

Homily 7 on Romans

by St. John Chrysostom

St. John Chrysostom's homily emphasizes that all are under sin and that justification comes solely through faith in Christ, apart from the Law.

Scripture: Matthew 6:33, Matthew 19:29, Luke 17:10, Romans 3:28, Romans 3:31

Topics: "Faith And Justification", "Christian Charity"

Description

John Chrysostom preaches about the importance of faith in justification, emphasizing that both Jews and Gentiles are justified by faith without the deeds of the Law. He highlights the need to trust in God's righteousness, witnessed by the Law and the Prophets, and to understand that faith does not nullify the Law but rather establishes it. Chrysostom urges believers to show charity through good deeds, such as helping the needy, caring for the sick, and rejoicing with others. He warns against the dangers of envy and grudging, emphasizing the need to love one another as Christ loved us, shedding His blood even for His enemies.

Transcript

Rom. III. 9-18

What then have we more than they? For we have proved both Jews and Gentiles, that they are all under sin. As it is written, There is none righteous, no, not one: there is none that understands, there is none that seeks after God. They are all gone out of the way, they are together become unprofitable; there is none that does good, no not one. Their throat is an open sepulchre; with their tongues have they used deceit; the poison of asps is under their lips; whose mouth is full of cursing and bitterness: their feet are swift to shed blood: destruction and misery are in their ways: and the way of peace have they not known: there is no fear of God before their eyes.

He had accused the Gentiles, he had accused the Jews; it came next in order to mention the righteousness which is by faith. For if the law of nature availed not, and the written Law was of no advantage, but both weighed down those that used them not aright, and made it plain that they were worthy of greater punishment, then after this the salvation which is by grace was necessary. Speak then of it, O Paul, and display it. But as yet he does not venture, as having an eye to the violence of the Jews, and so turns afresh to his accusation of them; and first he brings in as accuser, David speaking of the same things at length, which Isaiah mentioned all in short compass, so furnishing a strong curb for them, so that they might not bound off, nor any of his hearers, while the matters of faith were laid open to them, might

after this start away; being beforehand safely held down by the accusations of the prophets. For there are three excesses which the prophet lays down; he says that all of them together did evil, and that they did not do good indifferently with evil, but that they followed after wickedness alone, and followed it also with all earnestness. And next that they should not say, What then, if these things were said to others? he goes on:

Ver. 19. Now we know that whatever things the Law says, it says to them who are under the Law.

This then is why, next to Isaiah, who confessedly aimed at them, he brought in David; that he might show that these things also belonged to the same subject. For what need was there, he means, that a prophet who was sent for your correction should accuse other people. For neither was the Law given to any else than you. And for what reason did he not say, we know that whatever things the prophet says, but whatever things the Law says? It is because Paul uses to call the whole Old Testament the Law. And in another place he says, Do ye not hear the Law, that Abraham had two sons? Galatians 4:21-22 And here he calls the Psalm the Law when he says, We know that whatever things the Law says, it says to them who are under the Law. Next he shows that neither are these things he said merely for accusation's sake, but that he may again be paving the way for faith. So close is the relationship of the Old Testament with the New, since even the accusations and reproofs were entirely with a view to this, that the door of faith might open brightly upon them that hear it. For since it was the principal bane of the Jews that they were so conceited with themselves (which thing he mentioned as he went on, how that being ignorant of the righteousness of God, and going about to establish their own righteousness, they submitted not themselves to the righteousness of God) Romans 10:3, the Law and the Prophet by being beforehand with them cast down their high thoughts, and laid low their conceit, that being brought to a consideration of their own sins, and having emptied out the whole of their unreasonableness, and seen themselves in danger of the last extremity, they might with much earnestness run unto Him Who offered them the remission of their sins, and accept grace through faith. And this it is then which St. Paul hints even here, when he says,

Now we know that whatever things the Law says, it says to them who are under the Law, that every mouth may be stopped, and all the world may become guilty before God.

Here then he exhibits them as destitute of the boldness of speech which comes of works, and only using a parade of words and behaving in a barefaced way. And this is why he uses so literal an expression, saying, that every mouth may be stopped, so pointing out the barefaced and almost uncontrollable pomposity of their language, and that their tongue was now curbed in the strictest sense. For as an unsupportable torrent, so had it been borne along. But the prophet stopped it. And when Paul says, that every mouth may be stopped, what he means is, not that the reason of their sinning was that their mouth might be stopped, but that the reason of their being reprov'd was that they might not commit this very sin in ignorance. And all the world may become guilty before God. He does not say the Jew, but the whole of mankind. For the phrase, that every mouth may be stopped, is the language of a person hinting at them, although he has not stated it clearly, so as to prevent the language being too harsh. But the words that all the world may become guilty before God, are spoken at once both of Jews and of Greeks. Now this is no slight thing with a view to take down their unreasonableness. Since even here they have no advantage over the Gentiles, but are alike given up as far as salvation is concerned. For he would be in strict propriety called a guilty person, who cannot help himself to any excuse, but needs the assistance of another: and such was the plight of all of us, in that we had lost the things pertaining to salvation.

