and the understanding may not be ignorant of the things spoken. For except this be so, there will also be another confusion.

Ver. 16. "Else," saith he, "if thou bless with the spirit, how shall he that filleth the place of the unlearned say the Amen at thy giving of thanks, seeing he knoweth not what thou sayest?"

Ver. 17. "For thou verily givest thanks well, but the other is not edified."

Observe how again here he brings his stone to the plumb-line, every where seeking the edification of the Church. Now by the "unlearned" he means the laymen, and signifies that he also suffers no little loss when he is unable to say the Amen. And what he saith is this: "if thou shalt bless in a barbarian tongue, not knowing what thou sayest, nor able to interpret, the layman cannot respond the Amen. For not hearing the words, 'forever and ever,' which are at the end, he doth not say the Amen." Then again, comforting him concerning this, that he might not seem to hold the gift too cheap; the same kind of remark as he made above, that "he speaketh mysteries," and "speaketh unto God," and "edifieth himself," and "prayeth with the spirit," intending no little comfort from these things, this also he utters here, saying, "for thou indeed givest thanks well," since thou speakest being moved by the Spirit: but the other hearing nothing nor knowing what is said, stands there, receiving no great advantage by it."

Further, because he had run down the possessors of this gift, as though they had no such great thing; that he might not seem to hold them cheap, as being himself destitute of it, see what he saith:

Ver. 18. "I thank God, speaking with tongues more than ye all."

And this he doth also in another place intending, namely, to take away the advantages of Judaism and to show that henceforth they are nothing, he begins by declaring that himself had been endowed with them, yea, and that in very great excess; and then he calls them “loss,” thus saying, “If any man thinketh to have confidence in the flesh, I more: circumcised the eighth day, of the stock of Israel, of the tribe of Benjamin, a Hebrew of Hebrews; as touching the law, a Pharisee; as touching zeal, persecuting the Church; as touching the righteousness which is the law, found blameless.” (Philip. iii. 4–7.) And then, having signified himself to have the advantage of all, he saith, “Howbeit what things were gain to me, those have I counted loss for Christ.” So also he doth here, saying, “I speak with tongues more than ye all.” Do not ye therefore glory as though ye only had the gift. For I also possess it, yea more than ye.

Ver. 19. “Howbeit in the Church I had rather speak five words with my understanding, that I might instruct others also.”

What is that, “speak with my understanding, that I might instruct others also?” “Understanding what I say,” and “words which I can both interpret to others, and speak intelligently, and teach the hearers.” “Than ten thousand words in a tongue.” Wherefore? “That I may instruct others,” saith he. For the one hath but display only; the other, great utility: this being what he everywhere seeks, I mean the common profit. And yet the gift of tongues was strange, but that of prophecy familiar and ancient and heretofore given to many; this on the contrary then first given: howbeit it was not much cared for by him. Wherefore neither did he employ it; not because he had it not, but because he always sought the more profitable things: being as he was free from all vain-glory, and considering one thing only, how he might render the hearers better.

And here is the reason of the faculty he had of looking to the expedient both to himself and to others: viz. because he was free from vain-glory. Since he assuredly that is enslaved by it, so far from discerning what is good to others, will not even know his own.

Such was Simon, who, because he looked to vain-glory, did not even see his own advantage. Such also were the Jews, who because of this sacrificed their own salvation to the devil. Hence also did idols spring, and by this madness did the heathen philosophers excite themselves, and make shipwreck in their false doctrines. And observe the perverseness of this passion: how because of it some of them also made themselves poor, others were eager for wealth. So potent is its tyranny that it prevails even in direct contraries. Thus one man is vain of chastity, and contrariwise another of adultery; and this man of justice, and another of injustice; so of luxury and fasting, modesty and rashness, riches and poverty. I say poverty: since some of them that were with out, when it was in their power to receive, for admiration’s sake forbore to receive. But not so the Apostles: that they were pure from vainglory, they showed by their doings: in that, when some were calling them Gods and were ready to sacrifice-unto them oxen with garlands, they did not merely just forbid what was doing, but they even rent their clothes. (Acts xiv. 13, 14.) And after they had set the lame man upright, when all with open mouths were gazing at them, they said, “Why look ye so earnestly on us, as though by our own power we had made this man to walk?” And those, among men who admired poverty, chose to themselves a state of poverty: but these among persons who despised poverty and gave praise to wealth. And these, if they received aught, ministered to the needy. Thus, not vain-glory but benevolence, was the motive of all they did. But those quite the reverse; as enemies and pests of our common nature, and no otherwise, did they such things. Thus one sunk all his goods in the sea for no good purpose, imitating fools and madmen: and another let

all his land go to sheep common. Thus they did every thing for vain-glory. But not so the Apostles; rather they both received what was given them, and distributed to the needy with so great liberality that they even lived in continual hunger. But if they had been enamored of glory, they would not have practiced this, the receiving and distributing, for fear of some suspicion arising against them. For he who throws away his own for glory, will much more refuse to receive the things of others, that he may not be accounted to stand in need of others nor incur any suspicion. But these thou seest both ministering to the poor, and themselves begging for them. So truly were they more loving than any fathers.

And observe also their laws, how moderate and freed from all vain-glory. Thus: "Having" saith he, "food and covering, let us therewith be content." (1 Tim. vi. 8.) Not like him of Sinope, who clothed in rags and living in a cask to no good end, astonished many, but profited none: whereas Paul did none of these things; (for neither had he an eye to ostentation;) but was both clothed in ordinary apparel with all decency, and lived in a house continually, and displayed all exactness in the practice of all other virtue; which the cynic despised, living impurely and publicly disgracing himself, and dragged away by his mad passion for glory. For if any one ask the reason of his living in a cask, he will find no other but vain-glory alone. But Paul also paid rent for the house wherein he abode at Rome. Although he who was able to do things far severer, could much more have had strength for this. But he looked not to glory, that savage monster, that fearful demon, that pest of the world, that poisonous viper. Since, as that animal tears through the womb of her parent with her teeth, so also this passion tears in pieces him that begets it.

By what means then may one find a remedy for this manifold distemper? By bringing forward those that have trodden it under foot, and with an eye to their image so ordering one's own life. For so the patriarch Abraham.—nay, let none accuse me of tautology if I often make mention of him, and on all occasions: this being that which most of all shows him wonderful, and deprives them that refuse to imitate him of all excuse. For, if we exhibit one doing well in this particular, and another in that, some one might say that virtue is hardly to be attained; for that it is scarcely possible to succeed in all those things together, whereof each one of the saints hath performed only a part. But when one and the same person is found to possess all, what excuse will they have, who after the law and grace are not able to attain unto the same measure with them that were before the law and grace? How then did this Patriarch overcome and subdue this monster, when he had a dispute with his nephew? (Gen. xiii. 8.) For so it was, that coming off worst and losing the first share, he was not vexed. But ye know that in such matters the shame is worse than the loss to the vulgar-minded, and particularly when a person having all in his own power, as he had then, and having been the first to give honor, was not honored in return. Nevertheless, none of these things vexed him, but he was content to receive the second place, and when wronged by the young man, himself old, an uncle by a nephew, he was not indignant nor took it ill, but loved him equally and ministered to him. Again, having been victorious in that great and terrible fight, and having mightily put to flight the Barbarians (Gen. xiv.) he doth not add show to victory, nor erect a trophy. For he wished to save only, not to exhibit himself. Again, he entertained strangers, yet did he not here act vain-gloriously, but himself both ran to them and bowed down to them, not as though he were giving, but receiving a benefit, and he calleth them lords, without knowing who they are who are come to him, and presents his wife in the place of a handmaiden. (Gen. xviii.) And in Egypt too before this, when he had appeared so extraordinary a person, and had received back this very woman, his wife, and had enjoyed so great honor (Gen. xii.) he showeth it to no man. And though the inhabitants of the place called him prince, he himself even laid down the price of the sepulchre. (Gen. xxiii. 6.) And

when he sent to betroth a wife for his son, he gave no command to speak in high and dignified terms of him, (Gen. xxiv.) but merely to bring the bride.

