

1 Corinthians 1:26-27

by St. John Chrysostom

God chooses the foolish things of the world to put to shame the wise and to demonstrate the power and wisdom of God.

Scripture: 1 Kings 19:10, Jeremiah 1:5, John 1:13, John 16:12, 1 Corinthians 1:28-30, 2 Corinthians 5:21, 2 Corinthians 12:9

Topics: "Gods Wisdom", "Christian Humility"

Description

John Chrysostom preaches about the divine wisdom in choosing the foolish and weak to shame the wise and strong, emphasizing the power of God's foolishness over human wisdom. He highlights the ancient prophecy of God's plan to confound the wise and the strong, showing the ineffable power and wisdom of the Cross. Chrysostom points out the humility and submission required to fully surrender to God's wisdom, as seen in the disciples' simple faith and obedience. He challenges the Corinthians to boast only in the Lord, acknowledging that true wisdom, righteousness, sanctification, and redemption come from Christ alone.

Transcript

For behold your calling, brethren, that not many wise men after the flesh, not many mighty, not many noble, [are called;] but God chose the foolish things of the world, that he might put to shame them that are wise.

He has said that the foolishness of God is wiser than men; he has showed that human wisdom is cast out, both by the testimony of the Scriptures and by the issue of events; by the testimony, where he says, I will destroy the wisdom of the wise; by the event, putting his argument in the form of a question, and saying, Where is the wise? Where the Scribe? Again; he proved at the same time that the thing is not new, but ancient, as it was presignified and foretold from the beginning. For, It is written, says he, I will destroy the wisdom of the wise. Withal he shows that it was neither inexpedient nor unaccountable for things to take this course: (for, seeing that in the wisdom of God the world, says he, knew not God, God was well pleased through the foolishness of preaching to save them which believe:) and that the Cross is a demonstration of ineffable power and wisdom, and that the foolishness of God is far mightier than the wisdom of man. And this again he proves not by means of the teachers, but by means of the disciples themselves. For, Behold your calling, says he: that not only teachers of an untrained sort, but disciples also of the like class, were objects of His choice; that He chose not many wise men (that is his word)

according to the flesh. And so that of which he is speaking is proved to surpass both in strength and wisdom, in that it convinces both the many and the unwise: it being extremely hard to convince an ignorant person, especially when the discourse is concerning great and necessary things. However, they did work conviction. And of this he calls the Corinthians themselves as witnesses. For, behold your calling, brethren, says he: consider; examine: for that doctrines so wise, yea, wiser than all, should be received by ordinary men, testifies the greatest wisdom in the teacher.

2. But what means, according to the flesh? According to what is in sight; according to the life that now is; according to the discipline of the Gentiles. Then, lest he should seem to be at variance with himself, (for he had convinced both the Proconsul, Acts 13:12 and the Areopagite, Acts 17:34 and Apollos; Acts 18:26: through Aquila and Priscilla and other wise men, too, we have seen coming over to the Gospel;) he said not, No wise man, but, Not many wise men. For he did not designedly (■ποκεκληρωμ■νως) call the ignorant and pass by the wise, but these also he received, yet the others in much larger number. And why? Because the wise man according to the flesh is full of extreme folly; and it is he who especially answers to the term foolish, when he will not cast away his corrupt doctrine. And as in the case of a physician who might wish to teach certain persons the secrets of his art, those who know a few things, having a bad and perverse mode of practicing the art which they make a point of retaining, would not endure to learn quietly, but they who knew nothing would most readily embrace what was said: even so it was here. The unlearned were more open to conviction, for they were free from the extreme madness of accounting themselves wise. For indeed the excess of folly is in these more than any, these, I say, who commit unto reasoning things which cannot be ascertained except by faith. Thus, suppose the smith by means of the tongs drawing out the red-hot iron; if any one should insist on doing it with his hand, we should vote him guilty of extreme folly: so in like manner the philosophers who insisted on finding out these things for themselves disparaged the faith. And it was owing to this that they found none of the things they sought for.

