

2 Corinthians 1:23

by St. John Chrysostom

St. John Chrysostom's sermon on 2 Corinthians 1:23 emphasizes Paul's deep love and concern for the Corinthians, advocating for their joy and spiritual restoration over harsh rebuke.

Scripture: 2 Corinthians 12:20

Topics: "True Repentance", "Christian Obedience"

Description

John Chrysostom preaches about the importance of true repentance and forgiveness, highlighting the need for sincere contrition, humility, and a change of heart. He emphasizes the power of confession, self-reflection, and continuous mourning over one's sins as essential components of genuine repentance. Chrysostom urges believers to not only fast and perform outward acts of penance but to also focus on abstaining from evil, showing mercy, and defending the oppressed. He warns against the dangers of despair, self-righteousness, and the cunning devices of Satan, encouraging a life of obedience, love, and gratitude towards God.

Transcript

But I call God for a witness upon my soul, that to spare you I forbare to come unto Corinth.

What do you say, O blessed Paul? To spare them you came not to Corinth? Surely you present us with something of a contradiction. For a little above you said that you therefore came not, because you purpose not according to the flesh nor art your own master, but art led about every where by the authority of the Spirit, and set forth your afflictions. But here you say it was your own act that you came not, and not from the authority of the Spirit; for he says, To spare you I forbare to come to Corinth. What then is one to say? Either, that this too was itself of the Spirit, and that he himself wished to come but the Spirit suggested to him not to do so, urging the motive of sparing them; or else, that he is speaking of some other coming, and would signify that before he wrote the former Epistle he was minded to come, and for love's sake restrained himself lest he should find them yet unamended. Perhaps also, after the second Epistle though the Spirit no longer forbade him to go, he involuntarily stayed away for this reason. And this suspicion is the more probable, that in the first instance the Spirit forbade him: but afterwards upon his own conviction also that this was more advisable, he stayed away.

And observe, I pray you, how he remembers again his own custom, (which I shall never cease to observe,) of making what seems against him tell in his favor. For since it was natural for them to respect this and say, 'It was because you hated us, you would not come unto us,' he shows on the contrary, that

the cause for which he would not come was that he loved them.

What is the expression, to spare you? I heard, he says, that some among you had committed fornication; I would not therefore come and make you sorry: for had I come, I must needs have enquired into the matter, and prosecuted and punished, and exacted justice from many. I judged it then better to be away and to give opportunity for repentance, than to be with you and to prosecute, and be still more incensed. For towards the end of this Epistle he has plainly declared it, saying, I fear lest when I come, my God should humble me before you, and that I should mourn for many of them that have sinned heretofore, and repented not of the lasciviousness and uncleanness which they committed. 2 Corinthians 12:20-21 This therefore here also he intimates, and he says it indeed as in his own defense; yet rebukes them most severely and puts them in fear; for he implied that they were open to punishment, and will also have somewhat to suffer, unless they be quickly reformed. And he says the same thing again at the end of the Epistle thus; If I come again, I will not spare. 2 Corinthians 13:2 Only there he says it more plainly: but here, as it was the proem, he does not say it so but in a repressed tone; nor is he content even with this, but he softens it down, applying a corrective. For seeing the expression was that of one asserting great authority, (for a man spares those whom he has also power to punish,) in order to relieve it, and draw a shade over what seems harsh, he says,

2 Corinthians 1:24

Not for that we have lordship over your faith.

That is, I did not therefore say, To spare you I came not, as lording it over you. Again, he said not you, but your faith, which was at once gentler and truer. For him that has no mind to believe, who has power to compel?

But are helpers of your joy.

For since, says he, your joy is ours, I came not, that I might not plunge you into sorrow and increase my own despondency; but I stayed away that you being reformed by the threat might be made glad. For we do every thing in order to your joy, and give diligence in this behalf, because we are ourselves partakers of it. For by faith you stand.

Behold him again speaking repressedly. For he was afraid to rebuke them again; since he had handled them severely in the former Epistle, and they had made some reformation. And if, now that they were reformed, they again received the same reproof, this was likely to throw them back. Whence this Epistle is much gentler than the former.

2 Corinthians 1:25

But I determined for myself that I would not come again to you with sorrow.

