

THE TWENTY-FIFTH SERMON

WHICH IS THE SECOND UPON THE FOURTH CHAPTER

- 4** But when the time was fully come, God sent his son made of woman, and made under the Law.
- 5** To the intent to redeem those that were under the La, that we might receive the adoption of children.
- 6** And forasmuche as you be children, God hath sent the spirit of his son into your hearts, crying Abba, that is to say, father.
- 7** Wherefore now thou art not a servant but a son: and if thou be a son: thou art also an heir with Christ. —
<480404> GALATIANS 4:4-7

I HAVE TOLD YOU already why Saint Paul speaks here of the fullness of time: namely to abate men's curiosity, who by their good wills would seek to fare [*journey*] into God's secrets, yea and take upon them so boldly as to reply against God if he behave not himself after their fancy. To the intent therefore that the faithful may content themselves with the order that God hath kept in sending of our Lord Jesus Christ: he saith that the due season was not before, for that matter dependeth upon the only good pleasure of God, and upon his unchangeable purpose, whereunto it behooveth us to submit ourselves. And now Saint Paul saith, that our Lord Jesus Christ was made of woman, and put under the Law, to acquit those that were under the law. First he saith that he was clothed with our nature, for else he could not have yielded obedience to God in our behalf, that we might be set free. Howbeit forasmuch as he was conceived after a wonderful manner, therefore doth Saint Paul say he was made or begotten of a woman. It is true that he was of the seed of David: nevertheless I have told you already, that there was a secret working of the holy Ghost in his conception. But howsoever it was, our Lord Jesus Christ took our nature upon him, to the end he might yield obedience to God his father, as it were in our person. And that was the cause why he took our nature upon him.

And this subjection whereof he speaketh, was not of constraint, but of good will. For we know that the Son of God hath all superiority and sovereignty, insomuch that even the Angels and all the principalities must bow their knees before him to do him honor. How then could he be subject to the Law, seeing that the Law is such a bondage? This doth no whit deface the Majesty of God's son, forasmuch as he abased himself of his own good will. Therefore (as it is said in ^{<500206>}Philippians 2:6) there is no contrariety in that he might make himself equal with God without robbery: and yet that he abased himself also. So then, forasmuch of this doing of his proceeded of his own mere and unconstrained goodness: he continued always in his own state, notwithstanding that before men he had the shape and fashion of a servant as Saint Paul also specifieth [in the same place.]Howsoever the case stand, let us mark well, that he which was Lord of heaven and earth, took that subjection upon him, to set us free from it. For we see how our Lord Jesus Christ was circumcised, and when he came to man's age, he kept diligently all that belonged to the law of Moyses: not that he was bound to do it, but to put away the bondage, and to break the bond wherewith we were as it were pinched and fettered. Therefore as oft as the Gospel speaketh to us of liberty, (whereof Saint Paul doth also treat in this text): let us come back to our Lord Jesus Christ, assuring ourselves that he became not bond after that fashion for nothing. Now, there is nothing in him which containeth not the performance of our salvation. Then must we needs conclude that we be not anymore subject to the bondage of the law, or else it would turn to the dishonor of our Lord Jesus Christ. For what a thing were it, if after his yielding of himself to subjection for our sakes, we should still hold scorn of liberty? It were more convenient that heaven and earth should change their nature, than to say that the son of God is come down here below, and hath abased himself in manner aforesaid, and yet that we should esteem it but as a play or trifling thing. For what a dealing were that? Now then let us learn, that we may now serve our God freely, and come directly unto him without being held anymore so straightly under the yoke of the law as the ancient fathers were, because Jesus Christ is come, and hath set us free. I have told you already heretofore, in what wise we be delivered from the law. It is not for that it remaineth not still as a rule to frame our life by, so as God may govern us and have all superiority over us. For what a thing were it if we should be worse than the heathen folk and unbelievers? But it is certain

that they have the law engraved in their hearts as saith Saint Paul.