Ver. 20. For by the Law is the knowledge of sin.

He springs upon the Law again, with forbearance however (for what he says is not an accusation of it, but of the listlessness of the Jews). Yet nevertheless he has been earnest here with a view (as he was going to introduce his discourse about faith) to show its utter feebleness. For if you boast in the Law, he means, it puts you to the greater shame: it solemnly parades forth your sins before you. Only he does not word it in this harsh way, but again in a subdued tone; For by the Law is the knowledge of sin. And so the punishment is greater, but that because of the Jew. For the Law accomplished the disclosure of sin to you, but it was your duty then to flee it. Since then you have not fled you have pulled the punishment more sorely on yourself, and the good deed of the Law has been made to you a supply of greater vengeance. Now then having added to their fear, he next brings in the things of grace, as having brought them to a strong desire of the remission of their sins, and says,

Ver. 21. But now the righteousness of God without the Law is manifested.

Here he utters a great thing, and such as needed much proof. For if they that lived in the Law not only did not escape punishment, but were even the more weighed down thereby, how without the Law is it possible not only to escape vengeance, but even to be justified? For he has here set down two high points, the being justified, and the obtaining these blessings, without the Law. And this is why he does not say righteousness simply, but the righteousness of God, so by the worthiness of the Person displaying the greater degree of the grace, and the possibility of the promise. For to Him all things are possible. And he does not say, was given, but is manifested, so cutting away the accusation of novelty. For that which is manifested, is so as being old, but concealed. And it is not this only, but the sequel that shows that this is no recent thing. For after saying, is manifested, he proceeds:

Being witnessed by the Law and the Prophets.

Do not be troubled, he means, because it has but now been given, nor be affrighted as though at a thing new and strange. For of old both the Law and the Prophets foretold it. And some passages he has pointed out in the course of this argument, and some he will shortly, having in what came before brought in Habakkuk as saying, the just shall live by faith Romans 1:17, but in what comes after, Abraham and David, as themselves also conversing with us about these things. Now the regard they had for these persons was great, for one was a patriarch and a prophet, and the other a king and a prophet: and further the promises about these things had come to both of them. And this is why Matthew in the first beginning of his Gospel mentions both of these first, and then brings forward in order the forefathers. For after saying, the Book of the Generation of Jesus Christ Matthew 1:1, he does not wait after Abraham to name Isaac also and Jacob, but mentions David along with (5 manuscripts after) Abraham. And what is wonderful indeed is, that he has even set David before Abraham speaking on this wise, the Son of David, the Son of Abraham, and then begins the catalogue of Isaac and Jacob, and all the rest in order. And this is why the Apostle here keeps presenting them in turns, and speaks of the righteousness of God being witnessed by the Law and the Prophets. Then that no one should say, How are we to be saved without contributing anything at all to the object in view? He shows that we also offer no small matter toward this, I mean our faith. Therefore after saying, the righteousness of God, he adds straightway, by faith unto all and upon all that believe.

Here again the Jew is alarmed by his not having anything better than the rest, and being numbered with the whole world. Now that he may not feel this, he again lowers him with fear by adding, For there is no

difference, for all have sinned. For tell me not that it is such and such a Greek, such and such a Scythian, such and such a Thracian, for all are in the same plight. For even if you have received the Law, one thing alone is there which you have learned from the Law -- to know sin, not to flee from it. Next, that they may say, even if we have sinned, still it is not in the same way that they did, he added, and have come short of the glory of God. So that even if you have not done the same sins as others, still you are alike bereft of the glory, since you belong to those who have offended, and he that has offended belongs not to such as are glorified, but to such as are put to shame. Yet, be not afraid: for the reason of my saying this was not that I might thrust you into despair, but that I might show the love of the Lord (Δεσπ[■]του) toward man: and so he goes on;

Ver. 24, 25. Being justified freely by His grace through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus: Whom God has set forth to be a propitiation through faith in His blood, to declare His righteousness.

See by how many proofs he makes good what was said. First, from the worthiness of the person, for it is not a man who does these things, that He should be too weak for it, but God all-powerful. For it is to God, he says, that the righteousness belongs. Again, from the Law and the Prophets. For you need not be afraid at hearing the without the Law, inasmuch as the Law itself approves this. Thirdly, from the sacrifices under the old dispensation. For it was on this ground that he said, In His blood, to call to their minds those sheep and calves. For if the sacrifices of things without reason, he means, cleared from sin, much more would this blood. And he does not say barely λυτρ[■]σεως, but [■]πολυτρ[■]σεως, entire redemption, to show that we should come no more into such slavery. And for this same reason he calls it a propitiation, to show that if the type had such force, much more would the reality display the same. But to show again that it was no novel thing or recent, he says, fore-ordained (Auth. Version marg.); and by saying God fore-ordained, and showing that the good deed is the Father's, he shows it to be the Son's also. For the Father fore-ordained, but Christ in His own blood wrought the whole aright.