Not many mighty, not many noble; for these also are filled with pride. And nothing is so useless towards an accurate knowledge of God as arrogance, and being nailed down (προσηλ■σθαι) to wealth: for these dispose a man to admire things present, and make no account of the future; and they stop up the ears through the multitude of cares: but the foolish things of the world God chose: which thing is the greatest sign of victory, that they were uneducated by whom He conquers. For the Greeks feel not so much shame when they are defeated by means of the wise, but are then confounded, when they see the artisan and the sort of person one meets in the market more of a philosopher than themselves. Wherefore also he said himself, That He might put to shame the wise. And not in this instance alone has he done this, also in the case of the other advantages of life. For, to proceed, the weak things of the world He chose that He might put to shame the strong. For not unlearned persons only, but needy also, and contemptible and obscure He called, that He might humble those who were in high places.

1 Corinthians 1:28

And the base things of the world, and the things that are despised, and the things that are not, that he might bring to naught the things that are. Now what does He call things that are not? Those persons who are considered to be nothing because of their great insignificance. Thus has He shown forth His great power, casting down the great by those who seem to be nothing. The same elsewhere he thus expresses, 2 Corinthians 12:9 For my strength is made perfect in weakness. For a great power it is, to teach outcasts and such as never applied themselves to any branch of learning, how all at once to discourse wisely on the things which are above the heavens. For suppose a physician, an orator, or any one else: we then

most admire him, when he convinces and instructs those completely uneducated. Now, if to instil into an uneducated man the rules of art be a very wonderful thing, much more things which pertain to so high philosophy.

3. But not for the wonders sake only, neither to show His own power, has He done this, but to check also the arrogant. And therefore he both said before, That he might confound the wise and the strong, that He might bring to nought the things which are, and here again,

1 Corinthians 1:29

That no flesh should glory in the presence of God. For God does all things to this end, to repress vainglory and pride, to pull down boasting. Do you, too, says he, employ yourselves in that work. He does all, that we may put nothing to our own account; that we may ascribe all unto God. And have you given yourselves over unto this person or to that? And what pardon will you obtain?

For God Himself has shown that it is not possible we should be saved only by ourselves: and this He did from the beginning. For neither then could men be saved by themselves; but it required their compassing the beauty of the heaven, and the extent of the earth, and the mass of creation besides; if so they might be led by the hand to the great artificer of all the works. And He did this, repressing beforehand the self-conceit which was after to arise. Just as if a master who had given his scholar charge to follow wheresoever he might lead, when he sees him forestalling, and desiring to learn all things of himself, should permit him to go quite astray; and when he has proved him incompetent to acquire the knowledge, should thereupon at length introduce to him what himself has to teach: so God also commanded in the beginning to trace Him by the idea which the creation gives; but since they would not, He, after showing by the experiment that they are not sufficient for themselves, conducts them again unto Him by another way.

He gave for a tablet, the world; but the philosophers studied not in those things, neither were willing to obey Him, nor to approach unto Him by that way which Himself commanded. He introduces another way more evident than the former; one that might bring conviction that man is not of himself alone sufficient unto himself. For then scruples of reasoning might be started, and the Gentile wisdom employed, on their part whom He through the creation was leading by the hand; but now, unless a man become a fool, that is, unless he dismiss all reasoning and all wisdom, and deliver up himself unto the faith, it is impossible to be saved.

You see that besides making the way easy, he has rooted up hereby no trifling disease, namely, in forbidding to boast, and have high thoughts: that no flesh should glory: for hence came the sin, that men insisted on being wiser than the laws of God; not willing so to obtain knowledge as He had enacted: and therefore they did not obtain it at all. So also was it from the beginning. He said to Adam, Do such a thing, and such another you must not do. He, as thinking to find out something more, disobeyed; and even what he had, he lost.

He spoke unto those that came after, Rest not in the creature; but by means of it contemplate the Creator. They, forsooth, as if making out something wiser than what had been commanded, set in motion windings innumerable. Hence they kept dashing against themselves and one another, and neither found God, nor concerning the creature had any distinct knowledge; nor had any meet and true opinion about it. Wherefore again, with a very high hand, (■κ πολλο■ το■ περ■οντος) lowering their conceit.

He admitted the uneducated first, showing thereby that all men need the wisdom from above. And not only in the matter of knowledge, but also in all other things, both men and all other creatures He has constituted so as to be in great need of Him; that they might have this also as a most forcible motive of submission and attachment, lest turning away they should perish. For this cause He did not suffer them to be sufficient unto themselves. For if even now many, for all their indigency, despise Him, were the case not so, whither would they not have wandered in haughtiness? So that He stayed them from boasting as they did, not from any grudge to them, but to draw them away from the destruction thence ensuing.