(^{<450215>}Romans 2:15) He that never went to school, nay hath had any teaching at all, nor ever hath heard or read anything, may notwithstanding discern between good and evil. Not that he hath a perfect skill: but because that howsoever the world go with him, God to take away all excuse of ignorance, would that men should have that evidence printed in their hearts, that theft, whoredom, extortion, deceit, perjury, drunkenness and such other like things, are vices to be condemned. Also it was his will to have men know, that to blaspheme his name is an irksome thing. The Heathen folk knew all this without any teaching. Now then if we should be lawless under pretense that our Lord Jesus Christ reigneth over us, and hath set us at liberty: what a thing were it? There would be greater confusion in the Church, than there is where Satan hath made a minglemangle and put all things out of order, so as there is no bridle at all. But whereas it is said that we be no more under the law: it is in the same respect whereof mention hath been made heretofore: namely, that the Law shall not execute anymore this sharpness and rigor upon us, to say unto us, cursed shall he be that fulfilleth not all things. For so long as the threatening remaineth and standeth in force, we must needs be as men out of their wits, and as folk upon the rack ready to be torn in pieces. To be short, we can have no rest except the sentence of the law be abolished, which is that, they which perform not all that is contained in the law shall be accursed. But contrariwise let our consciences bear us record that God pitieth us and beareth with our infirmities as a father doth towards his children, and passeth not upon the vices that are in us, but hideth and burieth them so as our service is acceptable to him, though there be many things amiss in it: and then are we no more subject to the law. Not that we should be quite without rule, nor that the commandments ought not to be preached continually unto us, to the end we may know what God hath ordained and be held in awe by it: but that we should not be out of heart if we fall, or halt, or make any false steps: or that if we cannot discharge ourselves of all things so perfectly as were requisite, yet we should not be utterly dismayed, knowing well that God will always hold us up by the hand, and not enter into account with us to sift our life rigorously: and moreover because the Ceremonies that were before the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ, are no more in use as they were towards the fathers of old time, who were trained by them as in their childhood. For when the brute

beasts were offered in sacrifice, every man beheld there his own death, as though the bottomless gulf of hell had been opened to swallow up the whole world. At this day we know that the Son of God hath by his offering up of himself in sacrifice, and by his shedding of his blood for us purchased us everlasting redemption, so that we come with our heads upright before God, not doubting but that we obtain life by the death of him that was not subject to it, but of his own good will made himself subject to it as our surety, to the end that we might be quit and discharged by his death and passion. Thus ye see that at this day the law is abolished towards us, and that we be delivered from it, even to obtain the adoption. Howbeit, in speaking so, Saint Paul meaneth not that the Patriarchs, Kings, Prophets and other faithful folks that lived under the old Testament, were not the children of God as well as we, or that they knew not themselves to be adopted by faith as well as we: but that the said adoption was not yet so revealed as it is nowadays. For (as we have seen) the law was a Tutor to rule little children. But we be come to the age of men, because the son of God hath showed himself, and brought us all perfectness by his coming. Then seeing it is so: we do now enjoy the adoption which the fathers did but as it were taste of afore, because the time was not yet come. Not that God wrought not in them with such measure of his spirit as he thought good: but because the case concerneth the order of government that God held, and not the persons themselves, as I have said already. For in those days there were shadows and figures, so that it was as a chain of bondage: but now that our Lord Jesus Christ calleth us to him, and that the veil of the temple is rent asunder: he hath prepared us a Sanctuary, not builded with man's hand, but of a heavenly making, whereinto we may boldly enter, inasmuch as he is gone in thither before us. Ye see then that we be received fully into this adoption, because the law hath no more power over us, as it had in the time of the figures and shadows. Now to confirm this matter, Saint Paul addeth, that God showeth that he taketh us for his children, because the spirit of his son is in us, crying father: Speaking of the holy ghost, he doth by a circumstance term him the spirit of our Lord Jesus Christ. For by what title can we be God's children, but because we be members of his only son, to whom that right honor, and dignity belongeth by nature? For in that our Lord Jesus Christ is called the only son of God, not only men, but also the very Angels of heaven are excluded from that dignity, so that it belongeth to