To declare His righteousness. What is declaring of righteousness? Like the declaring of His riches, not only for Him to be rich Himself, but also to make others rich, or of life, not only that He is Himself living, but also that He makes the dead to live; and of His power, not only that He is Himself powerful, but also that He makes the feeble powerful. So also is the declaring of His righteousness not only that He is Himself righteous, but that He does also make them that are filled with the putrefying sores (κατασαπ[■]ντας) of sin suddenly righteous. And it is to explain this, viz. what is declaring, that he has added, That He might be just, and the justifier of him which believes in Jesus. Doubt not then: for it is not of works, but of faith: and shun not the righteousness of God, for it is a blessing in two ways; because it is easy, and also open to all men. And be not abashed and shamefaced. For if He Himself openly declares ([■]νδε[■]κνυται) Himself to do so, and He, so to say, finds a delight and a pride therein, how do you come to be dejected and to hide your face at what your Master glories in? Now then after raising his hearers expectations by saying that what had taken place was a declaring of the righteousness of God, he next by fear urges him on that is tardy and remissful about coming; by speaking as follows:

On account of the relaxing of sins that were before. Do you see how often he keeps reminding them of their transgressions? Before, he did it by saying, through the Law is the knowledge of sin; and after by saying, that all have sinned, but here in yet stronger language. For he does not say for the sins, but, for the relaxing, that is, the deadness. For there was no longer any hope of recovering health, but as the paralyzed body needed the hand from above, so does the soul which has been deadened. And what is indeed worse, a thing which he sets down as a charge, and points out that it is a greater accusation. Now what is this? That the last state was incurred in the forbearance of God. For you cannot plead, he means,

that you have not enjoyed much forbearance and goodness. But the words at this time are those of one who is pointing out the greatness of the power (Sav. forbearance) and love toward man. For after we had given all over, (he would say,) and it were time to sentence us, and the evils were waxed great and the sins were in their full, then He displayed His own power, that you might learn how great is the abundancy of righteousness with Him. For this, had it taken place at the beginning, would not have had so wonderful and unusual an appearance as now, when every sort of cure was found unavailing.

Ver. 27. Where is boasting then? It is excluded, he says. By what law? Of works? Nay, but by the law of faith.

Paul is at great pains to show that faith is mighty to a degree which was never even fancied of the Law. For after he had said that God justifies man by faith, he grapples with the Law again. And he does not say, where then are the well doings of the Jews? Where their righteous dealing? But, where is then the boasting? so taking every opportunity of showing, that they do but use great words, as though they had somewhat more than others, and have no work to show. And after saying, Where then is the boasting? he does not say, it is put out of sight and has come to an end, but it is excluded, which word rather expresses unseasonableness; since the reason for it is no more.

For as when the judgment has come they that would repent have not any longer the season for it, thus now the sentence being henceforth passed, and all being upon the point of perishing, and He being at hand Who by grace would break these terrors, they had no longer the season for making a plea of amelioration wrought by the Law. For if it were right to strengthen themselves upon these things, it should have been before His coming. But now that He who should save by faith had come, the season for those efforts was taken from them.

For since all were convicted, He therefore saves by grace. And this is why He has come but now, that they may not say, as they would had He come at the first, that it was possible to be saved by the Law and by our own labors and well-doings. To curb therefore this their effrontery, He waited a long time: so that after they were by every argument clearly convicted of inability to help themselves, He then saved them by His grace. And for this reason too when he had said above, To declare His righteousness, he added, at this time.

If any then were to gainsay, they do the same as if a person who after committing great sins was unable to defend himself in court, but was condemned and going to be punished, and then being by the royal pardon forgiven, should have the effrontery after his forgiveness to boast and say that he had done no sin. For before the pardon came, was the time to prove it: but after it came he would no longer have the season for boasting. And this happened in the Jews' case. For since they had been traitors to themselves, this was why He came, by His very coming doing away their boasting.

For he who says that he is a teacher of babes, and makes his boast in the Law, and styles himself an instructor of the foolish, if alike with them he needed a teacher and a Saviour, can no longer have any pretext for boasting. For if even before this, the circumcision was made uncircumcision, much rather was it now, since it is cast out from both periods. But after saying that it was excluded, he shows also, how. How then does he say it was excluded? By what law? Of works? Nay, but by the law of faith.