The expression again proves that he had already been made sorry from thence, and while he seems to be speaking in his own defense he covertly rebukes them. Now if they had both already made him sorry and were about again to make him sorry, consider how great the displeasure was likely to be. But he says not thus, 'You made me sorry,' but turns the expression differently yet implying the very same thing thus, 'For this cause I came not that I might not make you sorry:' which has the same force as what I said, but is more palatable.

2 Corinthians 2:1-2

2. For if I make you sorry, who then is he that makes me glad, but he that is made sorry by me?

What is this consequence? A very just one indeed. For observe, I would not, he says, come unto you, lest I should increase your sorrow, rebuking, showing anger and disgust. Then seeing that even this was strong and implied accusation that they so lived as to make Paul sorry, he applies a corrective in the words, For if I make you sorry, who then is he that makes me glad, but he that is made sorry by me?

What he says is of this kind. 'Even though I were to be in sorrow, being compelled to rebuke you and to see you sorry, still nevertheless this very thing would have made me glad. For this is a proof of the greatest love, that you hold me in such esteem as to be hurt at my being displeased with you.'

Behold too his prudence. Their doing what all disciples do, namely, smarting and feeling it when rebuked, he produces as an instance of their gratifying him; for, says he, 'No man makes me so glad as he that gives heed to my words, and is sorry when he sees me angry.'

Yet what followed naturally was to say, 'For if I make you sorry, who then is he that can make you glad?' But he does not say this, but turns his speech back again, dealing tenderly with them, and says, 'Though I make you sorry, even herein you bestow on me a very great favor in that you are hurt at what I say.'

2 Corinthians 2:3

And I wrote this very thing unto you.

What? That for this cause I came not, to spare you. When wrote he? In the former Epistle when he said, I do not wish to see you now by the way? 1 Corinthians 16:7 I think not; but in this Epistle when he said, Lest when I come again, my God should humble me before you. 2 Corinthians 12:21 I have written then towards the end this same, says he, lest when I come, my God will humble me, and I should mourn for many of them that have sinned heretofore.

But why did you write? Lest when I came I should have sorrow from them of whom I ought to rejoice, having confidence in you all, that my joy is the joy of you all? For whereas he said he was made glad by their sorrow, and this was too arrogant and harsh, again he gave it a different turn and softened it by what he subjoined. For, he says, I therefore wrote to you before, that I might not with anguish find you unreformed; and I said this, lest I should have sorrow, out of regard not to my own interest but yours. For I know that if you see me rejoicing you rejoice, and if you behold me sad you are sad. Observe therefore again the connection of what he said; for so his words will be more easy to understand. I came not, he says, lest I should cause you sorrow when finding you unreformed. And this I did, not studying my own advantage, but yours. For as to myself, when you are made sorry I receive no little pleasure, seeing that you care so much about me as to be sorry and distressed at my being displeased. For who is he that makes me glad, but he that is made sorry by me. However, though it be so with myself, yet because I study your advantage, I wrote this same thing to you that I might not be made sorry, herein also again studying not my advantage, but yours; for I know, that were ye to see me sad, you also would be sorry; as also you are glad when you see me rejoicing. Observe now his prudence. He said, I came not, that I might not make you sorry; although, says he, this makes me glad. Then, lest he should seem to take pleasure in their pain, he says, In this respect I am glad inasmuch as I make you feel, for in another respect I am sorry in that I am compelled to make those sorry who love me so much, not only by this rebuke, but also by

being myself in sorrow and by this means causing you fresh sorrow.

But observe how he puts this so as to mingle praise; saying, from them of whom I ought to rejoice, for these are the words of one testifying kindred and much tender affection; as if one were speaking of sons on whom he had bestowed many benefits and for whom he had toiled. If then for this I write and come not; it is with weighty meaning I come not, and not because I feel hate or aversion, but rather exceeding love.

3. Next, whereas he said, he that makes me sorry makes me glad; lest they should say 'this then is what you study, that you might be made glad and might exhibit to all the extent of your power;' he added,

2 Corinthians 2:4

For out of much affliction and anguish of heart I wrote to you with many tears, not that you should be made sorry, but that you might know the love which I have more abundantly unto you.