1 Corinthians 1:30-31

4. But of Him are you in Christ Jesus, who was made unto us wisdom from God, and righteousness, and sanctification, and redemption.

The expression of Him, I suppose he uses here, not of our introduction into being, but with reference to the faith: that is, to our having become children of God, not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh. John 1:13 Think not then, that having taken away our glorying, He left us so: for there is another, a greater glorying, His gift. For you are the children of Him in whose presence it is not meet to glory, having become so through Christ. And since he has said, The foolish things of the world He chose, and the base, he signifies that they are nobler than all, having God for their Father. And of this nobility of ours, not this person or that, but Christ is the cause, having made us wise, and righteous, and holy. For so mean the words, He was made unto us wisdom.

Who then is wiser than we are who have not the wisdom of Plato, but Christ Himself, God having so willed.

But what means, of God? Whenever he speaks great things concerning the Only-Begotten, he adds mention of the Father, lest any one should think that the Son is unbegotten. Since therefore he had affirmed His power to be so great, and had referred the whole unto the Son, saying that He had become wisdom unto us, and righteousness, and sanctification and redemption; -- through the Son again referring the whole to the Father, he says, of God.

But why said he not, He has made us wise, but was made unto us wisdom? To show the copiousness of the gift. As if he had said, He gave unto us Himself. And observe how he goes on in order. For first He made us wise by delivering from error, and then righteous and holy, by giving us the Spirit; and He has so delivered us from all our evils as to be of Him, and this is not meant to express communication of being, (ο■σ■σ■εωζ) but is spoken concerning the faith. Elsewhere we find him saying, We were made righteousness in Him; in these words, Him who knew no sin He made to be sin for us that we might be made the righteousness of God in Him; 2 Corinthians 5:21 but now he says, He has been made righteousness unto us; so that whosoever will may partake plentifully. For it is not this man or that who has made us wise, but Christ. He that glories, therefore, let him glory in Him, not in such or such an one. From Christ have proceeded all things. Wherefore, having said, Who was made unto us wisdom, and righteousness, and sanctification, and redemption, he added, that, according as it is written, he that glories, let him glory in the Lord.

For this cause also he had vehemently inveighed against the wisdom of the Greeks, to teach men this lesson, (το■το α■τ■ Savile; το■τ■ α■τ■ Bened.) and no other: that (as indeed is no more than just) they should boast themselves in the Lord. For when of ourselves we seek the things which are above us, nothing is more foolish, nothing weaker than we are. In such case, a tongue well whetted we may have; but stability of doctrine we cannot have. Rather, reasonings, being alone, are like the webs of spider. For

unto such a point of madness have some advanced as to say that there is nothing real in the whole of being: yea, they maintain positively that all things are contrary to what appears.

Say not therefore that anything is from yourself, but in all things glory in God. Impute unto no man anything at any time. For if unto Paul nothing ought to be imputed much less unto any others. For, says he, 1 Corinthians 3:6 I planted, Apollos watered, but God gave the increase. He that has learned to make his boast in the Lord, will never be elated, but will be moderate at all times, and thankful under all circumstances. But not such is the mind of the Greeks; they refer all to themselves; wherefore even of men they make gods. In so great shame has desperate arrogance plunged them. (■ξετραχ■λισεν)

5. It is time then, in what remains, to go forth to battle against these. Recollect where we left our discourse on the former day. We were saying that it was not possible according to human cause and effect that fishermen should get the better of philosophers. But nevertheless it became possible: from whence it is clear that by grace it became so. We were saying that it was not possible for them even to conceive such great exploits: and we showed that they not only conceived, but brought them to a conclusion with great ease. Let us handle, today, the same head of our argument: viz. From whence did it enter their thoughts to expect to overcome the world, unless they had seen Christ after He was risen? What? Were they beside themselves, to reckon upon any such thing inconsiderately and at random? For it goes even beyond all madness, to look, without Divine grace, for success in so great an undertaking. How did they succeed in it, if they were insane and frenzied? But if they were in their sober senses, as indeed the events showed, how, but on receiving credible pledges from the heavens and enjoying the influence which is from above, did they undertake to go forth to so great wars, and to make their venture against earth and sea, and to strip and stand their ground so nobly, for a change in the customs of the whole world which had been so long time fixed, they being but twelve men?