See he calls the faith also a law delighting to keep to the names, and so allay the seeming novelty. But what is the law of faith? It is, being saved by grace. Here he shows God's power, in that He has not only saved, but has even justified, and led them to boasting, and this too without needing works, but looking for

faith only. And in saying this he attempts to bring the Jew who has believed to act with moderation, and to calm him that has not believed, in such way as to draw him on to his own view.

For he that has been saved, if he be high-minded in that he abides by the Law, will be told that he himself has stopped his own mouth, himself has accused himself, himself has renounced claims to his own salvation, and has excluded boasting. But he that has not believed again, being humbled by these same means, will be capable of being brought over to the faith. Do you see how great faith's preëminence is? How it has removed us from the former things, not even allowing us to boast of them?

Ver. 28. Therefore we conclude that a man is justified by faith without the deeds of the Law.

When he had shown that by faith they were superior to the Jews, then he goes on with great confidence to discourse upon it also, and what seemed therein to annoy he again heals up. For these two things were what confused the Jews; one, if it were possible for men, who with works were not saved, to be saved without them, and another, if it were just for the uncircumcised to enjoy the same blessings with those, who had during so long a period been nurtured in the Law; which last confused them more by far than the former. And on this ground having proved the former, he goes on to the other next, which perplexed the Jews so far, that they even complained on account of this position against Peter after they believed. What does he say then? Therefore we conclude, that by faith a man is justified. He does not say, a Jew, or one under the Law, but after leading forth his discourse into a large room, and opening the doors of faith to the world, he says a man, the name common to our race. And then having taken occasion from this, he meets an objection not set down. For since it was likely that the Jews, upon hearing that faith justifies every man, would take it ill and feel offended, he goes on,

Ver. 29. Is He the God of the Jews only?

As if he said, On what foot does it then seem to you amiss that every man should be saved? Is God partial? So showing from this, that in wishing to flout the Gentiles, they are rather offering an insult to God's glory, if, that is, they would not allow Him to be the God of all. But if He is of all, then He takes care of all; and if He care for all, then He saves all alike by faith. And this is why he says, Is He the God of the Jews only? Is He not also of the Gentiles? Yes, of the Gentiles also. For He is not partial as the fables of the Gentiles (cf. Ov. Tr. I. ii. 5. sqq) are, but common to all, and One. And this is why he goes on,

Ver. 30. Seeing it is one God.

That is, the same is the Master of both these and those. But if you tell me of the ancient state of things, then too the dealings of Providence were shared by both, although in diverse ways. For as to you was given the written law, so to them was the natural; and they came short in nothing, if, that is, only they were willing, but were even able to surpass you. And so he proceeds, with an allusion to this very thing, Who shall justify the circumcision by faith, and the uncircumcision through faith, so reminding them of what he said before about uncircumcision and circumcision, whereby he showed that there was no difference. But if then there was no difference, much less is there any now. And this accordingly he now establishes upon still clearer grounds, and so demonstrates, that either of them stand alike in need of faith.

Ver. 31. Do we then, he says, make void the Law through faith? God forbid: yea, we establish the Law.

Do you see his varied and unspeakable judgment? For the bare use of the word establish shows that it was not then standing, but was worn out (καταλελυμ■νον). And note also Paul's exceeding power, and

how superabundantly he maintains what he wishes. For here he shows that the faith, so far from doing any disparagement to the Law, even assists it, as it on the other hand paved the way for the faith. For as the Law itself before bore witness to it (for he says, being witnessed by the Law and the Prophets), so here this establishes that, now that it is unnerved. And how did it establish? He would say. What was the object of the Law and what the scope of all its enactments? Why, to make man righteous. But this it had no power to do. For all, it says, have sinned: but faith when it came accomplished it. For when a man is once a believer, he is straightway justified. The intention then of the Law it did establish, and what all its enactments aim after, this has it brought to a consummation. Consequently it has not disannulled, but perfected it. Here then three points he has demonstrated; first, that without the Law it is possible to be justified; next, that this the Law could not effect; and, that faith is not opposed to the Law. For since the chief cause of perplexity to the Jews was this, that the faith seemed to be in opposition to it, he shows more than the Jew wishes, that so far from being contrary, it is even in close alliance and coöperation with it, which was what they especially longed to hear proved.

But since after this grace, whereby we were justified, there is need also of a life suited to it, let us show an earnestness worthy the gift. And show it we shall, if we keep with earnestness charity, the mother of good deeds. Now charity is not bare words, or mere ways of speaking (προσρ■σεις) to men, but a taking care (προστασ■α) of them, and a putting forth of itself by works, as, for instance, by relieving poverty, lending one's aid to the sick, rescuing from dangers, to stand by them that be in difficulties, to weep with them that weep, and to rejoice with them that rejoice.