Wilt thou examine also the conduct of those under grace, when from every side great was the glory of the teaching flowing round them, and wilt thou see then also this passion cast out? Consider, I pray, this same Apostle who speaks these things, how he ever ascribes the whole to God, how of his sins he makes mention continually, but of his good deeds never, unless perchance it should be needful to correct the disciples; and even if he be compelled to do this, he calls the matter folly, and yields the first place to Peter, and is not ashamed to labor with Priscilla and Aquila, and every where he is eager to show himself lowly, not swaggering in the market place, nor carrying crowds with him, but setting himself down among the obscure. Wherefore also he said, "but his bodily presence is weak." (2 Cor. x. 10.) i.e., easy to be despised, and not at all accompanied with display. And again, "I pray that ye do no evil, not that we may appear approved." And what marvel if he despise this glory? seeing that he despises the glory of heaven, and the kingdom, and hell, for that which was pleasing unto Christ: for he wishes himself to be accursed from Christ for the glory of Christ. For if he saith that he is willing to suffer this for the Jews' sake, he saith it on this account that none of those without understanding might think to take to himself the promises made to them. If therefore he were ready to pass by those things, what marvel is it if he despise human things?

But the men of our time are overwhelmed by all things, not by desire of glory only, but also, on the other hand, by insult and fear of dishonor. Thus, should any one praise, it would puff thee up, and if he blame, it would cast thee down. And as weak bodies are by common accidents injured, so also souls which grovel on earth. For such not poverty alone, but even wealth destroys, not grief only, but likewise joy, and prosperity more than adversity. For poverty compels to be wise, but wealth leads on oftentimes into some great evil. And as men in a fever are hard to be pleased in any thing, so also they that are depraved in mind on every side receive hurt.

Knowing therefore these things, let us not shun poverty, let us not admire riches: but prepare our soul to be sufficient for all estates. For so any one building an house doth not consider how neither rain may descend, nor sunbeam light on it, (for this were impossible,) but how it may be made capable of enduring all. And he again that builds a ship doth not fashion and design any thing to keep waves from breaking against it, or any tempest from rising in the sea: (for this too were impossible:) but that the sides of the ship may be ready to meet all. And again, he that cares for the body doth not look to this that there may be no inequality in the temperature, but that the body may easily endure all these things. So accordingly let us act in respect of the soul, and neither be anxious to fly poverty nor to become rich, but to regulate each of them for our own safety.

Wherefore, letting alone these things, let us render our soul meet both for wealth and poverty. For although no calamity, such as man is subject to, befall, which is for the most part impossible, even thus, better is he that seeks not wealth, but knows how to bear all things easily than he that is always rich. And why? First, such an one hath his safety from within, but the other from without. And as he is a better soldier who trusts to his bodily powers and skill in fighting, than he that hath his strength in his armor only; so he that relies on his wealth, compared with him that is fenced in by his virtue, is inferior. Secondly, because even if he do not fall into poverty, it is impossible that he should be without trouble. For wealth hath many storms and troubles; but not so virtue, but pleasure only and safety. Yea, and it

puts a man out of the reach of them that lay snares for him, but wealth quite the contrary, rendering him easy to be attacked and taken. And as among animals, stags and hares are of all most easily taken through their natural timidity, but the wild boar, and the bull, and the lion, would not easily fall in the way of the liers-in-wait; just so one may see in the case of the rich, and of them that live voluntarily in poverty. The one is like the lion and the bull, the other like the stag and the hare. For whom doth not the rich man fear? Are there not robbers, potentates, enviers, informers? And why speak I of robbers and informers, in a case where a man suspects his very domestics?

And why say I, “when he is alive?” Not even when dead is he freed from the villainy of the robbers, nor hath death power to set him in safety, but the evil doers despoil him even when dead, so dangerous a thing is wealth. For not only do they dig into houses, but they even burst open tombs and coffins. What then can be more wretched than this man, since not even death can furnish him with this security, but that wretched body, even when deprived of life, is not freed from the evils of life, those that commit such wickedness hastening to war even with dust and ashes, and much more grievously than when it was alive? For then, it might be, entering his storehouse, they would remove his chests, but abstain from his person, and would not take so much as to strip the body itself but now the accursed hands of the tombbreakers do not even abstain from these, but move and turn it about, and with much cruelty insult it. For after it hath been committed to the ground, having stripped it both of its covering of earth and of that which its grave-clothes constitute, they leave it thus to be cast out.

What foe then so deadly as wealth, which destroys both the soul of the living, and insults the body of the dead, not suffering it even to lie buried in the ground, which is common even to the condemned and to them that have been taken in the vilest crimes? For of them the legislators having exacted the punishment of death, inquire no further; but of these, wealth even after death exacts a most bitter punishment, exposing them naked and unburied, a dreadful and pitiable spectacle: since even those who suffer this after sentence and by the anger of their judges, do not suffer so grievously as these. For they indeed remain unburied the first and second day, and so are committed to the ground; but these, when they have been committed to the ground, are then stripped naked and insulted. And if the robbers depart without taking the coffin too, there is still no thanks to their wealth, but in this case also to their poverty. For she it is that guards it. Whereas most assuredly, had we intruded wealth with even so much as this, and leaving off to form it of stone, had forged it of gold, we should have lost this also.

So faithless a thing is wealth; which belongs not so much to them that have it, as to them that endeavor to seize it. So that it is but a superfluous argument which aims to show that wealth is irresistible, seeing that not even on the day of their death do its possessors obtain security. And yet who is not reconciled with the departed, whether it be wild beast, or demon, or whatever else? The very sight being enough to bend even one who is altogether iron, and quite past feeling. Wherefore, you know, when one sees a corpse, though it be an enemy public or private whom he sees, yet he weeps for him in common with his dearest friends; and his wrath is extinguished with life, and pity is brought in. And it would be impossible, in time of mourning and carrying out of burial, to distinguish an enemy from him who is not such. So greatly do all men revere their common nature, and the customs which have been introduced respecting it. But wealth not even on obtaining this, remits her anger against her possessors; nay, it renders them that have been no way wronged enemies of the dead; if at least to strip the dead body be an act of persons very bitter and hostile. And nature for her part reconciles even his enemies to him then: but wealth makes foes of them that have nothing to accuse him of, and cruelly intreats the body in

its utter desolation. And yet in that case there are many things which might lead one to pity, the fact of its being a corpse, its inability to move, and tending to earth and corruption, the absence of any one to help: but none of these things soften those accursed wretches, because of the tyranny they are under from their base cupidity. For the passion of covetousness, like some ruthless tyrant, is at hand, enjoining those inhuman commands and having made wild beasts of them, so brings them to the tombs. Yea, like wild beasts attacking the dead, they would not even abstain from their flesh, if their limbs were any way useful unto them. Such is our enjoyment of wealth; to be insulted even after death, and deprived of sepulture which even the most desperate criminals obtain.