And, what is more, what made them expect to convince their hearers, by inviting them to heaven and the mansions above? Even had they been brought up in honor, and wealth, and power, and erudition, not even so would it have been at all likely that they should be roused to so burthensome an undertaking. However, there would have been somewhat more of reason in their expectation. But as the case now stands, some of them had been occupied about lakes, some about hides, some about the customs: than which pursuits nothing is more unprofitable towards philosophy, and the persuading men to have high imaginations: and especially when one has no example to show. Nay, they had not only no examples to make their success likely, but they had examples against all likelihood of success, and those within their own doors. (■ναυλα) For many for attempting innovations had been utterly extinguished, I say not among the Greeks, for all that was nothing, but among the Jews themselves at that very time; who not with twelve men, but with great numbers had applied themselves to the work. Thus both Theudas and Judas, having great bodies of men, perished together with their disciples. And the fear arising from their examples was enough to control these, had they not been strongly persuaded that victory without divine power was out of the question.

Yea, even if they did expect to prevail, with what sort of hopes undertook they such great dangers, except they had an eye to the world to come? But let us suppose that they hoped for no less than victory; what did they expect to gain from the bringing all men unto Him, who is not risen again, as you say? For if now, men who believe concerning the kingdom of heaven and blessings unnumbered with reluctance encounter dangers, how could they have undergone so many for nothing, yea rather, for evil? For if the things which were done did not take place, if Christ did not ascend into heaven; surely in their obstinate zeal to invent these things, and convince all the world of them, they were offending God, and must expect ten thousand

thunderbolts from on high.

6. Or, in another point of view; if they had felt this great zeal while Christ was living, yet on His death they would have let it go out. For He would have seemed to them, had He not risen, as a sort of deceiver and pretender. Do you not know that armies while the general and king is alive, even though they be weak, keep together; but when those in such office have departed, however strong they may be, they are broken up?

Tell me then, what were the enticing arguments whereupon they acted, when about to take hold of the Gospel, and to go forth unto all the world? Was there any kind of impediment wanting to restrain them? If they had been mad, (for I will not cease repeating it,) they could not have succeeded at all; for no one follows the advice of madmen. But if they succeeded as in truth they did succeed, and the event proves, then none so wise as they. Now if none were so wise as they, it is quite plain, they would not lightly have entered upon the preaching. Had they not seen Him after He was risen, what was there sufficient to draw them out unto this war? What which would not have turned them away from it? He said to them, After three days I will rise again, and He made promises concerning the kingdom of heaven. He said, they should master the whole world, after they had received the Holy Spirit; and ten thousand other things besides these, surpassing all nature. So that if none of these things had come to pass, although they believed in Him while alive, after His death they would not have believed in Him, unless they had seen Him after He was risen. For they have said, 'After three days,' He said, 'I will rise again,' and He has not arisen. He promised that He would give the Spirit, and He has not sent Him. How then shall His sayings about the other world find credit with us, when His sayings about this are tried and found wanting?

And why, if He rose not again, did they preach that He was risen? Because they loved Him, you will say. But surely, it was likely that they would hate Him afterwards, for deceiving and betraying them; and because, having lifted them up with innumerable hopes, and divorced them from house, and parents, and all things, and set in hostility against them the entire nation of Jews, He had betrayed them after all. And if indeed the thing were of weakness, they might have pardoned it; but now it would be deemed a result of exceeding malice. For He ought to have spoken the truth, and not have promised heaven, being a mortal man, as you say. So that the very opposite was the likely line for them to take; to proclaim the deception, and declare Him a pretender and imposter. Thus again would they have been rid of all their perils; thus have put an end to the war. Moreover, seeing that the Jews gave money unto the soldiers to say that they stole the body, if the disciples had come forward and said, We stole Him, He is not risen again, what honor would they not have enjoyed? Thus it was in their power to be honored, nay, crowned. Why then did they for insults and dangers barter away these things, if it was not some Divine power which influenced them, and proved mightier than all these?