What more tenderly affectioned than this man's spirit is? For he shows himself to have been not less pained than they who had sinned, but even much more. For he says not out of affliction merely, but out of much, nor with tears, but with many tears and anguish of heart, that is, I was suffocated, I was choked with despondency; and when I could no longer endure the cloud of despondency, I wrote to you: not that you should be grieved, but that you might know the love, says he, which I have more abundantly unto you. And yet what naturally followed was to say, not that you might be grieved, but that you might be corrected: (for indeed with this purpose he wrote.) This however he does not say, but, (more to sweeten his words, and win them to a greater affection,) he puts this for it, showing that he does all from love. And he says not simply the love, but which I have more abundantly unto you. For hereby also he desires to win them, by showing that he loves them more than all and feels towards them as to chosen disciples. Whence he says, Even if I be not an Apostle unto others, yet at least I am to you; 1 Corinthians 9:2 and, Though you have many tutors, yet have ye not many fathers; 1 Corinthians 4:15 and again, By the grace of God we behaved ourselves in the world, and more abundantly to you ward; 2 Corinthians 1:12 and farther on, Though the more abundantly I love you, the less I be loved; and here Which I have more abundantly unto you; 2 Corinthians 12:15 So that if my words were full of anger, yet out of much love and sadness was the anger; and while writing the Epistle, I suffered, I was pained, not because ye had sinned only, but also because I was compelled to make you sorry. And this itself was out of love. Just as a father whose legitimate son is afflicted with a gangrene, being compelled to use the knife and cautery, is pained on both accounts, that he is diseased and that he is compelled to use the knife to him. So that what ye consider a sign of hating you was indeed a sign of excessive love. And if to have made you sorry was out of love, much more my gladness at that sorrow.

4. Having made this defense of himself, (for he frequently defends himself, without being ashamed; for if God does so, saying, O My people, what have I done unto you? Micah 6:3 much more might Paul,) having, I say, made this defense of himself, and being now about to pass on to the plea for him who had committed fornication, in order that they might not be distracted as at receiving contradictory commands, nor take to cavilling because he it was who both then was angry and was now commanding to forgive him, see how he provided for this beforehand, both by what he has said and what he is going to say. For what says he?

2 Corinthians 2:5

But if any has caused sorrow, he has caused sorrow not to me.

Having first praised them as feeling joy and sorrow for the same things as himself, he then strikes into the subject of this person, having said first, my joy is the joy of you all. But if my joy is the joy of you all, need is that you should also now feel pleasure with me, as you then were pained with me: for both in that you were made sorry, you made me glad; and now in that you rejoice, (if as I suppose you shall feel pleasure,) ye will do the same. He said not, my sorrow is the sorrow of you all; but having established this in the rest of what he said, he has now put forward that only which he most desired, namely, the joy: saying, my joy is the joy of you all. Then, he makes mention also of the former matter, saying,

But if any has caused sorrow he has caused sorrow not to me, but in part (that I press not too heavily) to you all.

I know, he says, that you shared in my anger and indignation against him that had committed fornication, and that what had taken place grieved in part all of you. And therefore said I in part, not as though you were less hurt than I, but that I might not weigh down him that had committed fornication. He did not then grieve me only but you also equally, even though to spare him I said, in part. Do you see how at once he moderated their anger, by declaring that they shared also in his indignation.

2 Corinthians 2:6

Sufficient to such a one is this punishment which was inflicted by the many.

And he says not to him that has committed fornication, but here again to such a one, as also in the former Epistle. Not however for the same reason; but there out of shame, here out of mercy. Wherefore he now where subsequently so much as mentions the crime; for it was time now to excuse.

2 Corinthians 2:7

So that contrariwise ye should rather forgive him and comfort him, lest by any means such a one should be swallowed up with his overmuch sorrow.

He bids them not only take off the censure; but, besides, restores him to his former estate; for if one let go him that has been scourged and heal him not, he has done nothing. And see how him too he keeps down lest he should be rendered worse by the forgiveness. For though he had both confessed and repented, he makes it manifest that he obtains remission not so much by his penitence as by this free gift. Wherefore he says, to forgive him and to comfort him, and what follows again makes the same thing plain. 'For' says he, 'it is not because he is worthy, not because he has shown sufficient penitence; but because he is weak, it is for this I request it.' Whence also he added, lest by any means such a one should be swallowed up with overmuch sorrow. And this is both as testifying to his deep repentance and as not allowing him to fall into despair.

But what means this, swallowed up? Either doing as Judas did, or even in living becoming worse. For, says he, if he should rush away from longer enduring the anguish of this lengthened censure, perchance also despairing he will either come to hang himself, or fall into greater crimes afterwards. One ought then to take steps beforehand, lest the sore become too hard to deal with; and lest what we have well done we lose by want of moderation.