Are we still then, tell me, to be fond of so grievous an enemy? Nay, I beseech you, nay, my brethren! but let us fly from it without turning to look: and if it come into our hands, let us not keep it within, but bind it fast by the hands of the poor. For these are the bonds which have more power to hold it, and from those treasuries it will never more escape; and so this faithless one abides for the time to come faithful, tractable, tame, the right hand of Mercy producing this effect on it.

As I have said then, if it ever come to us, let us hand it over to her; but if it come not, let us not seek after it, nor fret ourselves, nor count its possessors happy; for what sort of a notion of happiness is this? Unless thou wouldest also say that those who fight with beasts are to be envied, because those high-priced animals are shut up and reserved by the proposers of such contests for themselves: who however not daring themselves to approach or to touch them, but fearing and trembling because of them, hand over others to them. Something like this, I say, is the case of the wealthy, when they have shut up their wealth in their treasuries as if it were some savage beast, and day by day receive from it innumerable wounds: in this latter unlike to the beasts: since they, when thou leadest them out, then, and not till then, hurt such as meet them: but this, when it is shut up and preserved, then destroys its possessors and hoarders.

But let us make this beast tame. And it will be tame, if we do not shut it up, but give it into the hands of all who are in need. So shall we reap from this quarter the greatest blessings, both living in the present life with safety and a good hope, and in the day that is to come standing with boldness: to which may we all attain, through the grace and mercy, &c. &c.

Brethren, be not children in mind; howbeit in malice be ye babes, but in mind be men. (1 Corinthians 14:20)

As might be expected, after his long argument and demonstration he adopts a more vehement style and abundance of rebuke; and mentions an example suited to the subject. For children too are wont to gape after trifles and to be fluttered, but of things very great they have not so much admiration. Since then these also having the gift of tongues, which was the lowest of all, thought they had the whole; therefore he saith, "Be not children," i.e., be not without understanding where ye ought to be considerate, but there be ye childlike and simple, where unrighteousness is, where vain-glory, where pride. For he that is a babe in wickedness ought also to be wise. Since as wisdom with wickedness would not be wisdom, so also simplicity with folly would not be simplicity, it being requisite both in simplicity to avoid folly, and in wisdom wickedness. For as neither bitter nor sweet medicines in excess do good, so neither doth simplicity by itself, nor wisdom: and this is why Christ enjoining us to mix both said, "Be ye wise as serpents, and harmless as doves." (Matt. x. 16.)

But what is it to be a babe in wickedness? Not even to know what wickedness is: yea, such he willed them to be. Wherefore also he said, "It is actually reported that there is fornication among you." (1 Cor. v. 1.) He said not, "is done," but is "reported:" as if he said, "ye are not without knowledge of the thing; ye have heard of it some time." I say, he would have them both to be men and children; the one however in wickedness, but the other in wisdom. For so even the man may become a man, if he be also a child: but as long as he is not a child in wickedness, neither will he be a man. For the wicked, instead of being mature, will be but a fool.

Ver. 21. "In the law it is written, By men of strange tongues and by the lips of strangers will I speak unto this people; and not even thus will they hear me, saith the Lord."

Yet surely it is no where written in the Law, but as I said before, he calls always the whole of the Old Testament, the Law: both the prophets and the historical books. And he brings forward his testimony from Esaias the prophet, again covertly detracting from the glory of the gift, for their profit; nevertheless, even thus he states it with praise. For the expression, "not even thus," hath force to point out that the miracle was enough to astonish them; and if they did not believe, the fault was theirs. And wherefore did God work it, if they were not to believe? That He might in every case appear to do His part.

Having shown then even from the prophecy, that the sign in question is not of great use, he adds,

Ver. 22. "Wherefore tongues are for a sign, not to them that believe, but to the unbelieving: but prophesying is for a sign not to the unbelieving, but to them that believe."

Ver. 23. "If therefore the whole Church be assembled together, and all speak with tongues, and there come in men unlearned or unbelieving, will they not say that ye are mad?"

Ver. 24. "But if all prophesy, and there come in one unbelieving or unlearned, he is reproved by all, he is judged by all:"

Ver. 25. "And thus the secrets of his heart are made manifest; and so he will fall down on his face and worship God, declaring that God is among you indeed."

Great in this place is the difficulty which one seems to find arising from what is said. For if tongues are for a sign to them that believe not, how saith he, if they that believe not should see you speaking with tongues, they will say that "ye are mad?" And if prophecy be "not for the unbelieving, but for them that believe," how shall also the unbelievers gain thereby?

"For if there come in," saith he, "when ye are prophesying, one that believeth not, he is reproved by all, and judged."

And not only this, but also after this another question hence springs up: since the tongue will appear on the contrary greater than the prophecy. For if the tongues are for a sign to the unbelieving, but prophecy to them that believe, that which draws in aliens and makes of the household, is greater than that which regulates those of the household. What then is the meaning of that expression? Nothing difficult nor obscure, nor contrary to what went before, but rather very agreeable to it, if we give heed:

viz., that prophecy is suitable to both, but then tongue not so. Wherefore having said of the tongue, "it is for a sign," he adds, "not to them that believe, but to the unbelievers," and to them "for a sign," i.e., for astonishment, not so much for instruction.

"But in the case of prophecy too," saith some one, "he did the very same thing, saying, 'but prophesying serveth not for the unbelieving, but for them which believe.' For the believer hath no need to see a sign, but requires only teaching and catechizing. How then sayest thou," saith he, "that prophecy is of use to both, when Paul saith 'not to the unbelieving, but to them which believe?'" If thou wilt accurately examine, thou wilt understand what is said. For he said not, "prophecy is not useful to them unbelieving," but, "is not for a sign," as the tongue," i.e., a mere sign without profit: nor is the tongue any way useful to believers; for its only work is to astonish and to confound; the word "sign" being one of those which may be taken two ways: as when he saith, "show me a sign," (Ps. lxxxvi. 17.) and adds, "for good:" and again, "I am become as a wonder unto many," (Ps. lxxi. 7.) i.e., a sign.

And to show thee that he introduced the term "sign" here, not as a thing which of course did some good, he added that which resulted from it. And what was this? "They will say," saith he, "that ye are mad." This however not from the nature of the sign, but from their folly. But when thou hearest of unbelievers, do not suppose that the same persons are in every case intended, but at one time they which are incurably diseased and abide uncorrected, and at another they which may be changed; such as were they who in the times of the Apostles admire the mighty things of God which they hear of; such as in the case of Cornelius. His meaning accordingly is this; that prophecy avails both among the unbelieving and among them that believe: as to the tongue, when heard by the unbelieving and inconsiderate, instead of profiting by it, they rather deride the utterers as madmen. For, in fact, it is to them but for a sign, i.e., in order to astonish them merely; whereas they who had understanding used also to profit by it: with a view to which the sign was given. Even as then there were not only certain who accused them of drunkenness, but many also admired them as relating the wonderful works of God. It appears then that the mockers were those without understanding. Wherefore also Paul did not simply say, "they will say that ye are mad," but added, "unlearned and unbelievers."