Romans 12:15 For even this last is a part of charity. And yet this seems a little thing, to be rejoicing with them that rejoice: nevertheless it is exceedingly great, and requires for it the spirit of true wisdom. And we may find many that perform the more irksome part (πεικρ■τερον), and yet want vigor for this. For many weep with them that weep, but still do not rejoice with them that rejoice, but are in tears when others rejoice; now this comes of grudging and envy. The good deed then of rejoicing when our brother rejoices is no small one, but even greater than the other: and haply not only greater than weeping with them that weep, but even than standing by them that are in danger.

There are many, at all events, that have shared danger with men in danger, but were cut to the heart when they came into honor. So great is the tyranny of a grudging spirit! And yet the one is a thing of toils and labors, and this of choice and temper only. Yet at the same time many that have endured the harder task have not accomplished the one easier than it, but pine and consume away when they see others in honor, when a whole Church is benefited, by doctrine, or in any other fashion.

And what can be worse than this? For such an one does not any more fight with his brother, but with the will of God. Now consider this, and be rid of the disease: and even if you be unwilling to set your neighbor free, at least set yourself free from these countless evils. Why do you carry war into your own thoughts? Why fill your soul with trouble? Why work up a storm? Why turn things upside down? How will you be able, in this state of mind, to ask forgiveness of sins? For if those that allow not the things done against themselves to pass, neither does He forgive, what forgiveness shall He grant to those who go about to injure those that have done them no injury?

For this is a proof of the utmost wickedness. Men of this kind are fighting with the Devil, against the Church, and haply even worse than he. For him one can be on one's guard against. But these cloaking themselves under the mask of friendliness, secretly kindle the pile, throwing themselves the first into the furnace, and laboring under a disease not only unfit for pity, but even such as to meet with much ridicule.

For why is it, tell me, that you are pale and trembling and standing in fear?

What evil has happened? Is it that your brother is in honor, and looked up to, and in esteem? Why, you ought to make chaplets, and rejoice, and glorify God, that your own member is in honor and looked up to! But are you pained that God is glorified? Do you see to what issue the war tends? But, some will say, it is not because God is glorified, but because my brother is. Yet through him the glory ascends up to God: and so will the war from you do also. But it is not this, he will say, that grieves me, for I should wish God to be glorified by me.

Well then! rejoice at your brother's being in honor, and then glorified is God again through you also; and all will say, Blessed be God that has His household so minded, wholly freed from envy, and rejoicing together at one another's goods! And why do I speak of your brother? For if he were your foe and enemy, and God were glorified through him, a friend should you make of him for this reason. But you make your friend an enemy because God is glorified by his being in honor. And were any one to heal your body when in evil plight, though he were an enemy, you would count him thenceforward among the first of your friends: and do you reckon him that gladdens the countenance of Christ's Body, that is, the Church, and is your friend, to be yet an enemy?

How else then could you show war against Christ? For this cause, even if a man do miracles, have celibacy to show, and fasting, and lying on the bare ground, and does by this virtue advance even to the angels, yet shall he be most accursed of all, while he has this defect, and shall be a greater breaker of the Law than the adulterer, and the fornicator, and the robber, and the violator of sepulchres. And, that no one may condemn this language of hyperbole, I should be glad to put this question to you.

If any one had come with fire and mattock, and were destroying and burning this House, and digging down this Altar, would not each one of those here stone him with stones as accursed and a law-breaker? What then, if one were to bring a flame yet more consuming than that fire, I mean envy, that does not ruin the buildings of stone nor dig down an Altar of gold, but subverts and scornfully mars what is far more precious than either walls or Altar, the Teachers' building, what sufferance would he deserve?

For let no one tell me, that he has often endeavored and been unable: for it is from the spirit that the actions are judged. For Saul did kill David, even though he did not hit him. 1 Samuel 19:10 Tell me, do you not perceive that you are plotting against the sheep of Christ when you war with His Shepherd? Those sheep for whom also Christ shed His Blood, and bade us both to do and to suffer all things? Do you not remind yourself that your Master sought your glory and not His own, but you are seeking not that of your Master but your own? And yet if you saw His then you would have obtained your own also. But by seeking your own before His, you will not ever gain even this.

What then will be the remedy? Let us all join in prayer, and let us lift up our voice with one accord in their behalf as for those possessed, for indeed these are more wretched than they, inasmuch as their madness is of choice. For this affliction needs prayer and much entreaty. For if he that loves not his brother, even though he empty out his money, yea, and have the glory of martyrdom, is no whit advantaged; consider what punishment the man deserves who even wars with him that has not wronged him in anything; he is even worse than the Gentiles: for if to love them that love us does not let us have any advantage over them, in what grade shall he be placed, tell me, that envies them that love him?

