

THE THIRTY-NINTH SERMON

WHICH IS THE SECOND UPON THE SIXTH CHAPTER

- 2 Bear ye one anothers burden, and so fulfill the Law of Christ.
- 3 For if any man esteemeth himself to be somewhat, whereas in deed he is nothing: he deceiveth himself.
- 4 But let every man try his own work, and then shall he have glory in himself only, and not in another.
- 5 For every man shall bear his own burden. —
<480602> GALATIANS 6:2-5

WE HAVE SEEN this morning, that we must bear with men's infirmities where we see there is any fear of God, or any good seed, and that they be not utterly willful in wickedness. And so ye see in what cases we ought to be pitiful. But when we see men so proud, that they despise God with stubborn outrage: it is not for us to use any mildness or gentleness in that case, but forasmuch as they be seen to prance so in their braveries, that loftiness of theirs must be plucked down, when they exalt themselves after that fashion against God. Also I told you therewithal, that to keep a good mean in rebuking such as have done amiss, every man had need to bethink himself: for we must first of all condemn ourselves: that is the point which we must begin at. And when we see what we ourselves are, and that we have great store of vices in us worthy to be rebuked: then have we there on the other side wherewith to humble ourselves, and to restrain us from using too great or excessive rigor towards such as have need to be succored, and to be borne withal. Saint Paul therefore continueth still the same matter, saying, *that he which esteemeth himself to be anything is nothing, but deceiveth himself*: For every man shuts his eyes when he should think upon his own sins. Of a truth there cannot be so much as one drop of virtue in us, but by and by we magnify it: but if our vices be apparent to the whole world, insomuch that even little children can laugh us to scorn: yet cannot we ourselves see them. Now Saint Paul intending

to correct this vice, saith that men are loath to be deceived, and yet nevertheless every man beguiles himself willingly and wittingly, even through his own overweening [*high opinion*] and misconceit. And by this means he bringeth us to the very wellspring (as I said this morning) which is that if men were not vainglorious and desirous of estimation, surely there would be another manner of modesty and soberness than is to be seen. But forasmuch as every man is puffed up with pride, therefore we covet superiority above all men, and seek occasion to tread them under foot, or else to overcountenance them in such wise, as they may seem our underlings. Therefore it is impossible to redress this outrage of coveting after that sort to carp and bite men: except we be first rid of this fond desire to be had in estimation, and to be as it were advanced above others. No doubt but men can talk well enough of humility: but there are very few that understand what the word meaneth and importeth. Nevertheless Saint Paul showeth us here, which is the true humility: that is to wit, that men should utterly abase themselves, and consider that they be nothing worth, for then shall they be rightly humbled. When humility or lowliness is talked of in common speech: it is taken to be but a device. For every man can well enough say by his honesty, that he is nothing: but in the meanwhile they cease not to swell like Toads with the poison of pride. But Saint Paul teacheth us here a far other lesson: which is, that we must put away all opinion of our own wisdom, and of all the virtues that we can imagine ourselves to have. For it is said here in one word, that we must think ourselves to be nothing. And in very deed, the saying that is set down here must be laid forth thus: Seeing that men are nothing at all: they that presume upon their own virtues, and glory of them, beguile themselves willingly. Therefore let us take this part, namely that we be nothing. It is true that God hath left still some marks in us, whereby it may be perceived that he hath exalted us in worthiness and excellency above the brute beasts, inasmuch as it was his will to create us after his own image. Then if we have respect to the thing that God did put into us, the same ought to be esteemed still: but yet for all that, in respect of our own persons we be nothing. For we be wholly bound unto him, and as for the goodness that we have received, have we received it for our own worthiness sake? Is it given men to make their own estimation and praise of it. No, but rather to increase our shame, because that all the understanding, judgment, and discretion that is in us, is corrupted and