But prophecy is not for a sign merely, but is also suitable and useful for faith and for profit unto both classes. And this, if not directly, yet in the sequel he more clearly explained, saying, "he is reprov'd by all. For, if all prophesy," saith he, "and there come in one unbelieving or unlearned, he is reprov'd by all; he is judg'd by all; and thus are the secrets of his heart made manifest; and so he will fall down on his face and worship God, declaring that God is among you indeed."

So that not in this only is prophecy greater, in its availing with each class, but also in its attracting the more shameless of the unbelievers. For it was not the same wonder, when Peter convicted Sapphira, which was a work of prophecy, and when he spake with tongues: but in the former case all shrank into themselves; whereas, when he spake with tongues, he got the credit of being even beside himself.

Having said then, that a tongue profited not, and having again qualified this statement by turning the charge upon the Jews, he proceeds to signify that it even doth injury. "And wherefore was it given?" That it might go forth with interpretation: since without this, it hath even the contrary effect among them that are without understanding. "For if," saith he, "all speak with tongues, and there come in unbelievers or unlearned, they will say that ye are mad;" as indeed even the Apostles incurred the

suspicion of being drunken: for “these men,” it saith, “are filled with new wine: (Acts ii. 13.) but it is not the fault of the sign, but of their unskilfulness; therefore he added, “unlearned and unbelievers,” to show that the notion belongs to their ignorance and want of faith; for, as I before said, his object is to rank that gift not among things that are disparaged, but among those which do not greatly profit, and this, in order to repress them, and bring them to a necessity of seeking for an interpreter. For since the greater part looked not to this, but made use of it for display and rivalry, this is what he especially withdraws them from, intimating that their credit is injured, they bringing on themselves a suspicion of madness. And this especially is what Paul continually attempts to establish, when he wants to lead men away from any thing: he shows that the person suffers loss in respect of those very things which he desires.

And do thou accordingly likewise: if thou wouldest lead men away from pleasure, show that the thing is bitter: if thou wouldest withdraw them from vain-glory, show that the thing is full of dishonor: thus also was Paul used to do. When he would tear away the rich from their love of money, he said not merely that wealth is a hurtful thing, but also that it casts into temptations. “For they that desire to be rich,” saith he, “fall into a temptation.” (1 Tim. vi. 9.) Thus, since it seems to deliver from temptations, he attributes to it the contrary of that which the rich supposed. Others again held fast by the wisdom that is without, as though by it establishing Christ’s doctrine; he signifies that not only it gives no aid to the cross, but even makes it void. They held to going to law before strangers, thinking it unmeet to be judged by their own, as if those without were wiser: he points out that going to law before them that are without is shameful. They clave to things offered in sacrifice to idols, as displaying perfect knowledge: he intimates that this is a mark of imperfect knowledge, not to know how to manage in the things which concern our neighbors. So also here, because they were wild about this gift of tongues, through their love of glory, he signifies that this on the other hand more than any thing brings shame upon them, not only depriving them of glory, but also involving them in a suspicion of madness. But he did not at once say this, but having spoken very many things before, when he had made his discourse acceptable, then he brings in that topic so very contrary to their opinion. And this in fact is no more than the common rule; that he who intends thoroughly to shake a deep-rooted opinion and to turn men round to its contrary, must not at once state the opposites: otherwise he will be ridiculous in the eyes of them that are preoccupied by the contrary conviction. Since that which is very much beside expectation cannot be from the beginning easily received, but you must first well undermine by other arguments, and then give it the contrary turn.

Thus for example he did when discoursing of marriage: I mean, since many regarded it as a thing which brings ease, and he wished to intimate that the abstaining from marriage was ease; if he had said this at once he would not so easily have made it acceptable: whereas now, having stated it after much other matter and timing its introduction exactly, he strongly touched the hearers. This also he did in respect of virginity. For before this having said much, and after this again, at last he saith, “I spare you,” and, “I would have you to be free from cares.” (1 Cor. vii. 28, 32.)

This then he doth in respect of the tongues, showing that they not only deprive of glory, but also bring shame upon those who have them in the eyes of the unbelievers. But prophecy, on the contrary, is both free from reproach among the unbelievers, and hath very great credit and usefulness. For none will say in regard to prophesying, “they are mad;” nor will any one deride them that prophesy; but, on the contrary, will be astonished at and admire them. For “he is reprov’d by all,” i.e., the things which he

hath in his heart, are brought forward and shown unto all: now it is not the same thing for any one to come in and see one speaking in Persian and another in Syriac, and to come in and hear the secrets of his own mind; as whether he cometh in as a tempter and with evil mind, or sincerely; or that such and such a thing hath been done by him, and such another designed. For this is much more awful and more profitable than the other. For this cause therefore, whereas of the tongues he saith, “ye are mad;” not however affirming this of himself, but of their judgment: i.e., “they will say,” saith he, “that ye are mad;” here, on the contrary, he makes use both of the verdict of the facts, and that of those who are the objects of the benefit. “For he is reproved by all,” saith he, “he is judged by all; and thus are the secrets of his heart made manifest; and so he will fall down on his face and worship God, declaring that God is around you indeed. Seest thou that this is not capable of two interpretations: how in the former case what is done may be doubted of, and here and there an unbeliever might ascribe it to madness? whereas here there will be no such thing, but he will both wonder and worship, first making a confession by his deeds, and then by his words also. Thus also Nebuchadnezzar worshipped God, saying, “Of a truth, your God, He is the God that revealeth secrets, seeing thou couldest reveal this secret.” (Dan. ii. 47.) Seest thou the might of prophecy, how it changed that savage one and brought him under instruction and introduced him to faith?

Ver. 26. “What is it then, brethren? When ye come together, each one hath a psalm, hath a teaching, hath a tongue, hath a revelation, hath an interpretation. Let all things be done unto edifying.”

Seest thou the foundation and the rule of Christianity? how, as it is the artificer’s work to build, so it is the Christian’s to profit his neighbors in all things.

But since he had vehemently run down the gift; lest it might seem to be superfluous, for with a view to pull down their pride and no more, he did this:—again he reckons it with the other gifts, saying, “hath a psalm, hath a teaching, hath a tongue.” For of old they used also to make psalms by a gift and to teach by a gift. Nevertheless, “let all these look to one thing,” saith he, “the correction of their neighbor: let nothing be done at random. For if thou comest not to edify thy brother, why dost thou come here at all? In fact, I do not make much account of the difference of the gifts. One thing concerns me, one thing is my desire, to do all things “unto edifying.” Thus also he that hath the lesser gift will outrun him that hath the greater, if this be not wanting. Yea, therefore are the gifts bestowed, that each might be edified; since unless this take place, the gift will rather turn to the condemnation of the receiver. For what, tell me, is the use of prophesying? What is the use of raising the dead, when there is none who profits by it? But if this be the end of the gifts, and if it be possible to effect it in another way without gifts, boast not thyself on the score of the signs, nor do thou bewail thyself to whom the gifts are denied.