7. But if we do not yet convince, take this also into consideration; that had this not been so, though they were ever so well disposed, they would not have preached this Gospel in His name, but would have treated Him with abhorrence. For you know that not even the names of those who deceive us in this sort are we willing to hear. But for what reason preached they also His name? Expecting to gain the mastery through Him? Truly the contrary was natural for them to expect; that even if they had been on the point of prevailing they were ruining themselves by bringing forward the name of a deceiver. But if they wished to throw into the shade former events, their line was to be silent; at any rate, to contend for them earnestly was to excite more and more both of serious hostility and of ridicule. From whence then did it enter their thoughts to invent such things? I say, invent: for what they had heard, they had forgotten. But if, when there was no fear, they forgot many things, and some did not even understand, (as also the Evangelist

himself says,) now that so great a danger came upon them, how could it be otherwise than that all should fleet away from them? Why speak I of words? When even their love towards their Master Himself began gradually to fade away, through fear of what was coming: wherewith also He upbraided them. For since, before this, they hung upon him, and were asking continually, Where are You going, but afterwards on His drawing out His discourse to so great length, and declaring the terrors which at the very time of the Cross, and after the Cross should befall them, they just continued speechless and frozen through fear -- hear how He alleges to them this very point saying, None of you asks Me, Where are You going? But because I have said these things unto you, sorrow has filled your heart. John 16:5-6 Now if the expectation that He would die and rise again was such a grief to them, had they failed to see Him after He was risen, how could it be less than annihilation? Yea, they would have been fain to sink into the depths of the earth, what with dejection at being so deceived, and what with dread of the future, feeling themselves sorely straightened.

Again: from whence came their high doctrines? For the higher points, He said, they should hear afterwards. For, says He, John 16:12 I have many things to speak unto you, but you cannot bear them now. So that the things not spoken were higher. And one of the disciples was not even willing to depart with Him into Judea, when he heard of dangers, but said, Let us also go that we may die with Him, John 11:16 taking it hardly because he expected that he should die. Now if that disciple, while he was with Him, expected to die and shrunk back on that account, what must he not have expected afterwards, when parted from Him and the other disciples, and when the exposure of their shameless conduct was so complete?

8. Besides, what had they to say when they went forth? For the passion indeed all the world knew: for He had been hanged on high, upon the frame of wood, (■κρ■ου) and in mid-day, and in a chief city, and at a principal feast and that from which it was least permitted that any should be absent. But the resurrection no man saw of those who were without: which was no small impediment to them in working conviction. Again, that He was buried, was the common talk of all: and that His disciples stole His body, the soldiers and all the Jews declared: but that He had risen again, no one of them who were without knew by sight. Upon what ground then did they expect to convince the world? For if, while miracles were taking place, certain soldiers were persuaded to testify the contrary, upon what ground did these expect without miracles to do the work of preachers, and without having a farthing to convince land and sea concerning the resurrection? Again, if through desire of glory they attempted this, so much the rather would they have ascribed doctrines each one to himself, and not to Him that was dead and gone. Will it be said, men would not have believed them? And which of the two was the likelier, being preached, to win their belief? He that was apprehended and crucified, or those who had escaped the hands of the Jews?

9. Next, tell me with what view were they to take such a course? They did not immediately, leaving Judæa, go into the Gentile cities, but went up and down within its limit. But how, unless they worked miracles, did they convince? For if such they really wrought, (and work them they did,) it was the result of God's power. If on the other hand they wrought none and prevailed, much more wonderful was the event. Knew they not the Jews-- tell me -- and their evil practice, and their soul full of grudgings? For they stoned even Moses, Numbers 14:10, comp. Exodus 17:4 after the sea which they had crossed on foot; after the victory, and that marvellous trophy which they raised without blood, by means of his hands, over the Egyptians who had enslaved them; after the manna; after the rocks, and the fountains of rivers which break out thence; after ten thousand miracles in the land of Egypt and the Red Sea and the wilderness. Jeremiah they cast into a pit, and many of the prophets they slew. Hear, for example, what says Elias, after that fearful

famine, and the marvellous rain, and the torch which he brought down from heaven, and the strange holocaust; driven, as he was, to the very extreme edge of their country: Lord, your prophets they have killed, your altars they have dug down, and I am left alone, and they seek my life. 1 Kings 19:10 Yet were not those (who were so persecuted) disturbing any of the established rules. Tell me then, what ground had men for attending to these of whom we are speaking? For, on one hand, they were meaner persons than any of the prophets; on the other, they were introducing just such novelties as had caused the Jews to nail even their Master to the Cross.