marred by our own naughtiness. To be short, we be like a stinking and rotten vessel, and God's gifts are as good wine that is put into the vessel: and so by that means all is marred. Even so is it with us. We be vessels. And what manner of vessels? Vessels infected with the corruption of sin. God putteth of his gifts into us, to the end he might be glorified by it. Now, may we deserve to have any praise thereby before men? No, but rather blame, because that we by our sinfulness do mar the good things that God hath put into us. Moreover, whereas it is said that we be nothing: it is because we cannot but apply all our understanding and reason unto evil, and for that we will needs be counted wise, [when as notwithstanding] God avoweth that there is nothing but naughtiness in us, and that all our thoughts, are but vanities, leasings [*falsehoods*], illusions, and deceits. (⁰¹⁰⁶⁰⁵Genesis 6:5) Again, whereas to our seeming we have a will whereby we choose both good and evil: the same will is a bonds slave to sin, so as we do nothing else but fight against God. As much is to be said of all our affections. And if we have anything else that seemeth commendable, God distributeth it to every man as it pleaseth himself, and moreover he is fain [*pleased*] to continue the thing that he hath begun, as we see by experience. What cause then hath he to boast, which hath a sharp and subtle wit, seeing it is not he that hath made himself to excel, as though he had been his own maker? Therefore we must hold all things of God, and do him homage for them. Again we see that even they which take themselves to be jolliest fellows, even they that are most honored in the world, who must not be replied against when they have once spoken the word, I say we shall see even them made brutish when it pleaseth God. So then, let us conclude that Saint Paul doth justly abolish here all the power that men presume to have, to the end that they may be rightly humbled, that is to wit, to the end we may not think ourselves to be aught [*anything*] worth. Mark that for one point. Now hereupon he mocketh the fond vaingloriousness which ravisheth their wits, because there is not any man that would willingly be beguiled. And in very deed it is a grief to us when we see any man go about to wind us in by wiliness and dissimulation, and we can by no means brook [*tolerate*] it: and yet for all that we shall find no greater deceivers in the world to us, than ourselves. Every man deceives himself, every man overthrows himself, yea and that in a manner willingly: and what a folly is that? Now then we see Saint Paul's drift, and also the lesson that we have to gather of that sentence.

Forasmuch as every of us will needs advance himself by abasing his fellows: therefore Saint Paul telleth us, that if we make a good and right trial of the things that are in us: there will not be found so much as one drop of virtue that deserveth praise, at leastwise in respect of our own persons. For we be nothing, and there needed but one blast to make clean dispatch of us. Therefore it is but a foolish overweening [*high opinion*] that letteth us to walk in simplicity. And so let us understand first of all, that we cannot challenge anything to ourselves without treason to God, because it is a robbing of him of the right that belongeth to him, and which ought to be reserved unto him, and that is to our own destruction. For in good faith what shall we gain by it when we shall have abused men, and when we shall have been taken for other than we be? To be short, when we shall have been as Idols, what will be the end of it but our own decay and confusion? Then seeing it is so: let us learn to be cast down and laid flat upon the ground, that we may be thoroughly grounded in our God. And to bring that to pass, let us learn to magnify him only. And in the meanwhile, if it please him to exalt us, let us not cease to keep ourselves in continual awe with soberness and modesty, knowing that we have nothing of our own, and that whatsoever God hath given unto us, he must be fain [*pleased*] to preserve it in us from time to time, and that we must so hold all things of him, as to make a willing sacrifice and oblation of them unto him, endeavoring to employ ourselves in the service of our neighbors, according to the measure of grace which we have received of him, and yielding the praise thereof to him unto whom it belongeth. This is in effect the thing that we have to remember upon this strain. Truly it is hard to bring us to this reasonableness. And in good sooth [*truth*] we see the great contentions that are nowadays about Freewill and men's own virtues, as though men were able to advance themselves, and to take the grace of God, and by that means to deserve well. But all this proceedeth of this, that men are fore possessed with such devilish pride, as they will evermore needs be somewhat of themselves. And therefore it standeth us so much the more on hand to put this doctrine in practice. Certainly we cannot profit at all in God's school, nor in the holy Scripture, till we have known that we be nothing at all, to the end we may come to draw out of the fullness of our Lord Jesus Christ. But that can we not do, except we be first utterly dried up in ourselves, and confess with David (^{<19E306>}Psalm 143:6) that we be as the earth that is scorched and cloven with heat, and