Ver. 27. “And if any man speaketh in a tongue, let it be by two, or at the most by three, and that in turn; and let one interpret.”

Ver. 28. “But if there be no interpreter, let him keep silence in the Church; and let him speak to himself, and to God.”

What sayest thou, tell me? Having spoken so much of tongues, that the gift is a thing unprofitable, a thing superfluous, if it have no interpreter, dost thou command again to speak with tongues? I do not command, saith he, neither do I forbid; as when he saith, “if any of them that believe not bid you to a

feast and ye be disposed to go," he saith it not laying down a law for them to go, but not hindering them: so likewise here. "And let him speak to himself and to God." If he endure not to be silent, saith he, but is so ambitious and vain-glorious, "let him speak by himself." And thus, by the very fact of so permitting, he greatly checked and put them to shame. Which he doth also elsewhere, discoursing of converse with a wife and saying, "But this I say because of your incontinency." But not so did he speak, when he was discoursing of prophecy. How then? In a tone of command and legislation: "Let the prophets speak, two or three." And he no where here seeks the interpreter, nor doth he stop the mouth of him that prophesies as under the former head, saying, "If there be no interpreter, let him keep silence;" because in fact he who speaks in a tongue is not sufficient of himself. Wherefore if any hath both gifts, let him speak. But if he hath not, yet wish to speak, let him do so with the interpreter's aid. For the prophet is an interpreter, but of God; whereas thou art of man. "But if there be no interpreter, let him keep silence:" for nothing ought to be done superfluously, nothing for ambition. Only "let him speak to himself and to God;" i.e., mentally, or quietly and without noise: at least, if he will speak. For this is surely not the tone of one making a law, but it may be of one who shames them more even by his permission; as when he saith, "but if any hunger, let him eat at home:" and seeming to give permission, he touches them hereby the more sharply. "For ye come not together for this purpose," saith he, "that ye may show that ye have a gift, but that ye may edify the hearers;" which also he before said, "Let all things be done unto edifying."

Ver. 29. "Let the prophets speak by two or three, and let the others discern."

No where hath he added, "at the most," as in the case of the tongues. And how is this, one saith? For he makes out that neither is prophesy sufficient in itself, if at least he permitteth the judgment to others. Nay, surely it is quite sufficient; and this is why he did not stop the mouth of the prophet, as of the other, when there is no interpreter; nor, as in his case he said, "if there be no interpreter let him keep silence," so also in the case of the prophet, "if there be none to discern, let him not prophesy;" but he only secured the hearer; since for the satisfaction of the hearers he said this, that no diviner might throw himself in among them. For of this also at the beginning he bade them beware, when he introduced a distinction between divination and prophecy, and now he bids them discriminate and spy out the matter, so that no Satanic teacher might privily enter.

Ver. 30. "But if a revelation be made to another sitting by, let the first keep silence."

Ver. 31. "For ye all can prophesy one by one, that all may learn, and all may be comforted."

What may this be which is spoken? "If when thou prophesiest," saith he, "and art speaking, the spirit of another stir him up, be silent thenceforth." For that which he said in the case of the tongues, this also here he requires, that it should be done "in turn," only in a diviner way here. For he made not use of the very expression, "in turn?" but "if a revelation be made to another." Since what need was there further, that when the second was moved to prophesy the first should speak? Ought they then both? Nay, this were profane and would produce confusion. Ought the first? This too were out of place. For to this end when the one was speaking, the Spirit moved the other, in order that he too might say somewhat.

So then, comforting him that had been silenced, he saith, "For ye all can prophesy one by one, that all may learn, and all may be comforted." Seest thou how again he states the reason wherefore he doeth all

things? For if him that speaks with tongues he altogether forbid to speak, when he hath not an interpreter, because of the unprofitableness; reasonably also he bids restrain prophecy, if it have not this quality, but createth confusion and disturbance and unseasonable tumult.

Ver. 32. "And the spirits of the prophets are subject to the prophets."

Seest thou how he put him to shame earnestly and fearfully? For that the man might not strive nor be factious, he signifies that the gift itself was under subjection. For by "spirit" here, he means its actual working. But if the spirit be subject, much more thou its possessor canst not justly be contentious.

Then he signifies that this is pleasing also to God, subjoining and saying,

Ver. 33. "For God is not a God of confusion, but of peace, as [I teach] in all the Churches of the saints."

Seest thou by how many reasons he leads him to silence and soothes him, in the act of giving way to the other? By one thing and that the chief, that he was not shut up by such a proceeding; "for ye all can prophesy," saith he, "one by one." By a second, that this seems good to the Spirit Himself; "for the spirits of the prophets are subject to the prophets." Besides these, that this is according to the mind of God; "for God," saith he, "is not a God of confusion, but of peace:" and by a fourth, that in every part of the world this custom prevails, and no strange thing is enjoined upon them. For thus, saith he, "I teach in all the Churches of the saints."

What now can be more awful than these things? For in truth the Church was a heaven then, the Spirit governing all things, and moving each one of the rulers and making him inspired. But now we retain only the symbols of those gifts. For now also we speak two or three, and in turn, and when one is silent, another begins. But these are only signs and memorials of those things. Wherefore when we begin to speak, the people respond, "with thy Spirit," indicating that of old they thus used to speak, not of their own wisdom, but moved by the Spirit. But not so now: (I speak of mine own case so far.) But the present Church is like a woman who hath fallen from her former prosperous days, and in many respects retains the symbols only of that ancient prosperity; displaying indeed the repositories and caskets of her golden ornaments, but bereft of her wealth: such an one doth the present Church resemble. And I say not this in respect of gifts: for it were nothing marvelous if it were this only: but in respect also of life and virtue. Thus the list of her widows, and the choir of her virgins, then gave great ornament to the churches: but now she is made desolate and void, and the tokens only remain. There are indeed widows now, there are also virgins; but they retain not that adornment which women should have who prepare themselves for such wrestlings. For the special distinction of the virgin is the caring for the things of God alone, and the waiting on Him without distraction: and the widow's mark too should be not so much the not engaging in a second marriage, as the other things, charity to the poor, hospitality, continuing instant in prayers, all those other things, which Paul writing to Timothy requires with great exactness. One may see also the married women exhibiting among us great seemliness. But this is not the only thing required, but rather that sedulous attention to the needy, through which those women of old shone out most brightly. Not as the generality now-a-days. For then instead of gold they were clothed with the fair array of almsgiving: but now, having left off this, they are decked out on every side with cords of gold woven of the chain of their sins.

Shall I speak of another repository too emptied of its hereditary splendor? They all met together in old time and sang psalms in common. This we do also now: but then among all was there one soul and one heart: but now not in one single soul can one see that unanimity, rather great is the warfare every where.

“Peace,” even now, “to all,” he that presides in the Church prays for, entering as it were into his Father’s house: but of this peace the name is frequent, but the reality no where.