Now this he said, (as I have already observed,) both to keep him low, and to teach him not to be over-listless after this restoration. For, not as one who has washed all quite away; but as fearing lest he should work anything of deeper mischief, I have received him, he says. Whence we learn that we must

determine the penance, not only by the nature of the sins, but by the disposition and habit of them that sin. As the Apostle did in that instance. For he feared his weakness, and therefore said, lest he be swallowed up, as though by a wild beast, by a storm, by a billow.

2 Corinthians 2:8

Wherefore I beseech you.

He no longer commands but beseeches, not as a teacher but as an equal; and having seated them on the judgment seat he placed himself in the rank of an advocate; for having succeeded in his object, for joy he adopts without restraint the tone of supplication. And what can it be that you beseech? Tell me.

To confirm your love toward him.

That is, 'make it strong,' not simply have intercourse with him, nor any how. Herein, again, he bears testimony to their virtue as very great; since they who were so friendly and so applauded him as even to be puffed up, were so estranged that Paul takes such pains to make them confirm their love towards him. Herein is excellence of disciples, herein excellence of teachers; that they should so obey the rein, he so manage their motions. If this were so even now, they who sin would not have transgressed senselessly. For one ought neither to love carelessly, nor to be estranged without some reason.

2 Corinthians 2:9

5. For to this end also did I write to you, that I might know the proof of you, whether you are obedient in all things; not only in cutting off but also in reuniting. Do you see how here again he brings the danger to their doors. For as when he sinned, he alarmed their minds, except they should cut him off, saying, A little leaven leavens the whole lump, 1 Corinthians 5:6 and several other things; so here too again he confronts them with the fear of disobedience, as good as saying, 'As then ye had to consult not for him, but for yourselves too, so now must ye not less for yourselves than for him; lest ye seem to be of such as love contention and have not human sensibilities, and not to be in all things obedient. And hence he says, For to this end also did I write to you, that I might know the proof of you, whether you are obedient in all things.

For the former instance might have seemed to proceed even of envy and malice, but this shows very especially the obedience to be pure, and whether you are apt unto loving kindness. For this is the test of right minded disciples; if they obey not only when ordered to do certain things, but when the contrary also. Therefore he said, in all things, showing that if they disobey, they disgrace not him so much as themselves, earning the character of lovers of contention; and he does this that hence also he may drive them to obey. Whence also he says, For to this end did I write to you; and yet he wrote not for this end, but he says so in order to win them. For the leading object was the salvation of that person. But where it does no harm, he also gratifies them. And by saying, In all things, he again praises them, recalling to memory and bringing forth to view their former obedience.

2 Corinthians 2:10

To whom you forgive any thing, I forgive also.

Do you see how again he assigns the second part to himself, showing them as beginning, himself following. This is the way to soften an exasperated, to compose a contentious spirit. Then lest he should make them careless, as though they were arbiters, and they should refuse forgiveness; he again

constrains them unto this, saying, that himself also had forgiven him.

For what I also have forgiven, if I have forgiven any thing, for your sakes have I forgiven it. For, this very thing I have done for your sakes, he says. And as when he commanded them to cut him off, he left not with them the power to forgive, saying, I have judged already to deliver such an one unto Satan, 1 Corinthians 5:3-5 and again made them partners in his decision saying, ye being gathered together to deliver him, (ib. 4, 5.) (thereby securing two most important things, viz., that the sentence should be passed; yet not without their consent, lest herein he might seem to hurt them;) and neither himself alone pronounces it, lest they should consider him self-willed, and themselves to be overlooked, nor yet leaves all to them, lest when possessed of the power they should deal treacherously with the offender by unseasonably forgiving him: so also does he here, saying, 'I have already forgiven, who in the former Epistle had already judged.' Then lest they should be hurt, as though overlooked, he adds, for your sakes. What then? Did he for men's sake pardon? No; for on this account he added, In the person of Christ.

What is in the person of Christ? Either he means according to [the will of] God, or unto the glory of Christ.

2 Corinthians 2:11

That no advantage may be gained over us by Satan: for we are not ignorant of his devices.

Do you see how he both commits the power to them and again takes away that by that he may soften them, by this eradicate their self will. But this is not all that he provides for by this, but shows also that should they be disobedient the harm would reach to all, just as he did at the outset also. For then too he said, A little leaven leavens the whole lump. 1 Corinthians 5:6 And here again, Lest Satan should get an advantage of us. And throughout, he makes this forgiveness the joint act of himself and them.