none but only to Jesus Christ. Howbeit forasmuch as we be joined unto him, and he will not be separated from us, but showeth himself to be our head, and we have such union with him as the members have with the head: therefore he saith that either we must have the spirit of our Lord Jesus Christ, or else we can no familiar access to our God, to call upon him as our father: and it were too great a presumption for us to take that honor upon us. For if a beggar would make himself a rich man's son, folk would laugh him to scorn, and he should be shaken off with all the shame that might be. And how then should we silly worms of the earth, yea and full of all infection and filthiness, go match ourselves with the Angels of heaven, to say that God is our father? Truly the very Angels themselves cannot challenge such nobility, but by the means of our Lord Jesus Christ because he is their head. Then were it great pride in us if we would take upon us to fly above the Angels, without coming in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, or without having his spirit, that we might be accepted as members of his body, and be entertained as it were in his person. And therefore also it is said that he maketh intercession for us, and that we call upon God in his name. For if he were not our spokesman, how could we hope to have our petitions received? Let us a little consider the feebleness that is in us when we intend to pray unto God. Although we sigh unfeignedly [*genuinely*], and although we have good motions to lift us up: yet do we faint, and they that think to come unto God with a perfect zeal, beguile themselves, yea even too grossly. But they that humbly acknowledge themselves to be as they be: do perceive themselves to halt and stumble even in the very virtue and strength that is given them. Howbeit forasmuch as our Lord Jesus Christ is in the midst, and standeth there in our behalf, and maketh us to come near: therefore we may boldly pray. And for the same cause did the high Priest in the time of the law bear twelve precious stones upon his breast, and other twelve behind upon his shoulders, wherein were written the names of the twelve tribes of Israel. For although the people were present in the porch [or outer tabernacle,] yet was there a veil betwixt him and them, so as the Sanctuary was hidden, and nothing was seen of the things that were done within for a witness of God's presence. It was enough that the high priest went in, in the name of them all, having in his hand the blood wherewith God's wrath was to be appeased. Then had he the said tablet at his breast, wherein the names of the twelve tribes (that is to say, of God's people) were engraven. Also he

had them upon his shoulders, that it might be said how he was there in the name of the whole Church. Thus ye see how we cry, even by the spirit of our Lord Jesus Christ, unto God his father, with full assurance that he knoweth and avoweth us for members of his son, by whose means he receiveth us into his heavenly kingdom, and setteth open the gate unto us, so as we have access unto him familiarly. And this is expressed yet better by the word Cry. Saint Paul could well have said, we say: but he goeth further as need was. For (as I have touched heretofore) here he compareth the old fathers with us, and showeth that our state is better than theirs, because God hath showed himself more bountiful towards us, than he did towards them that were under the law. That is the cause why he saith that we in these days do cry out that God is our father, yea even with open mouth and full liberty, and that we come boldly to him, glorying that we be taken for his children. True it is that the fathers under the law did also use the same manner of speech, as when they said, Lord what shall become of us if thou receive us not to mercy? Abraham knoweth us not, no more doth Jacob. (<236316> Isaiah 63:16) We be born of them as touching the flesh: howbeit, all this natural kindred is nothing in comparison of the spiritual kindred, whereinto thou hath ingrafted us in the person of thy son. Therefore thou art our father? After that manner did the whole Church pray unto God as Esay reporteth it. And there are many such texts. And out of doubt it had been impossible for the fathers to have offered up good petitions and prayers unto God, without that ground: that is to wit, unless they had been fully resolved, that God took them for his children. For that is the thing wherein the faithful differed from the Heathen and unbelievers in all ages. The Heathen men did indeed pray unto God, howbeit, that was but at all adventure, not knowing whether they should be heard or no. But our prayer must be grounded upon faith. (<451013> Romans 10:13) And Saint Paul's saying shall always be true: namely that we cannot pray unto God, except we first know and understand his good will towards us. Therefore it must needs follow that they which lived under the Law, were fully assured in their consciences that God accepteth them for his children. Howbeit this was showed them as ye would say but with half face, so that they prayed being wrapped in many shadows and figures, which taught them grossly. It is true that they offered not themselves without faith (for then had it booted them very little,) and that it stood them on hand to overcome all the letts