For envying is even worse than warring; since he that wars, when the cause of the war is at an end, puts an end to his hatred also: but the grudger would never become a friend. And the one shows an open kind

of battle, the other a covert: and the one often has a reasonable cause to assign for the war, the other, nothing else but madness, and a Satanic spirit. To what then is one to compare a soul of this kind? To what viper? To what asp? To what canker-worm? To what scorpion?

Since there is nothing so accursed or so pernicious as a soul of this sort. For it is this, it is this, that has subverted the Churches, this that has gendered the heresies, this it was that armed a brother's hand, and made his right hand to be dipped in the blood of the righteous, and plucked away the laws of nature, and set open the gates for death, and brought that curse into action, and suffered not that wretch to call to mind either the birth-pangs, or his parents, or anything else, but made him so furious, and led him to such a pitch of phrenzy, that even when God exhorted him and said, Unto you shall be his recourse, and you shall rule over him Genesis 4:7, Septuagint; he did not even then give in.

Yet did He both forgive him the fault, and make his brother subject to him: but his complaint is so incurable, that even if thousands of medicines are applied, it keeps sloughing with its own corruption. For wherefore are you so vexed, you most miserable of men? Is it because God has had honor shown Him? Nay, this would show a Satanical spirit. Is it then because your brother outstrips you in good name? As for that, it is open to you in turn to outstrip him. And so, if you would be a conqueror, kill not, destroy not, but let him abide still, that the material for the struggle may be preserved, and conquer him living.

For in this way your crown had been a glorious one; but by thus destroying you pass a harder sentence of defeat upon yourself. But a grudging spirit has no sense of all this. And what ground have you to covet glory in such solitude? For those were at that time the only inhabitants of the earth. Still even then this restrained him not, but he cast away all from his mind, and stationed himself in the ranks of the devil; for he it was who then led the war upon Cain's side. For inasmuch as it was not enough for him that man had become liable to death, by the manner of the death he tried to make the tragedy still greater, and persuaded him to become a fratricide.

For he was urgent and in travail to see the sentence carried into effect, as never satisfied with our ills. As if any one who had got an enemy in prison, and saw him under sentence, were to press, before he was out of the city, to see him butchered within it, and would not wait even the fitting time, so did the devil then, though he had heard that man must return to earth, travail with desire to see something worse, even a son dying before his father, and a brother destroying a brother, and a premature and violent slaughter. See you what great service envy has done him? How it has filled the insatiate spirit of the devil, and has prepared for him a table great as he desired to see?

Let us then escape from the disease; for it is not possible, indeed it is not, to escape from the fire prepared for the devil, unless we get free from this sickness. But free we shall get to be if we lay to mind how Christ loved us, and also how He bade us love one another. Now what love did He show for us? His precious Blood did He shed for us when we were enemies, and had done the greatest wrong to Him. This do thou also do in your brother's case (for this is the end of His saying A new commandment I give unto you, That ye so love one another as I have loved you) John 13:34; or rather even so the measure does not come to a stand.

For it was in behalf of His enemies that He did this. And are you unwilling to shed your blood for your brother? Why then do you even shed his blood, disobeying the commandment even to reversing it? Yet what He did was not as a due: but you, if you do it, are but fulfilling a debt. Since he too, who, after receiving the ten thousand talents, demanded the hundred pence, was punished not merely for the fact

that he demanded them, but because even by the kindness done him he had not become any better, and did not even follow where his Lord had begun, or remit the debt.

For on the part of the servant the thing done was but a debt after all, if it had been done. For all things that we do, we do towards the payment of a debt. And this is why Himself said, When you have done all, say, We are unprofitable servants, we have done that which was our duty to do. Luke 17:10 If then we display charity, if we give our goods to them that need, we are fulfilling a debt; and that not only in that it was He who first began the acts of goodness, but because it is His goods that we are distributing if we ever do give.

Why then deprive yourself of what He wills you to have the right of? For the reason why He bade you give them to another was that you might have them yourself. For so long as you have them to yourself even you yourself hast them not. But when you have given to another, then have you received them yourself. What charm then will do as much as this? Himself poured forth His Blood for His enemies: but we not even money for our benefactor. He did so with His Blood that was His own: we will not even with money that is not ours.

He did it before us, we not even after His example. He did it for our salvation, we will not do it even for our own advantage. For He is not to have any advantage from our love toward man, but the whole gain accrues unto us. For this is the very reason why we are bidden to give away our goods, that we may not be thrown out of them. For as a person who gives a little child money and bids him hold it fast, or give it the servant to keep, that it may not be for whoever will to snatch it away, so also does God.