Consider it from the first. But if any, says he, have caused sorrow he has caused sorrow not to me, but in part (that I press not too heavily) to you all. Then again, Sufficient to such a one is this punishment which was inflicted by the many. This is his own decision and opinion. He rested not however with this decision, but again makes them partners saying, So that contrariwise ye should rather forgive him and comfort him. Wherefore I beseech you to confirm your love towards him.

Having thus again made the whole their act, he passes to his own authority, saying, For to this end did I write unto you, that I might know the proof of you, whether you are obedient in all things. Then, again, he makes the favor theirs, saying, To whom you forgive anything. Then, his own, I forgive also: saying, if I have forgiven anything, it is for your sakes. Then both theirs and his, For, says he, if I have forgiven any thing, for your sakes forgave I it in the person of Christ, either [that is] for the glory of Christ, or as though Christ commanding this also, which was most effectual to prevail with them.

For after this they would have feared not to grant that which tended to His glory and which He willed. Then again he signifies the common harm should they disobey, when he says, Lest Satan should get an advantage of us; well naming it, getting advantage. For he no more takes his own, but violently seizes ours, for he is reformed. And tell me not that this one only becomes the wild beast's prey, but consider this also, that the number of the herd is diminished, and now especially when it might recover what it had lost.

For we are not ignorant of his devices, That he destroys even under the show of piety. For not only by leading into fornication can he destroy, but even by the contrary, the unmeasured sorrow following on the repentance for it. When then besides his own he takes ours too, when both by bidding to sin, he destroys;

and when we bid repent, violently seizes; how is not this case getting advantage ? For he is not content with striking down by sin, but even by repentance he does this except we be vigilant.

Wherefore also with reason did he call it getting advantage, when he even conquers our own weapons. For to take by sin is his proper work; by repentance, however, is no more his; for ours, not his, is that weapon. When then even by this he is able to take, think how disgraceful the defeat, how he will laugh at and run us down as weak and pitiful, if he is to subdue us with our own weapons. For it were matter for exceeding scorn and of the last disgrace, that he should inflict wounds on us through our own remedies. Therefore he said, for we are not ignorant of his devices, exposing his versatility, his craftiness, his evil devices, his malice, his capacity to injure under a show of piety.

6. These things then having in mind, let us too never despise any one; nor ever, though we fall into sin, despair; on the other hand, again, let us not be easy-minded afterwards, but, when we transgress, afflict our minds and not merely give vent to words. For I know many who say indeed that they bewail their sins, but do nothing of account. They fast and wear rough garments; but after money are more eager than hucksters, are more the prey of anger than wild beasts, and take more pleasure in detraction than others do in commendations. These things are not repentance, these things are the semblance and shadow only of repentance, not repentance itself. Wherefore in the case of these persons too it is well to say, Take heed lest Satan should get an advantage of us, for we are not ignorant of his devices; for some he destroys through sins, others through repentance; but these in yet another way, by suffering them to gain no fruit from repentance. For when he found not how he might destroy them by direct [attack,] he came another road, heightening their toils, while robbing them of the fruits, and persuading them, as if they had successfully accomplished all they had to do, therefore to be neglectful of what remains.

That we may not then fruitlessly afflict ourselves, let us address a few words to women of this character; for to women this disorder especially belongs. Praiseworthy indeed is even that which now ye do, your fasting and lying on the ground and ashes; but except the rest be added, these are of no avail. God has showed how He remits sins. Why then forsaking that path, do ye carve another for yourselves. In old time the Ninevites sinned, and they did the things which you too now are doing. Let us see however what it was that availed them. For as in the case of the sick, physicians apply many remedies; howbeit the man of understanding regards not that the sick person has tried this and that, but what was of service to him; such must be also our inquiry here. What then was it that availed those barbarians? They applied fasting unto the wounds, yea applied extreme fasting, lying on the ground too, putting on of sackcloth, and ashes, and lamentations; they applied also a change of life. Let us then see which of these things made them whole. And whence, says one, shall we know? If we come to the Physician, if we ask Him: for He will not hide it from us, but will even eagerly disclose it. Rather that none may be ignorant, nor need to ask, He has even set down in writing the medicine that restored them. What then is this? God, says He, saw that they turned every one from his evil way, and He repented of the evil that He had said He would do unto them. Jonah 3:10 He said not, He saw [their] fasting and sackcloth and ashes. And I say not this to overturn fasting, (God forbid!) but to exhort you that with fasting ye do that which is better than fasting, the abstaining from all evil. David also sinned. 2 Samuel 12:17, etc. Let us see then how he too repented. Three days he sat on ashes. But this he did not for the sin's sake, but for the child's, being as yet stupefied with that affliction. But the sin by other means did he wipe away, by humbleness, contrition of heart, compunction of soul, by falling into the like no more, by remembering it always, by bearing thankfully every thing that befalls him, by sparing those that grieve him, by forbearing to requite those who conspire against him; yea, even preventing those who desire to do this. For instance, when Shimei was bespattering him with reproaches