Then the very houses were churches: but now the church itself is a house, or rather worse than any house. For in a house one may see much good order: since both the mistress of the house is seated on her chair with all seemliness, and the maidens weave in silence, and each of the domestics hath his appointed task in hand. But here great is the tumult, great the confusion, and our assemblies differ in nothing from a vintner’s shop, so loud is the laughter, so great the disturbance; as in baths, as in markets, the cry and tumult is universal. And these things are here only: since elsewhere it is not permitted even to address one’s neighbor in the church, not even if one have received back a long absent friend, but these things are done without, and very properly. For the church is no barber’s or perfumer’s shop, nor any other merchant’s warehouse in the market-place, but a place of angels, a place of archangels, a palace of God, heaven itself. As therefore if one had parted the heaven and had brought thee in thither, though thou shouldst see thy father or thy brother, thou wouldest not venture to speak; so neither here ought one to utter any other sound but these which are spiritual. For, in truth, the things in this place are also a heaven.

And if thou believest not, look to this table, call to mind for Whose sake it is set, and why: consider Who it is that is coming forth here; tremble with awe even before the time. For so, when one sees the throne only of a king, in heart he rises up, expecting the king’s coming forth. And do thou accordingly thrill with awe even before that thrilling moment: raise up thyself, and before thou seest the veils drawn aside and the choir of angels marching forth, ascend thou to the very heaven.

But the uninitiated knows not these things. Well then, it is necessary with a view to him also to introduce other topics. For neither towards him shall we want reasons able to stir him up thoroughly and cause him to soar.

Thou then who knowest not these things, when thou shalt hear the prophet saying, “Thus saith the Lord,” quit the earth, ascend thou also unto heaven, consider who it is that by him discourses with thee.

But as things are, for a buffoon who is moving laughter or for a whorish and abandoned woman, so vast an assemblage of spectators is set, listening in entire quietness to what is spoken, and this when none commands silence; and there is neither tumult, nor cry, nor any the least noise: but when God is speaking from heaven on subjects so awful, we behave ourselves more impudently than dogs, and even to the harlot women we pay greater respect than to God.

Doth it make your flesh creep to be told of these things? Nay then, much rather let it creep when ye do them.

That which Paul said of them that despised the poor and feasted alone, “What, have ye not houses to eat and to drink in? or despise ye the Church of God, and shame them that have not?” (1 Cor. xi. 22.)—

the same allow me also to say of those who make a disturbance and hold conversations in this place. "What? have ye not houses to trifle in? or despise ye the Church of God, and corrupt those even who would be modest and quiet?" "But it is sweet and pleasant for you to converse with your friends." I do not forbid this, but let it be done in the house, in the market, in the baths. For the church is not a place of conversation, but of teaching. But now it differs not from the market; nay, if it be not too bold a word, haply, not even from the stage; in such sort do the women who assemble here adorn themselves more wantonly than the unchaste who are to be found there. Accordingly we see that even hither many profligates are enticed by them; and if any one is trying or intending to corrupt a woman, there is no place, I suppose, that seems to him more suitable than the church. And if anything be to be sold or bought, the church appears more convenient than the market. For on such subjects also there is more talk here than in the shops themselves. Or if any wish to say or to hear any scandal, you will find that this too is to be had here more than in the forum without. And if you wish to hear any thing of political matters, or the affairs of private families, or the camp, go not to the judgment-hall, nor sit in the apothecary's shop; for here, here I say are those who report all these things more accurately; and our assemblies are any thing rather than a church.

Can it be that I have touched you to the quick? I for my part think not. For while ye continue in the same practices, how am I to know that you are touched by what hath been said? Therefore I must needs handle the same topics again.

Are these things then to be endured? Are these things to be borne? We weary and distract ourselves every day that ye may not depart without having learned something useful: and none of you go away at all the better, but rather injured the more. Yea, and "ye come together unto judgment," having no longer any cloak for your sin, and ye thrust out the more modest, disturbing them with your fooleries on every side.

But what do the multitude say? "I do not hear what is read," saith one, "nor do I know what the words are which are spoken." Because thou makest a tumult and confusion, because thou comest not with a reverent soul. What sayest thou? "I know not what things are said." Well then, for this very reason oughtest thou to give heed. But if not even the obscurity stir up thy soul, much more if things were clear wouldest thou hurry them by. Yea, this is the reason why neither all things are clear, lest thou shouldest indulge indolence; nor obscure, lest thou shouldest be in despair.

And whereas that eunuch and barbarian (Acts viii. 20.) said none of these things, but surrounded as he was with a crowd of so important affairs and on his journey, had a book in his hands and was reading: dost thou, both abounding in teachers, and having others to read to thee privately, allege to me thine excuses and pretexts? Knowest thou not what is said? Why then pray that thou mayest learn: but sure it is impossible to be ignorant of all things. For many things are of themselves evident and clear. And further, even if thou be ignorant of all, even so oughtest thou to be quiet, not to put out them that are attentive; that God, accepting thy quietness and thy reverence, may make the obscure things also plain. But canst thou not be silent? Well then, go out, not to become a mischief to others also.

For in truth there ought to be but one voice in the church always, even as there is but one body. Therefore both he that reads utters his voice alone, and the Bishop himself is content to sit in silence; and he who chants chants alone; and though all utter the response, the voice is wafted as from one

mouth. And he that pronounces a homily pronounces it alone. But when there are many conversing on many and diverse subjects, why do we disturb you for no good? since surely unless ye thought that we are but disturbing you for no good, ye would not in the midst of our speech on such high matters, discourse on things of no consequence.

Therefore not in your conduct only, but in your very estimation of things, there is great perversion. And ye gape after superfluities, and leaving the truth pursue all sorts of shadows and dreams. Are not all present things a shadow and dreams, and worse than a shadow? For both before they appear, they fly away; and before they are flown, the trouble they give is much, and more than the pleasure. Let one acquire in this world and bury in the earth ever such abundance of wealth, yet when the night is past, naked he shall depart hence, and no wonder. Since they too who are rich but in a dream, on rising from their couch have nothing of what they seemed to have while sleeping. So also are the greedy of gain: or rather not so, but in a much worse condition. For he that dreams of being rich, neither hath the money which he fancied he had, nor is any other mischief found to have accrued to him from this phantasy when he arises, but this man is both deprived of his riches, and hath also to depart, filled with the sins which arise out of them; and in his wealth having but enjoyed a phantasy, the evils resulting from his wealth he sees not in fancy any more, but in the very truth of things; and his pleasure was in dreams, but the punishment ensuing on his pleasure turns out no more a dream, but is matter of actual experience. Yea rather, even before that punishment, even here he pays the heaviest penalty, in the very collecting of his wealth wearing into himself innumerable sadnesses, anxieties, accusations, calumnies, tumults, perturbations.

In order therefore that we may be delivered both from the dreams and from the evils that are not in dreams, instead of covetousness let us choose almsgiving, instead of rapine, mercy to mankind. For thus we shall obtain the good things both present and to come, through the grace and mercy of our Lord Jesus Christ, with Whom, to the Father, with the Holy Ghost, be glory, power, honor, now and ever, and world without end. Amen.