[*hindrances*] that were set before their eyes: but yet were they not able to call upon God with the full certainty which is communicated to us under the Gospel. And this is yet better expressed in ^{<450815>}Romans 8:15, where Saint Paul saith that we have not now received the spirit of fearfulness and bondage, but the spirit of boldness, so as we be able to cry Abba, father. And by the contrary member he enlighteneth the matter that might be darksome in this Text by reason of the shortness of it. For he setteth down the spirit of bondage, because the Law was given with great terribleness, and the old fathers were driven to feel that they were held in awe under it, and had not yet the liberty that is purchased us in these days by the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ. They were as little children: who although their fathers travail for them, know not what is laid up for them. For although their fathers love them: yet must the rod be walking now and then, and they stand always in awe. And because they have no discretion to govern themselves, they know not how their fathers will deal with them. Even so was it in the time of the Law. There was a kind of fearfulness, insomuch that they which were God's children, were yet under the straight bondage afore said. But Saint Paul saith that we be no more as it were at Mount Sinai, where God thundered, where the lightnings flashed, where trumpets sounded, and where the air roared in such wise, that all men were so amazed as they durst not come near God, according as it is said, let not God speak unto us, for then are we all dead and undone. (^{<021916>}Exodus 19:16; ^{<022019>}Exodus 20:19) We be not now in that fear saith Saint Paul: but God hath given us full liberty because our Lord Jesus Christ is come. And we know that he is gone into heaven, to the intent that the heavenly throne should not thenceforth have such terrible Majesty as to make us shrink back from it: and that we might find favor and grace to talk familiarly with our God. Thus ye see in effect what this word cry importeth. Now, it is true that the faithful oftentimes shall not feel so frank and free a mind in themselves, but that they shall be distressed when they open their mouths, and feel heartbitings, and cast doubts whether God will hear them or no. Heaviness will so overpress us, as we shall hardly know how to dispose our prayers, or whereat to begin. This then is a thing that might seem contrary to that which Saint Paul speaketh here, and to the text which I am about to allege. For it will follow that we be cut off from the array of the faithful, if we doubt in ourselves whether we may pray unto God or no and that are hearts be as it were

locked up in those doubtings. If we be at that point, in what case are we then? Where is the trust that Saint Paul speaketh of here? He dischargeth that doubt immediately, saying that God's spirit supplieth our wants and infirmities. (^{<450826>}Romans 8:26) For there are certain unutterable groanings which God heareth, although they be not perceived of men. Therefore let us first mark, that if we have profited in the Gospel, we must believe assuredly that God taketh us for his children, and that he calleth us gently unto him, and that we may boldly come unto him. According whereunto he saith in ^{<490312>}Ephesians 3:12, that by our believing in Jesus Christ, we by and by conceive trust and boldness to offer ourselves unto God. Then if we have not trust and boldness, it appeareth that we have no faith. Howbeit forasmuch as our faith is never perfect, but endureth brunts whereby it is as good as beaten down to outward seeming: sometimes we be so dismayed at it through the overpressing of our miseries and afflictions, that God seemeth to be estranged from us, and we cannot utter one word of prayer unto God. And therefore let us receive that which Saint Paul saith: namely that the spirit helpeth our infirmities. And so let us hold out still and pray unto God without ceasing, and if we bee speechless, or do stutte [*stutter*], and cannot utter any one piece of our mind to the purpose, but be entangled with many impediments: well, howsoever we fare, let God's spirit thrust us forward still, and let us stick fast to this ground, that God is nevertheless our father, and let us flee to him for refuge, and though we do it not so frankly as were requisite, but be overweighed with the heaviness of our grief's, yet whatsoever come of it, let us go on forward still, and not shut ourselves out of the gate through our own default, but hold on still in praying to our God, assuring ourselves that he will have pity upon us in the end. Thus ye see what we have to consider here when mention is made of the spirit of boldness or trustfulness, whereby we may cry [unto God,] because we be sure of our adoption. Let us not think that this can be fully in us, for there are many vices which we be not yet rid of. Again there remaineth unbelief, which if it be not thoroughly rooted in us, hath notwithstanding many strings to hold us back with, so as we must be fain [*willing*] to strive against them. But yet in the meanwhile, we must be fully resolved that God is our father: and afterward according to our measure and ability, let us keep onward to the mark that is set forth here. And it is one of the greatest controversies that we have with the Papists in