have no whit of wetting or moisture, other than it may receive from heaven. Hereupon Saint Paul addeth, *Therefore let every man try his own work, and then shall he have praise in himself, and not of other men:* that is to say, not by comparing of himself with other men. Here Saint Paul remedieth yet one other vice which is too common, and yet notwithstanding we will all of us grant it to be deadly of itself, and that all of us are attainted with it: namely that we esteem ourselves as little Angels, when other men are worse than we, or at leastwise when we find them not better. And that is the very thing that rocketh so many wretched souls asleep nowadays, making them to forget themselves, so as they make no reckoning neither of God nor of their own salvation. It is because they see that the whole world tag and rag doth go that trace. If we take a whole town, and ask them from one to another how they behave themselves, surely every man will have his excuse and they will all pretend this for a buckler, Tush [*def: to express disdain or reproach*] we must do as other men do. As much will they say in cities and countries. To be short, we will needs be like colliers [*coal miner*] sacks (as the Proverb saith) one of us maketh another black. And again, we bear ourselves in hand, that we be quit and clean before God when we can say: such a one is as bad as I, we see that the world is no better, it is apparent that all men do so. Howbeit, besides that these shifts cannot purge us, they be an occasion to harden us in all naughtiness, and to make us rebelliously to despise God's justice, as though we should never come to account of our doings. So have we a very good and profitable exhortation in this text, when Saint Paul saith that every man must try his own work. True it is that the word which he useth, might be taken for to approve or allow: but it agreeth not with the matter: for he speaketh here of the trial or examination that every man ought to make of himself, without comparing himself with others: according as we see how in ^{<471007>}2 Corinthians 10:7, he taunteth such as had measured themselves by other men's yards. For Saint Paul said unto them, Every one of you consider what he hath done, and when ye have well laid all your percells [*parcels*] together: what will you show? Therefore every one of you must come and as it were lay himself upon the rack, that it may be seen what manner of man he is, and what he hath done: and then may judgment be given of him. Even so is it said in this text, that every man must try his own work. As if he should say, we will needs be advanced one above another, but if it be cast in any

of our teeth that we have done amiss, by and by his cloak shall be, that he hath a great sort of fellows: but that shall never go for payment before God (saith Saint Paul:) every man must shole [*shovel*] out himself, and set himself alone aside from the rest, and understand that he shall be acquit or condemned before God, not thereafter as another man shall be found to be better or worse than he, but after the rule of the judge, that is to say, after his word. For God hath on the one side his own word, and on the other side our life. Therefore the true balance whereunto we must come: is not to set down the multitude [for our excuse] and to say, such men or such have misinstructed me, I have followed that which I saw, it was the common fashion, I was fain [*willing*] to do so whither I would or no: for I was carried away, because I was not able to stand against a multitude. No, none of these things will go for payment before God, it will not serve our turn to say, that we have many fellows. But (as I have said already) the true balance is that God's word be the Counterpeyse [*opposition, counter-balance*], and [to consider] that although the whole world draw us unto evil, yet we shall not be excused if we prefer not God and his word before all men's doings. And here first of all, in following the matter that Saint Paul layeth forth, when account is to be entered into, we must call ourselves home to examine our own lives thoroughly. For a man shall never be touched with true repentance, nor never acknowledge his sins without hypocrisy, till he have shut his eyes against all the doings of other men, and fall to considering thus with himself: Go to, what is it that my God commandeth me? After what manner may I appear before his judgment seat? How will he judge me? According to his word. Behold here in effect how we may be touched with the true fear of God: behold also how we may mislike of our sins, and finally be humbled: namely, not by looking upon this man or that man, but by examining truly what we ourselves are, and thereupon by resolving ourselves fully, that only God's word shall bear sway with us, and that it is not for us to give judgment by the things that are seen in the world. Let that serve for one point. And hereupon also we may gather a general lesson: namely that it is too gross an oversight, to think to bury our faults and to scape unespied [*unseen*], by having a great number guilty as well as ourselves. And yet nevertheless it is the common excuse nowadays, as I have touched already: but yet for all that it is but a trifling excuse. If a man ask why the Papists are so dull, and why they give no ear to any reason, tell them what ye can, but