Let your women keep silence in the churches: for it is not permitted unto them to speak; but let them be in subjection, as also saith the law. (1 Corinthians 14:34)

Having abated the disturbance both from the tongues and from the prophesyings; and having made a law to prevent confusion, that they who speak with tongues should do this in turn, and that they who prophesy should be silent when another begins; he next in course proceeds to the disorder which arose from the women, cutting off their unseasonable boldness of speech: and that very opportunely. For if to them that have the gifts it is not permitted to speak inconsiderately, nor when they will, and this, though they be moved by the Spirit; much less to those women who prate idly and to no purpose. Therefore he represses their babbling with much authority, and taking the law along with him, thus he sews up their mouths; not simply exhorting here or giving counsel, but even laying his commands on them vehemently, by the recitation of an ancient law on that subject. For having said, "Let your women keep silence in the churches;" and "it is not permitted unto them to speak, but let them be in subjection;" he added, "as also saith the law." And where doth the law say this? "Thy desire shall be to thy husband, and he shall rule over thee." (Gen. iii. 16.) Seest thou the wisdom of Paul, what kind of testimony he adduced, one that not only enjoins on them silence, but silence too with fear; and with as great fear as that wherewith a maid servant ought to keep herself quiet. Wherefore also having himself said, "it is not

permitted unto them to speak," he added not, "but to be silent," but instead of "to be silent," he set down what is more, to wit, "the being in subjection." And if this be so in respect of husbands, much more in respect of teachers, and fathers, and the general assembly of the Church. "But if they are not even to speak," saith one, "nor ask a question, to what end are they to be present?" That they may hear what they ought; but the points which are questioned let them learn at home from their husbands. Wherefore also he added,

Ver. 35. "And if they would learn any thing, let them ask their own husbands at home."

Thus, "not only, as it seems, are they not allowed to speak," saith he, "at random, but not even to ask any question in the church." Now if they ought not to ask questions, much more is their speaking at pleasure contrary to law. And what may be the cause of his setting them under so great subjection? Because the woman is in some sort a weaker being and easily carried away and light minded. Here you see why he set over them their husbands as teachers, for the benefit of both. For so he both rendered the women orderly, and the husbands he made anxious, as having to deliver to their wives very exactly what they heard.

Further, because they supposed this to be an ornament to them, I mean their speaking in public; again he brings round the discourse to the opposite point, saying, "For it is shameful for a woman to speak in the church." That is, first he made this out from the law of God, then from common reason and our received custom; even when he was discoursing with the women about long hair, he said, "Doth not even nature herself teach you?" (c. xi. 14.) And everywhere thou mayest find this to be his manner, not only from the divine Scriptures, but also from the common custom, to put them to shame.

But besides these things, he also shames them by consideration of what all agreed on, 223and what was every where prescribed; which topic also here he hath set down, saying,

Ver. 36. "What? was it from you that the word of God went forth? or came it unto you alone?"

Thus he brings in the other Churches also as holding this law, both abating the disturbance by consideration of the novelty of the thing, and by the general voice making his saying acceptable. Wherefore also elsewhere he said, "Who shall put you in remembrance of my ways which be in Christ, even as I teach everywhere in all the Churches." (1 Cor. iv. 17.) And again, "God is not a God of confusion, but of peace, as in all the Churches of the saints." (c. xiv. 33.) And here, "What? was it from you that the word of God went forth? or came it unto you alone?" i.e., "neither first, nor alone are ye believers, but the whole world." Which also writing to the Colossians he said, "even as it is bearing fruit and increasing in all the world," (Col. i. 6.) speaking of the Gospel.

But he turns it also at another time to the encouragement of his hearers; as when he saith that theirs were the first fruits, and were manifest unto all. Thus, writing to the Thessalonians he said, "For from you hath sounded forth the word of God," and, "in every place your faith to God-ward is gone forth." (1 Thess. i. 8.) And again to the Romans, "Your faith is proclaimed throughout the whole world." For both are apt to shame and stir up, as well the being commended of others, as that they have others partakers in their judgment. Wherefore also here he saith; "What? was it from you that the word of God went forth? or came it unto you only?" "For neither can ye say this," saith he; "we were made teachers to the rest, and it cannot be right for us to learn of others;" nor, "the faith remained in this place only, and no

precedents from other quarters ought to be received." Seest thou by how many arguments he put them to shame? He introduced the law, he signified the shamefulfulness of the thing, he brought forward the other Churches.

Next, what is strongest of all he puts last, saying, "God ordains these things even at this time by me."

Ver. 37. Thus: "if any man thinketh himself to be a prophet, or spiritual, let him take knowledge of the things which I write unto you that they are the commandments of the Lord."

Ver. 38. "But if any man is ignorant, let him be ignorant."

And wherefore did he add this? Intimating that he is not using violence nor contention, which is a sign of them who wish not to set up their own things, but aim at what is profitable to others. Wherefore also in another place he saith, "But if any man seemeth to be contentious, we have no such custom." (1 Cor. xi. 16.) But he doth not this everywhere, but only where the offences are not very great, and then rather as putting them to shame. Since when he discourses of other sins, he speaks not thus. But how? "Be not deceived: neither fornicators, nor effeminate, shall inherit the kingdom of God." (1 Cor. vi. 9, 10.) And again, "Behold, I Paul say unto you, that if ye receive circumcision, Christ will profit you nothing." (Gal. v. 2.) But here, since his discourse was of silence, he doth not very keenly inveigh against them, by this very thing attracting them the more. Then, as he is ever wont to do, unto the former subject whence he digressed to say these things, he brings back his discourse as follows:

Ver. 39. "Wherefore, brethren, desire earnestly to prophesy, and forbid not to speak with tongues."

For this too is his wont, not only to work out what is before him, but also starting from that to set right whatever seems to him in any way akin to it, and again to return to the former, so as not to appear to wander from the subject. For so when he was discoursing of their concord in their banquets, he digressed to their Communion in the Mysteries, and having thence put them to shame, he returns again to the former, saying, "Wherefore, when ye come together to eat, wait one for another." (1 Cor. xi. 33.)

And here, accordingly, having discoursed of good order in their gifts, and of its being a duty neither to faint in the lesser, nor to be puffed up on account of the greater; then having made an excursion from thence to the sobriety becoming women and having established it, he returns again to his subject, saying, "Wherefore, brethren, desire earnestly to prophesy, and forbid not to speak with tongues." Seest thou how to the end he preserved the difference of these? And how he signifies that the one is very necessary, the other not so? Wherefore of the one he saith, "desire earnestly," but of the other, "forbid not."

Then, as in brief summary, setting all things right, he adds the words,

Ver. 40. "Let all things be done decently and in order."

Again giving a blow to them who chose to behave themselves unseemly without cause, and to incur the imputation of madness; and who keep not their proper rank. For nothing doth so build up as good order, as peace, as love; even as their contraries tend to pull down. And not only in things spiritual, but also in all others one may observe this. Thus whether it be in a dance, or a ship, or in a chariot, or a camp, if

thou shouldest confound the order, and casting the greater out of their proper place, shouldest bring in the lesser into their rank, thou destroyest all, and thus things are turned upside down. Neither let us then destroy our order, nor place the head below and the feet above: now this is done when we cast down right reason, and set our lusts, passions, and pleasure, over the rational part: whence violent are the billows, and great the confusion, and intolerable the tempest, all things being wrapt in darkness.

And, if thou wilt, let us first examine the unseemliness which arises herefrom, and then the loss. How then may this be clear to us, and thoroughly known? Let us bring forward a man in that frame of mind; enamoured of a harlot and overcome by a dishonorable passion; and then we shall see the mockery which this comes to. For what can be baser than a man watching the doors before the harlots' chambers, and beaten by a whorish woman, and weeping, and lamenting, and turning his glory into shame? And if thou wilt also see the loss, call to mind, I pray, the expenditure of money, the extreme risks, the contests with rival lovers, the wounds, the stripes received in such affrays.