these days. For they say we cannot be sure that God loveth us, and that it is a case which ought to hang in suspense whether he love us or hate us. But by this means they utterly deface the true manner and fashion of praying. For we know how the Scripture saith, that we cannot pray without faith, and Saint James saith, let not such a man think that ever he shall be heard, that is to wit, such a one as cometh like a wavering reed that is shaken to and fro with every wind. (<590106> James 1:6, 7) For we must believe that God is faithful in his promises, and that we shall not be disappointed in coming unto him, because he hath bidden us come. We must be thus minded in all our prayers and petitions, or else all is nothing worth. Again what Christianity is there in us if we have not God's spirit, as saith Saint Paul in the eighth to the Romans? And for the same cause also doth he say in the fifth Chapter, (<450505> Romans 5:5) that we shall never be ashamed of our hope, because God's love is shedded into our hearts by the holy Ghost which is given unto us. For if we have no hope, surely then are we banished out of God's kingdom, and cannot be named Christians. And what manner of hope is it? It is (saith Saint Paul) that God's love is shedded into our hearts: that is to say, that we be fully settled and contented because we know ourselves to be in God's favor. And how know we that? By the spirit. And he setteth down purposely the word Shed, to do us to wit, that God's making of us to feel his fatherly goodness and love towards us, is not with a wet finger and away (as they say,) and then afterward to leave us hungry and needy: but that he sheddeth or poureth it out upon us, that is to say, that he giveth us a sufficient and full warrant that he acknowledgeth and avoweth us for his own, seeing he hath laid forth all the treasures of his mercy in our Lord Jesus Christ. Now, this must needs come of God's spirit, according as it is said in <460209> 1 Corinthians 2:9, 14, that we do not now by our natural wit comprehend that God loveth us: for that passeth all the power of man. God then must be fain [*pleased*] to lift us up above the world: for it lieth not in our own power to certify ourselves of God's love. Therefore the spirit giveth it us: that is to say, we have it not by nature, nor by inheritance, neither do we purchase it by our deserts: but God of his own mere goodness assureth us of it, to the intent we might resort unto him familiarly in all our needs. But contrariwise, the Papists after their own imagination, deem that we cannot be sure of God's love. And these wretches are so blind, that they say it is presumption if we desire to have