For He says, Give to him that needs, lest some one should snatch it away from you, as an informer, for instance, or a calumniator, or a thief, or, after all these are avoided, death. For so long as you hold it yourself, you have no safe hold of it. But if you give it Me through the poor, I keep it all for you exactly, and in fit season will return it with great increase. For it is not to take it away that I receive it, but to make it a larger amount and to keep it more exactly, that I may have it preserved for you against that time, in which there is no one to lend or to pity.

What then can be more hard-hearted, than if we, after such promises, cannot make up our minds to lend to him? Yes, it is for this that we go before Him destitute and naked and poor, not having the things committed to our charge, because we do not deposit them with Him who keeps them more exactly than any. And for this we shall be most severely punished. For when we are charged with it, what shall we be able to say about the loss of them? what pretext to put forward? What defense?

For what reason is there why you did not give? Do you disbelieve that you will receive it again? And how can this be reasonable? For He that has given to one that has not given, how shall He not much rather give after He has received? Does the sight of them please you? Well then, give much the more for this reason, that you may there be the more delighted, when no one can take them from you. Since now if you keep them, you will even suffer countless evils. For as a dog, so does the devil leap upon them that are rich, wishing to snatch from them, as from a child that holds a sippet or a cake.

Let us then give them to our Father, and if the devil see this done, he will certainly withdraw: and when he has withdrawn, then will the Father safely give them all to you, when he cannot trouble, in that world to come. For now surely they that be rich differ not from little children that are troubled by dogs, while all are barking round them, tearing and pulling; not men only, but ignoble affections; as gluttony, drunkenness, flattery, uncleanness of every kind. And when we have to lend, we are very anxious about those that give

much, and look particularly for those that are frank dealers.

But here we do the opposite. For God, Who deals frankly, and gives not one in the hundred, but a hundred-fold, we desert, and those who will not return us even the capital, these we seek after. For what return will our belly make us, that consumes the larger share of our goods? Dung and corruption. Or what will vainglory? Envy and grudging. Or what nearness? Care and anxiety. Or what uncleanness? Hell and the venomous worm! For these are the debtors of them that be rich, who pay this interest upon the capital, evils at present, and dreadful things in expectation.

Shall we then lead to these, pray, with such punishment for interest, and shall we not trust the same to Christ (4 manuscripts om. τ) Who holds forth unto us heaven, immortal life, blessings unutterable? And what excuse shall we have? For how do you come not to give to Him, who will assuredly return, and return in greater abundance? Perhaps it is because it is so long before He repays. Yet surely He repays even here. For He is true which says, Seek the kingdom of heaven, and all these things shall be added to you.

Matthew 6:33 Do you see this extreme munificence? Those goods, He says, have been stored up for you, and are not diminishing: but these here I give by way of increase and surplus. But, besides all this, the very fact of its being so long before you will receive it, does but make your riches the greater: since the interest is more.

For in the case of those who have money lent them, we see that this is what the lenders do, lending, that is, with greater readiness to those who refund a long time after. For he that straightway repays the whole, cuts off the progression of the interest, but he that keeps possession of it for a longer time, makes also the gain from it greater. Shall we then, while in man's case we are not offended at the delay, but even use artifices to make it greater, in the case of God be so little-minded, as on this very ground to be backward and to retract?

And yet, as I said, He both gives here, and along with the reason mentioned, as planning also some other greater advantage to us, He there keeps the whole in store. For the abundance of what is given, and the excellency of that gift, transcends this present worthless life. Since in this perishable and doomed body there is not even the possibility of receiving those unfading crowns; nor in our present state, perturbed and full of trouble, and liable to many changes as it is, of attaining to that unchangeable unperturbed lot.

Now you, if any one were to owe you gold, and while you were staying in a foreign country, and had neither servants, nor any means to convey it across to the place of your abode, were to promise to pay you the loan, would beseech him in countless ways to have it paid down not in the foreign land, but at home rather. But do you think right to receive those spiritual and unutterable things in this world? Now what madness this would show! For if you receive them here, you must have them corruptible to a certainty; but if you wait for that time, He will repay you them incorruptible and unalloyed.

If you receive here, you have gotten lead; but if there, tried gold. Still He does not even deprive you of the goods of this life. For along with that promise He has placed another also, to the following effect, That every one that loves the things of the world to come, shall receive an hundred-fold in this life present, and shall inherit eternal life. Matthew 19:29 If then we do not receive the hundred-fold, it is ourselves that are to blame for not lending to Him Who can give so much, for all who have given have received much, even though they gave but little.

For what great thing, tell me, did Peter give? Was it not a net that was broken Luke 5:6-11, and a rod and a hook only? Yet still God opened to him the houses of the world, and spread before him land and sea, and all men invited him to their possessions. Or rather they sold what was their own, and brought it to their feet, not so much as putting it into their hands, for they dared not, so great was the honor they paid him, as well as their profuseness. But he was Peter, you will say!