Such also are they who are holden by the lust of wealth; or rather they behave themselves more unseemly. For whereas these are wholly occupied about one person; the covetous busy themselves about all men's substance alike, both poor and rich, and long for things that are not; a thing which above all denotes the wildness of their passion. For they say not, "I would fain have the substance of such a person or of such another," only, but they want the very mountains to be gold, and the houses and all that they see; and they go forth into another world, and this passion they feel to a boundless degree, and at no point cease from their lusting. What discourse can set before us the tempest of those thoughts, the waves, the darkness? And where the waves and tempest are so great, what pleasure can there be? There is not any; but tumult, and anguish, and black clouds which instead of rain bring great sorrow of heart: the kind of thing which is wont to happen in the case of those who are enamoured of beauty not their own. Wherefore they who have no passionate love at all are in more pleasure than any lovers.

[5.] This however no man would gainsay. But to me even he who loves, but restrains his passion, seems to live more pleasurably than he who continually enjoys his mistress. For though the proof be rather difficult, nevertheless even at that disadvantage the argument must be ventured on: the cause of the increased difficulty not being the nature of the thing, but because of the want of meet hearers for this high morality. Thus: whether is it pleasanter, tell me, to the lover, to be despised by his beloved, or to be honored, and to look down upon her? Evidently the latter. Whom then, tell me, will the harlot value more? Him that is a slave to her and is already led captive at her will, or him that is above her nets and soareth higher than her arrows? Every one must see, the latter. And about whom will she take more thought, the fallen, or him that is not yet so? Him that is not yet so, of course. And which will be more an object of desire, he who is subdued, or he who is not yet taken? He who up to this time is not yet taken. And if ye disbelieve it, I will produce my proof from what takes place within yourselves. As thus: of which woman would a man be more enamored; one that easily submits and gives herself up to him, or one that denies, and gives him trouble? Evidently of this last; since hereby the longing is more vehemently kindled. Of course then in the woman's case also exactly the same thing will happen. And him will they honor and admire more who looks down upon them. But if this be true, so likewise is the other, that he enjoys greater pleasure who is more honored and beloved. Since the general too lets alone the city that hath been once taken, but that which stands out and maintains the struggle he besets with all diligence:

and the hunter, when the animal is caught, keeps it shut up in darkness as the harlot doth her lover, but pursues that which flies from him.

But I shall be told, “the one enjoys his desire, the other not so.” But freedom from disgrace, and from being a slave under her tyrannical commands, the not being led and dragged about by her as a drudge, beaten, spit upon, pitched head foremost; dost thou consider this to be a small pleasure, tell me? Nay, if one would accurately examine these things, and were able to gather into one their insults, complaints, everlasting quarrels, some arising from their tempers, others from their wantonness, their enmities, and all the rest, such as they only that feel them know;—he will find that there is no war but hath more truces than this wretched life of theirs. What pleasure then meanest thou, tell me? The temporary and brief enjoyment of intercourse? But this speedily doth strife overtake, and storms, and rage, and the same madness again.

And these things have been said by us, as one would speak discoursing with licentious youths, who do not very patiently submit to hear our discourses of the kingdom and of hell.

And now that we are bringing forward these topics also, it is not even possible to say how great is the pleasure of the continent; if one frame in one’s own mind his crowns, his rewards, his converse with the angels, the proclaiming of him before the world, his boldness, those blessed and immortal hopes of his.

“But intercourse hath a certain pleasure:” for this they are continually repeating: “while the continent continually suffers pain contending with the tyranny of nature.” Nay, but one shall find just the contrary result. For this violence and tumult is present with the unchaste rather: there being in his body a violent tempest, and no sea in a storm so grievously vexed as he; never withstanding his passion, but ever receiving blows from it; as the possessed and they that are continually rent in the midst by evil spirits. Whereas the temperate like a noble champion continually giving blows to it, reaps the best of pleasures, and sweeter than ten thousand of that kind; and this victory and his good conscience, and those illustrious trophies, are ornaments for him continually to deck himself withal.

As to the other, if after his intercourse he hath a little respite, it must be counted nothing. For again the storm comes on, and again there are waves. But he that commands himself doth not suffer this tumult to lay hold of him at all, nor the sea to arise, nor the wild beast to roar. And even if he endure some violence in restraining such an impulse, yet so doth the other also, continually receiving blows and stabs, and unable to endure the sting: and it is like as if there were a wild horse furious and struggling, and one should check with the bridle, and hold him in with all skill: while another giving him the rein to escape the trouble, were dragged along by him and carried hither and thither.

If I have spoken these things more plainly than is becoming, let no man blame me. For I desire not to make a brave show by a gravity of words, but to make my hearers grave.

Therefore also the prophets spare no such words, wishing to extirpate the licentiousness of the Jews, but do even more nakedly inveigh against them than we do now in the things we have spoken. For so a physician wishing to remove an ulcer doth not consider how he may keep his hands clean, but how he may rid the patient of the ulcer; and he who would raise on high the lowly, first makes himself lowly; and he who seeks to slay the conspirator stains himself with blood as well as the other, and this makes him the more brilliant. Since if one were to see a soldier returning from the war, stained with gore and

blood and brains, he will not loathe him nor turn from him on this account, but will even admire him the more. So then let us do, when we see any one returning, covered with blood after the slaughter of his evil desire, let us the more admire him and become partakers of his battle and victory, and say to those who indulge this wild love, "show us the pleasure you derive from lust; for the continent hath that which comes of his victory, but thou none from any quarter. But if ye should mention that which is connected with the criminal act, yet the other is more manifest and satisfactory. For thou hast from the enjoyment something brief and hardly apparent; but he from his conscience, hath both a greater and an enduring and a sweeter joy. The company of a woman hath surely no such power as self-command, to preserve the soul undisturbed and give it wings."

Well then: the continent man, as I said, thus evidently makes his pleasure out to us: but in thy case I see the dejection arising from defeat, but the pleasure, desiring to see, I find not. For what dost thou consider the moment of pleasure? That before the criminal action? Nay, it is not so, for it is a time of madness and delirium and frenzy: to grind the teeth and be beside one's self is not any pleasure: and if it were pleasure, it would not produce the same effects on you which they who are in pain endure. For they who strike with their fists and are stricken grind their teeth, and women in travail distracted with pains do the same. So that this is no pleasure, but frenzy rather, and confusion, and tumult. Shall we say then, the time after the action? Nay, neither is this. For neither could we say that a woman just delivered is in pleasure, but in release from certain pains. But this is by no means pleasure, but weakness rather and falling away: and there is a great difference between these two. What then is the time of pleasure, tell me? There is none. But if there be any, it is so brief as not even to be apparent. At least, having zealously sought in a great many ways to detect and apprehend it, we have not been able. But the time of the chaste man's pleasure is not such, rather it is wider and evident to all. Or rather, all his life is in pleasure, his conscience crowned, the waves laid, no disturbance from any quarter arising within him.

Since then this man's life is more in pleasure, while the life spent in love of pleasure is in dejection and disquiets; let us flee from licentiousness, let us keep hold on continence, that we may also obtain the good things to come, through the grace and mercy, &c., &c.