any certainty of it: yea [and so is it,] if we would have it of ourselves. For if a man would upon his own conceit bear himself in hand that God is his father, he should be but a fantastical child, and a fool at all assays [attempts] like one of these dizzardes [jesters, fools] that gad [wander] up and down the streets, and play the Kings and Princes. But if we have the said record of our God: should we then doubt of it still? Is it a presumptuousness to do God so much honor, as to believe him to be faithful, and to rest ourselves upon his word? Again on the other side, when we go to pray, is it not a good forwardness [earnestness] that he giveth us when he saith, come to me? (^{<401128>}Matthew 11:28) If we had no commandment to pray unto God, surely it were too great a rashness to preace [press] into his presence. But seeing that he calleth us, yea and tarrieth not till we seek him, but preventeth us, and telleth us that he requireth nothing but that we should come to him, and giveth us both the motion and mind to pray unto him: if we take him for our God, let us yield him his deserved praise, by seeking all our welfare at his hand. Seeing (say I) that he hath so prevented us: should we dispute whether we ought to follow him or no? Is it not a blasphemy that tendeth to the defacing of all God's promises? Thus ye see what we have to remember when mention is made of this word Cry. But yet for all this, howsoever the world go with us, though we be fain [willing] to hack it out like folk that have half forgone their speech, and be straightened with so many overthwarts that we cannot fashion out one syllable or jot aright: yet whatsoever come of it, let us not leave going unto God, upon this ground, that he will succor us at our need, and redress the infirmities that pluck us back. To be short, when the spirit worketh in us to stir us up to the groanings whereof I have spoken: let us seek God, and though we be at our wits end, and know not whereat to begin: let us always go forward to the mark that is set before us here. And Saint Paul saith purposely, that we cry Abba, father, to signify that it is not the Jews only whom God will have to call upon him, and to flee to him for succor nowadays: but that he will have the whole world to do it. And forasmuch as the Gospel which is the key to open us the gate of Paradise, is published every where: now he will have all men to enjoy the right which heretofore had been as the special privilege of the lineage of Abraham. Thus ye see after what manner we cry Abba, father. Now the first word Abba signifieth a father: howbeit Saint Paul useth the language that was held still as most common among the Jews. For the Hebrew

tongue was not so pure after the captivity of Babylon as it was before, but was mingled with the Chaldee tongue. Howbeit Saint Paul's meaning here, is to show that under the Gospel all men in common ought to call upon God with open mouth, because his adoption was offered to all Nations, and the wall was broken down which divided the Jews and Gentiles asunder, so that henceforth he will have us to be equal and in like state. Ye see then that we may call upon God in all languages, as it were with one mouth, and we must not doubt but that God receiveth us and giveth us leave to preace [*press*] unto him, inasmuch as we have the doctrine of the Gospel to lead us, which is an infallible guide for us.

Now by this means we see that every man's praying unto God ought to be with understanding. For if a man that understandeth no more but his own mother tongue, should pray unto God in Greek or Hebrew, surely it were but a dalliance, and an utter perverting and marring of the rule of praying aright, and there could be nothing but hypocrisy and feigned [*pretended*] devotion in it. I have told you already that we cannot pray unto God without faith, to be sure that he will hear us. And what a thing is it if we know not what we have to ask at his hand? Is it not a defiling of so holy a thing as prayer is? We know that to call upon God, and to flee to him alone for succor, is the Sacrifice that he requireth at our hands, because that therein we confess him to be our father, and the very wellspring of all welfare. Now then it is meet that we should resort unto him which is the rewarder, according as the Apostle saith in ^{<581106>}Hebrews 11:6, that he disappointeth not those that seek him, but that they shall always find that there is nothing better than to flee unto him. Therefore when we pray unto God, we must have understanding to know what we crave of him. Mark that for one point. Moreover whereas it is said that we cry Abba, father: thereby we be done to understand, that the diversity of languages hindereth not the unity of faith. Esay seemeth to use a clean contrary manner of speaking, when he saith, that all men shall speak the language of Canaan, (^{<231928>}Isaiah 19:28) that is to say, the Hebrew tongue. Now to be Christians and faithful believers, it is not of necessity that we must have skill of that language: but he meaneth that God shall be worshipped in all languages. And he speaketh of the tongue of Canaan, because the Hebrew was a holy tongue wherein God's secrets were contained. Forasmuch then as that language was after a sort consecrated unto God: he