account it as nothing: it is because they judge by comparison, saying: All the world doth thus. To be short, God seemeth unto them to be barred of all liberty, when the world behaveth itself otherwise than he hath commanded by his word. But it is to no purpose for them to set down and object such examples: for they cannot prejudice God, that he should not always condemn such as have done amiss. Though there were a thousand worlds, yet should they all go to wreck before him, specially if men came with such stateliness, as to say, Thus and thus do we. And who are you? Thus ye see in effect whereunto this text ought to serve us that we may take profit by it where Saint Paul would have every man to try his own works. And it is purposely said *his own work*, to bring us to the consideration of our whole life. For he meaneth not that we should take a piece of it and let the rest alone: but that like as God hath written all in his records, so we on our side should search thoroughly by parcelmeal [*piecemeal*] wherein we may have offended, and what vices and infirmities there are in us. That is it that Saint Paul meant by the word *work*. For it may happen now and then, that in some one point we shall have served God faithfully, but yet howsoever it be done, there is still some infirmity in it. Again we be faulty of so many imperfections, as it abasheth us to see it, and we cannot but even loath ourselves.

Therefore let us learn to examine our own lives well, before we judge of other men's. For seeing that God doth us the honor to make every of us his own judge: we do but increase our own damnation before him, when we be so rough and severe towards those that have offended, and forget our own sins. Now whereas Saint Paul saith that every man shall have praise in himself only: it is not meant when men examine themselves, they shall find cause in them wherefore to be praised: but that the true praise is that which hath some substantialness in itself: which is, that every man know what he himself is, and judge of himself without comparing with others. As for example: it is always said that a purblind person is clear-sighted, among them that are stark blind. And among the black Moors, he that is tawny will seem white. If judgment be given of a white man when he is among a dozen Moors, there will be no whiteness unto his. But if he be brought again among his own countrymen he will be found to be a far other than he was taken to be. If it be said, Lo here a man that is clear-sighted, and yet he is but purblind: his clear-sightedness shall be but in

comparison of them that are stark blind: for his eyesight is not clear and sound indeed. Even so, to judge by comparison is a very fond thing. Thus ye see in effect what Saint Paul meant to say. He meant not that when we have examined our life, we have wherefore to commend and esteem ourselves: but that all the praises which men do challenge to themselves, are but wind and smoke, and stark lies because their gazing is at themselves, as if a man should be in love with his own image.

Mark me a little child when one showeth him a glass, he knows not whither it be himself or another, whom he sees there, and yet is he altogether fond of it. Even so is it with all such as believe themselves to be wondrous fellows. And why so? Whereupon do they ground themselves, or what reason moveth them, but that they seem to themselves to be of more value, than they that were able to show them the way? For see here what they will allege. O (say they) such a man is well esteemed, but yet he hath such a fault and such a fault in him. So that when a man's vices are searched out, if they be condemned, ye see it is but a sport of little children. Therefore not without cause doth Saint Paul say, that to make a good trial, that we may have a well-grounded praise and such a one as may stand before God, we must try ourselves. If a man say, yea: but may a man praise himself? It is so certain that we must be void of all glory, to put in ure [*remembrance*] that which we have seen in another text, where it is said that we must glory in God. The question then is not whither men may be praised or no: but Saint Paul hath said conditionally, that if any man will be praised of God, he must withdraw himself as it were into his secret chamber, and consider what manner of one he is: and then will he be no more so foolish as to commend himself or to say, tush [*def: to express disdain or reproach*], I am worth as much as such a one, I am as good a man as he. When this geer [*whimsical mockery*] is pulled down: then shall a man see whither he ought to be praised or no. Now of a truth, it is certain that there is not one spark of praise in us, at leastwise that we may challenge as our own. Nevertheless we shall not fail to have praise in our God: which is much better than if we were hoisted above the Clouds. For when men deceive themselves with a vain opinion, or that the whole world laugheth upon them: it seemeth to them that they fly in the air: but it is the next way to make them tumble down and break their necks. Lo whereunto all this presumption that blindeth us serveth us. But when we