And what of this? O man! For it was not Peter only to whom He made this promise, neither said He, You, O Peter, only art to receive an hundred-fold, but every one whosoever has left houses or brethren shall receive an hundredfold. For it is not distinction of persons that He recognizes, but actions that are rightly done. But a circle of little ones is round about me, one will say, and I am desirous of leaving them with a good fortune. Why then do we make them paupers? For if you leave them everything, you are still committing your goods to a trust that may deceive you.

But if you leave God their joint-heir and guardian, you have left them countless treasures. For as when we avenge ourselves God assists us not, but when we leave it to Him, more than we expect comes about; so in the case of goods, if we take thought about them ourselves, He will withdraw from any providence over them, but if we cast all upon Him, He will place both them and our children in all safety. And why are you amazed that this should be so with God? For even with men one may see this happening.

For if you do not when dying invite any of your relatives to the care of your children, it often happens, that one who is abundantly willing feels reluctancy, and is too modest to spring to the task of his own accord. But if you cast the care upon him, as having had a very great honor shown him, he will in requital make very great returns. If then you would leave your children much wealth, leave them God's care. For He Who, without your having done anything, gave you a soul, and formed you a body, and granted you life, when He sees you displaying such munificence and distributing their goods to Himself along with them, must surely open to them every kind of riches.

For if Elijah after having been nourished with a little meal, since he saw that that woman honored him above her children, made threshing-floors and oil-presses appear in the little hut of the widow, consider what loving caring the Lord of Elijah will display! Let us then not consider how to leave our children rich, but how to leave them virtuous. For if they have the confidence of riches, they will not mind anything besides, in that they have the means screening the wickedness of their ways in their abundant riches.

But if they find themselves devoid of the comfort to be got from that source, they will do all so as by virtue to find themselves abundant consolation for their poverty. Leave them then no riches that you may leave them virtue. For it is unreasonable in the extreme, not to make them, while we are alive, lords of all our goods, yet after we are dead to give the easy nature of youth full exemption from fear. And yet while we are alive we shall have power to call them to good account, and to sober and bridle them, if they make an ill use of their goods: but if after we are dead we afford them, at the time of the loss of ourselves, and their own youthfulness, that power which wealth gives, endless are the precipices into which we shall thrust those unfortunate and miserable creatures, so heaping fuel upon flame, and letting oil drop into a fierce furnace.

And so, if you would leave them rich and safe withal, leave God a debtor to them, and deliver the bequest to them into His hands. For if they receive the money themselves, they will not know even who to give it to, but will meet with many designing and unfeeling people. But if you beforehand puttest it out to interest with God, the treasure henceforward remains unassailable, and great is the facility wherewith that repayment

will be made. For God is well pleased at repaying us what He owes, and both looks with a more favorable eye upon those who have lent to Him, than on those who have not; and loves those the most to whom He owes the most.

And so, if you would have Him for your Friend continually, make Him your Debtor to a large amount. For there is no lender so pleased at having those that owe to him, as Christ (6 manuscripts God) is rejoiced at having those that lend to Him. And such as He owes nothing to, He flees from; but such as He owes to, He even runs unto. Let us then use all means to get Him for our Debtor; for this is the season for loans, and He is now in want. If then you give not unto Him now, He will not ask of you after your departing hence.

For it is here that He thirsts, here that He is an hungered. He thirsts, since He thirsts after your salvation; and it is for this that He even begs; for this that He even goes about naked, negotiating immortal life for you. Do not then neglect Him; since it is not to be nourished that He wishes, but to nourish; it is not to be clothed, but to clothe and to accoutre you with the golden garment, the royal robe. Do you not see even the more attached sort of physicians, when they are washing the sick, wash themselves also, though they need it not?

In the same way He also does all for the sake of you who art sick. For this reason also He uses no force in demanding, that He may make you great returns: that you may learn that it is not because He is in need that He asks of you, but that He may set right that you need. For this reason too He comes to you in a lowly guise, and with His right hand held forth. And if you give Him a farthing, He turns not away: and even if you reject Him, He departs not but comes again to you.

For He desires, yea desires exceedingly, our salvation: let us then think scorn of money, that we may not be thought scorn of by Christ. Let us think scorn of money, even with a view to obtain the money itself. For if we keep it here, we shall lose it altogether both here and hereafter. But if we distribute it with abundant expenditure, we shall enjoy in each life abundant wealthiness. He then that would become rich, let him become poor, that he may be rich. Let him spend that he may collect, let him scatter that he may gather.

But if this is novel and paradoxical, look to the sower, and consider, that he cannot in any other way gather more together, save by scattering what he has and, letting go of what is at hand. Let us now sow and till the Heaven, that we may reap with great abundance, and obtain everlasting goods, through the grace and love toward man, etc.

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