without number 2 Samuel 16:5-9 and the captain who was with him was greatly indignant, he said, Let him curse me, for the Lord has bidden him: for he had a contrite and humbled heart, and it was this especially which wiped away his sins. For this is confession, this is repentance. But if while we fast we are proud, we have been not only nothing profited but even injured.

7. Humble then your heart, thou too, that you may draw God unto you. For the Lord is near unto them that are of a contrite heart. Psalm 33:19 Do you see not in the gorgeous houses those who are in disgrace; how they answer not again when even the lower servants insult them, but put up with it because of the disgrace with which their fault has surrounded them? So do thou too: and if any one revile you, wax not fierce, but groan, not for the insult, but for that sin which cast you into disgrace. Groan when you have sinned, not because you are to be punished, (for this is nothing,) but because you have offended your Master, one so gentle, one so kind, one that so loves you and longs for your salvation as to have given even His Son for you. For this groan, and do this continually: for this is confession. Be not today cheerful, tomorrow of a sad countenance, then again cheerful; but continue ever in mourning and self contrition. For, Blessed, says he, are they that mourn, that is, that do this perpetually. Continue then to do this perpetually, and to take heed to yourself, and to afflict your heart; as one who had lost a beloved son might mourn. Rend, says he, your hearts, and not your garments. Joel 2:13 That which is rent will not lift itself on high; that which has been broken cannot rise up again. Hence one says, Rend, and another, a broken and a contrite heart God will not despise. Psalm 51:17 Yea, though thou be wise, or wealthy, or a ruler, rend your heart. Suffer it not to have high thoughts nor to be inflated. For that which is rent is not inflated, and even if there be something to make it rise, from being rent it cannot retain the inflation. So also do thou be humble-minded. Consider that the publican was justified by one word, although that was not humiliation, but a true confession. Now if this has power so great, how much more humiliation. Remit offenses to those who have transgressed against you, for this too remits sins. And concerning the former He says, I saw that he went sorrowful, and I healed his ways; Isaiah 57:17-18; Septuagint and in Ahab's case, this appeased the wrath of God: 1 Kings 21:29 concerning the latter, Remit, and it shall be remitted unto you. There is also again another way which brings us this medicine; condemning what we have done amiss; for, Declare first your transgressions, that you may be justified. Isaiah 43:26. Septuagint And for one in afflictions to give thanks looses his sins; and almsgiving, which is greater than all.

Reckon up therefore the medicines which heal your wounds, and apply all unremittingly, humbleness, confession, forgetting wrongs, giving thanks in afflictions, showing mercy both in alms and actions, persevering in prayer. So did the widow propitiate the cruel and unyielding judge. And if she the unjust, much more thou the gentle. There is yet another way along with these, defending the oppressed; for, He says, judge the fatherless, and plead for the widow; and come, and let us reason together, and though your sins be as scarlet, I will make them white as snow. Isaiah 1:17-18 What excuse then can we deserve if with so many ways leading us up to heaven, and so many medicines to heal our wounds, even after the Laver we continue where we were. Let us then not only continue so, but let those indeed who have never yet fallen abide in their proper loveliness; yea, rather let them cultivate it more and more, (for these good works, where they find not sins, make the beauty greater:) and let us who in many things have done amiss, in order to the correction of our sins use the means mentioned: that we may stand at the tribunal of Christ with much boldness, whereunto may all we attain through the grace and love towards men of our Lord Jesus Christ, with Whom to the Father, together with the Holy Spirit, be glory, and power, and honor, now and ever, world without end. Amen.

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