once know what it is to seek praise in God: then are we in the way to be rightly knit unto him, and so shall we stand upon a good and sure ground to be praised and esteemed. According whereunto we see how Saint Paul glorieth in his good conscience and in his uprightness. He saith that they whom he hath won unto Jesus Christ by the Gospel are his Crown or garland. And all God's servants may say as much. Nevertheless, it is not meant that they must part stakes with God, as they do which allege their own virtues and deservings, who out of all doubt do make as it were idols of themselves: But that the faithful having confessed themselves to be nothing at all but by God's free goodness: rejoice in the things that he hath given them, always reserving to him his due. Therefore when we desire not to have anything to ourselves alone from God, but depend upon him and upon his mere grace: then shall we have praise, howbeit in ourselves (saith Saint Paul) and not in other folk. Now whereas it is said *But in ourselves*: it is not meant that the praise springeth in ourselves, and that we be not sinners: but he hath an eye to that which I have told you already: which is, that so long as men stand upon comparing of themselves with other folks, they do but deceive themselves. For it will seem that we be little Angels: and yet for all that, we shall be never a whit better than Devils. And why? For we liken ourselves but to such as are stark nought and utterly corrupted. Now if ever this warning were necessary, it is most necessary nowadays. For although there have been much corruption even ever from Saint Paul's time hitherto: yet at this day it is come to the full height of it. And in very deed it seemeth that all states and degrees have conspired against God. We see then that the world rusheth forth as it were into a furious rage, to make war against all equity and uprightness: and yet we cease not to sleep still in such confusion. And why? Because every man doth so. And by that means God is as it were driven back. Think we that we by our iniquities shall thrust him out of his seat, or bereave him of his authority of judging the whole world? No: For all of us without exception must appear before him, and there we cannot shock ourselves together to say, Sirs let us stick to our tackling, for we be too great a multitude. God with one blast of his mouth is able to sink a hundred worlds. Sith [*since*] it is so, let us put the thing in practice which is spoken here by Saint Paul, and let every man keep good watch over himself. And when we see blasphemy, whoredom, wantonness, Looseness, drunkenness, gluttony, pilling and polling, perjury, treason, envy, and such other like things have

their full scope: Let us be sorry for it, and yet let us not think that because the thorns among the which we walk do scratch us, therefore we be discharged: nor that it may avail us when we can allege, that other men have been the cause of our starting out into lewd behavior, or of that we have been carried away in deed as it were with a whirlwind. I say let us not think that that can avail us: but let us follow God's word when it is preached unto us: Let that be all our wisdom. Let that be all our counsel, according as it is said in the hundred and nineteenth Psalm, that God's commandments are the Counselors of a faithful man. When a young man that is ready to fall to unthriftiness [*of dissolute and reckless conduct*] hath a governor to hold him in awe, he will be restrained for a time. Now truly Satan hath great store of allurements, and infinite means and occasions to break our necks withal: But God of his grace giveth us counsel, he setteth his word before us.

Therefore it is good reason he should win so much at our hands as to be heard of us, and that we should frame ourselves to him: for what shall it advantage us to have alleged a hundred thousand times that we have done as other men did? It is all one as if we should say, Tush [*def. to express disdain or reproach*] sir, we pass not so much for GOD as for men, we have preferred the world, which led us to unthriftiness [*of dissolute and reckless conduct*], and withdrawn ourselves from all goodness. Is this a reasonable excuse? No: Is it not all one as if we should spit in his face, and bid him back and get him hence, that men may have full sway among us, for we must do as they do and frame ourselves to the bent of their bow? Thus ye see in few words to what use we ought nowadays to put this doctrine of Saint Paul's. And for the same cause also he addeth, *that every man shall bear his own burden*. As if he had said, every man shall be cumbered enough for himself, without helping of his fellow. True it is that this sentence may be applied to many uses, yea even without turning of the words from Saint Paul's own meaning. For if this reason that every man shall bear his own burden before GOD, be alleged as a general matter: then useth he the word *Burden*, to cut off all excuses, to the end that men should think that all their shifts and startingholes cannot avail them: and that is well worthy to be marked. For we see what malapertness is in us: we would be ashamed to stand in contention with creatures as we do with our GOD, and for proof thereof, if God press us, we will never leave our

replying and murmuring, till we be more than convicted. Ye see then that Saint Paul's setting down of this word *Burden*, is as if he should say that we cannot accuse GOD, nor win anything by standing in contention with him. For why? Whence cometh the condemnation that presseth us? Is it of that God stretcheth out his arm to make us feel his power in overwhelming us? No, but every man shall bear his own burden.