saith that God shall be honored of all men, and all men shall renounce their blasphemies, superstitions, and abuses, and there shall be one conformity of faith among men, and being instructed both in the Law and the Gospel, they shall all make one selfsame profession, so as there shall be one tunableness [*concordant sound*] and good agreement among all men. Howbeit Saint Paul meant to express here more clearly after what manner we call upon God: namely that every man prayeth to him as now in his own language, and he heareth us all. For God needeth not to go to school to learn this man's or that man's language. And we know that in praying, speech serveth to no other purpose than to stir us up the more unto it. Also it serveth us to witness before men with our mouths, that we repose all our trust in God. Moreover it serveth to help our infirmity, and because we be lazy and cold, our tongue had need to drive forth our heart, and to help our weakness and sloth which are overgreat in us. But God hath no need of none of all this, we need not to cry out aloud when we would be heard at his hand: for he knoweth the secret thoughts of our hearts. Thus ye see in effect what we have to mark. And herein we see how great sway the Devil beareth in Popery, so that there is neither prayer nor faith. To their seeming their is neither devotion nor holiness, except men babble in an unknown language, and mumble it up without knowing what they say. And although the Priests, Monks, and Hypocrites say they understand latin: men know well enough what their understanding is. Besides this, they make even a rule of their jangling without knowing what they say, and it is enough with them to have a final intent (for so do they term it:) so they have that final intent before they babble their *Domine labia*, to say we go to pray and to serve God, although their mind be upon their kitchen, or upon things much worse, and much more shameful: they bear themselves in hand, that all their prayers and supplications are acceptable to God. The poor people have their eyes bleared at it: for they be made to believe that it is not lawful for them to pray in common language, and therefore they shun that as a bug. We see then that the Devil hath besotted [*dulled, made stupid*] these wretches, yea and utterly bewitched them, seeing they be so loath to receive the food of life, that instead of good bread and wholesome meat, they receive poison and burst with it. But for our own part we see the rule that is given us here and which we ought to keep: which is, that when we pray unto God we must not step to it unadvisedly without bethinking of us what we should demand, or without

knowing how we should behave ourselves towards him. And when we call him our father, let us consider well that it is not for any worthiness of our own persons, nor for any desert or work of our own: but because he hath united us to our Lord Jesus Christ, and gathereth us altogether in him, and because we be his body, and God accepteth us to favor in his person. And for that cause also doth Saint Paul add, that if we be children, we be heirs also. As if he should say, that we enjoy our inheritance even now: not that we be entered into the possession of it, to be partakers of the glory that is promised us, but as in respect of the fathers of old time, which were shut out into the body of the Temple, and had a veil or Curtain drawn before them, with other figures and shadows. Now, we be not like them in that case: but we repair unto God in such wise as we be frank and free. And so is the adoption otherwise in our hearts nowadays, than it was in theirs in the time of the Law. For we be heirs after such a sort, that yet notwithstanding we be also as pilgrims in this world, and (as Saint Paul saith in ^{<470506>} 2 Corinthians 5:6) must be fain [*willing*] to be absent from God, till he have rid us of this mortal body, and have taken us out of this earthly pilgrimage and transitory life. Howsoever the case stand, we must magnify God's grace: and seeing he hath adopted us to be his children, let us understand that therein lieth all our happiness and joy. Therefore let us glory in that, yea even so far forth as to rejoice in the midst of the troubles and adversities which we have to suffer. Let us not cease to have an inward joy continually in us, inasmuch as God calleth us, and hath told us that all the adversities which we endure, shall be turned to our welfare and salvation, so we hold onto the mark that is set before us, that is to wit, so we go on still forward to our Lord Jesus Christ, and forsake all other things.

Now let us fall down before the majesty of our good God, with acknowledgment of our sins, praying him to make us so to feel them, as it may humble us before him, and yet we not be discouraged but that seeing he vouchsafeth to accept well of us, and hath also bound himself to us of his own good will to hear our requests when we come to him with assured trust in him: it may please him to grant us the grace to overcome all distresses and letts [*hindrances*], and all debates and controversies that Satan can put in our hearts, so as we by experience feel the availableness of this promise, that whosoever calleth upon the name of the Lord shall be

safe. (<290232> Joel 2:32; <440221> Acts 2:21) And so let us all say, Almighty God heavenly father, etc.