And in another way, too, it seemed less unaccountable for Christ to utter such things than for them; for He, they might suppose, acted thus to acquire glory for himself; but these they would have hated even the more, as waging war with them in behalf of another.

10. But did the laws of the Romans help them? Nay, by these they were more involved in difficulties. For their language was, John 19:12 Whosoever makes himself a king is not Cæsar's friend. So that this alone was a sufficient impediment to them, that of Him who was accounted an usurper they were first disciples, and afterwards desirous to strengthen His cause. What in the world then set them upon rushing into such great dangers? And by what statements about Him would they be likely to gain credit? That He was crucified? That He was born of a poor Jewish woman who had been betrothed to a Jewish carpenter? That He was of a nation hated by the world? Nay, all these things were enough not only to fail of persuading and attracting the hearers, but also to disgust every one; and especially when affirmed by the tent-maker and the fisherman. Would not the disciples then bear all these things in mind? Timid nature can imagine more than the reality, and such were their natures. Upon what ground then did they hope to succeed? Nay, rather, they had no hope, there being things innumerable to draw them aside, if so be that Christ had not risen. Is it not quite plain even unto most thoughtless that unless they had enjoyed a copious and mighty grace, and had received pledges of the resurrection, they would have been unable, I say not, to do and undertake these things, but even so much as to have them in their minds? For if when there were so great hinderances, in the way of their planning, I say not of their succeeding, they yet both planned and brought to effect and accomplishing things greater than all expectation, every one, I suppose, can see that not by human power but by divine grace they wrought things.

Now these arguments we ought to practice, not by ourselves only, but one with another; and thus also the discovery of what remains will be easier to us.

11. And do not, because you are an artisan, suppose that this sort of exercise is out of your province; for even Paul was a tent-maker.

Yes, says some one, but at that time he was also filled with abundant grace, and out of that he spoke all things Well; but before this grace, he was at the feet of Gamaliel; yea, moreover, and he received the grace, because of this, that he showed a mind worthy of the grace; and after these things he again put his hand to his craft. Let no one, therefore, of those who have trades be ashamed; but those, who are brought up to nothing and are idle, who employ many attendants, and are served by an immense retinue. For to be supported by continual hard work is a sort of asceticism. (φιλοσοφία?δος comp. Hooker, E. P. V. lxxii. 18.) The souls of such men are clearer, and their minds better strung. For the man who has nothing to do is apter to say many things at random, and do many things at random; and he is busy all day long about nothing, a huge lethargy taking him up entirely. But he that is employed will not lightly entertain in himself any thing useless, in deeds, in words, or in thoughts; for his whole soul is altogether intent upon his laborious way of livelihood. Let us not therefore despise those who support themselves by the labor of

their own hands; but let us rather call them happy on this account. For tell me, what thanks are due unto you, when after having received your portion from your father, you go on not in any calling, but lavishing away the whole of it at random? Do you not know that we shall not all have to render the same account, but those who have enjoyed greater licence here a more exact one; those who were afflicted with labor, or poverty, or any thing else of this kind, one not so severe? And this is plain from Lazarus and the rich man. For as thou, for neglecting the right use of the leisure, art justly accused; so the poor man, who having full employment has spent his remnant of time upon right objects, great will be the crowns which he shall receive. But do you urge that a soldier's duties should at least excuse you; and do you charge them with your want of leisure? The excuse cannot be founded in reason. For Cornelius was a centurion, yet in no way did the soldier's belt impair his strict rule of life. But you, when you are keeping holiday with dancers and players, and making entire waste of your life upon the stage, never thinkest of excusing yourself from such engagements by the necessity of military service or the fear of rulers: but when it is the Church to which we call you, then occur these endless impediments.

And what will you say in the day, when you see the flame, and the rivers of fire, and the chains never to be broken; and shall hear the gnashing of teeth? Who shall stand up for you in that day, when you shall see him that has labored with his own hand and has lived uprightly, enjoying all glory; but yourself, who art now in soft raiment and redolent of perfumes, in incurable woe? What good will your wealth and superfluity do you? And the artisan -- what harm will his poverty do him?

Therefore that we may not suffer then, let us fear what is said now, and let all our time be spent in employment on things which are really indispensable. For so, having propitiated God in regard of our past sins, and adding good deeds for the future, we shall be able to attain unto the kingdom of heaven: through the favor and loving-kindness, etc., etc.

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