Now it is very true that God's wrath is likened to a burning fire which consumeth all: (¹⁹⁵⁰⁰³ Psalm 50:3) but in the meanwhile, whence cometh the wood of the fire that consumeth us? What kindleth it? What maintaineth it? It is we ourselves: Our sins are (as ye would say) the wood, and our wicked lusts have kindled the fire. Even so is it as in respect of the word *Burden*. It is true that it is God's hand which presseth the wicked: but yet notwithstanding if they look upon the very cause, they shall find it to be their own sins. Thus much concerning the word *Burden*. Now after that Saint Paul hath stopped all mouths, and showed that we must quietly receive the judgment that God shall give upon us: he telleth us that every man shall bear his own burden. And thereupon we have to gather the thing which I have touched already, namely that every man shall be cumbered enough with himself. And Saint Paul doth purposely say so, because that when I refer myself to custom and say, the fashion or guise is so, and every man doth so: it is all one as if I would unburden myself. But now must I look whither they whom I allege for my warrant be strong enough, and whither their shoulders be able to bear my burden.

Behold, God calleth me, and I must be fain [*obliged*] to yield up an account of my life: and I shall go seek warrants to answer for me. And who be they? Every man shall be cumbered enough in answering for himself: there is not that man which hath not faults ynow [*enough*] of his own already. And how then could they bear my burden if I should cast it upon them, seeing they be so sore loden already with themselves, as is able to weigh them down a hundred times? Is it not then a great folly for me to bring such warrants before God? I am guilty of a hundred thousand faults, I shall be put there into the throng among the rest, and if I examine myself rightly, I shall find myself worse than guilty as I said, and yet for all this, I will satisfy God with saying, I have followed the common trace. While I go about to discharge myself after this fashion upon others, a

thousand persons or twain shall fall upon me, and by that means my burden which was to heavy already shall be increased and be made much heavier: and so ye see we shall still abide in confusion. Now therefore we see what folly it is to allege men, as though they could defend us against God, or that we could be exempted from our deserved condemnation by making a number of bucklers after that sort, to shield ourselves against God: as who should say, the matter were doubtful who should get the upper hand, whither God's word which must endure forever (Isaiah 40:8) and cannot be impeached, or else our lusts which are fleshly. For whereof cometh custom, and fashion, and all that men term lawfulness, and antiquity or prescription and such other things? Of nothing else but that men will needs be wise in despite of God: and moreover are carried away with their own wicked lusts, and every man would have the bridle slaked, to take leave to do all manner of lewdness. Ye see then that we cannot bring any warrants to set against God, but we make open war against him. To be short, if every of us consider that he is overloden with his own faults, he shall have cause to humble himself. For there is not any man which is not beaten down to the ground if God list [*wish*] to enter into account with him, especially if he execute rigor towards him, and even the righteousest men of all, shall have somewhat continually in them that is worthy of blame, so as they shall be confounded. Let us acknowledge this, and yield God the whole praise, suffering ourselves to be governed by him. And let us go back again to that which Saint Paul told us heretofore: that is to wit [to beware] that we deceive not ourselves willfully, when we would show ourselves hardy and bold in correcting, rebuking, and amending one man or other. Let us not be so foolish as to justify ourselves by comparison, as who should say that God ought to hold himself contented with our rebuking of others after that manner, and for that there is some show of virtue in us. Let us not stay upon any of these things, as is told us here, but let us mark also by the way, that whereas it is said that every man shall bear his own burden, we have right great need of our Lord Jesus Christ's help, and that he should take all our burdens upon him, according as in very deed he hath borne all our sins upon the cross, as saith Saint Peter in his first Epistle. (<600224> 1 Peter 2:24) True it is that the matter which Saint Paul handleth here, is none other than the same that I have declared already: that is to wit, that we must not imagine that men are able to warrant us, for the righteousest man alive is cumbered enough with

himself. And furthermore, that if our Lord had not regard to hold us up, we should be oppressed under our burden. Yet notwithstanding every man must answer for himself, and God's word must have the mastery as I said afore. Thus ye see what Saint Paul intended to tell us. But yet further, let us think a little upon ourselves. If every man should be fain [*obliged*] to bear his own burden, who were able to endure it? We should needs be borne down. For if a man had but some one sin in him, behold hell were ready to swallow him up. Surely the weight of one sin is heavier than a stone that were able to crush all our limbs and bones a pieces. Now it is no talking of anyone, nor of a hundred: the multitude of them is infinite. How then shall we stand in judgment before God when he bringeth us to account? Who can say that he cometh frank and free? To be short, we see that if there were not a remedy in the matter that Saint Paul telleth us here: we should all be damned. Therefore we must repair to our Lord Jesus Christ, for it is he that hath borne all our burdens, as I have alleged already. Truly the redeeming of us did cost him dear, and if we seek heaven and earth throughout for the price of a ransom, we shall not find any other than him, that is able to pacify God. Then had we never been sanctified, except the son of God had given himself for us. And in very deed the prophet Esay showeth how he bear our burdens. (^{<235304>}Isaiah 53:4, 5) Namely that he felt the pains of death, and that the father was fain [*pleased*] to wreak himself upon him, as though he had been an offender and guilty of all the sins of the world. Now therefore we must resort unto him, according also as he allureth us to him. And by the way, if any man allege that here seemeth to be some contrariety, considering how Saint Paul saith that every man shall bear his own burden: the answer thereto is easy. When the Scripture speaketh to us of God's justice: it saith that every man shall be recompensed according to his own works. After which manner Saint Paul speaketh in the fourteenth to the Romans. According as every man shall have walked in his conversation in this world (saith he) and according as he shall have wrought in his body: so must he receive his reward. That is the order which the scripture keepeth in speaking of God's justice. Yea, but in the meanwhile it excludeth not the remedy that is given us in our Lord Jesus Christ, whereby men are succored. Lo how God succoreth his elect, and such as he hath reserved to salvation: that is to wit, after he hath chastised them, he reacheth them his hand, and lifteth them up again when he hath cast them down. And truly we should not

know of what value the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ is, neither could we taste of it, neither could we ever be partakers of it, unless we were utterly confounded in ourselves. Therefore let us learn to feel our burden in such wise, as to bow under it, (as hath been declared this morning) and let the same lead us to true humility. And afterward, when we have felt the burden more than we are able to bear: let us repair to our Lord Jesus Christ, who promiseth to ease us, so we seek our whole rest in him. (<401128> Matthew 11:28) So then, we see that God's grace is not excluded when his justice is spoken of. For it standeth us in hand to have recourse always to his mercy. Whereas it is said that he which shall have been a cruel and merciless person, shall have justice without mercy: thereby Saint James doth us to understand, (<590213> James 2:13) that our Lord hath his judgment against the wicked and the reprobates, to recompense them according to their misdeeds: and again that he measureth his own otherwise, that is to wit, that after he hath condemned them in themselves, and made them to feel their diseases thereby to bring them to true lowliness: then he setteth them up again. Then must we first be stricken down with God's hand, and afterward be lifted up again by his gracious promises, in that he telleth us that in our Lord Jesus Christ we shall find all that we want. Thus ye see in sum, after what manner we must practice this text: namely that in admonishing our neighbors with a gentle and mild spirit, and being also humble and meek ourselves, without presuming anything upon ourselves, we must examine well our own lives, so as we may daily bewail our sins and be sorry for them, to the end that we be no more deceived with hypocrisy, but labor to withdraw ourselves from the world, to the intent we surmise not that we shall scape God's judgment by our shifts. So then, let us bear all these things in mind, that we may submit ourselves to the pure word of God. And whatsoever men do to turn us away from it, let us not suffer ourselves to be seduced. And for the bringing hereof to pass, let us flee to our Lord Jesus Christ, knowing that how desirous soever we be to give ourselves wholly to the serving of God, yet we be so overloden with sins and imperfections, that they were able to sink us down to the bottom of hell, if we had not one to hold us back, that is to wit, our Lord Jesus Christ, who hath borne all our sins, and set us utterly free from them, to the intent we might hereafter come before God with our faces upright.

Now let us acknowledge our sins with such humility, as every of us may confess, yea even unfeignedly [*genuinely*], that we are all forlorn and past hope, except this our good God have pity upon us: praying him nevertheless, to make the fruit and virtue of the death and passion of our Lord Jesus Christ available, not only in hiding of the sins which we have committed already, and in burying them out of remembrance: but also in cleansing us daily by his holy spirit: and in holding us up continually, till we be come to the perfection whereunto he calleth us, and be delivered from the prison of sin, wherewith we be yet enclosed. That it may please him to grant this grace, not only to us, but also to all people, etc.