



THE HOMILIES ON  
VARIOUS EPISTLES

ST. JOHN CHRYSOSTOM

# **The Homilies On Various Epistles**

## **St. Chrysostom**

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## **John Chrysostom - A Biography**

John Chrysostom, a bishop, doctor, and saint of the eastern church, born in Antioch, according to the best authorities, Jan. 14, 347, died Sept. 14, 407. His name was only John,

the appellation Chrysostom (Greek for "the golden-mouthed"), by which he is usually known, not having been given to him until the 7th century. His father, Secundus, who was *magister militum Orientis*, died while John was still in his infancy. Arethusa, his mother, left a widow in her 20th year, resolved to remain single in order to devote her whole life to her boy. Intending him to follow the legal profession, she sought for him the best school of eloquence, and placed him with the renowned Libanins, then teaching at Antioch. Libanius, who had formerly had among his pupils the great Basil of Csesarea, his brother Gregory of Nyssa, and his bosom friend Gregory Nazianzen, had also been the master of the emperor Julian, and his most ardent auxiliary in his endeavor to put down Christianity and restore the worship of the old gods. He welcomed John, soon discovered his genius, labored to develop it, and predicted the preeminence which his favorite pupil afterward attained. At the age of 18 he was practising at the bar, where even then more than one great success laid the foundation of his fame.

This, as well as his social position and the virtues of his mother, drew on him the eyes of Meletius, bishop of Antioch, who wished to secure as a member of his clergy one so full of promise. He instructed and baptized him, gave him his first lessons in ecclesiastical science, ordained him lector or reader, and assigned him a residence beneath his own roof. This was not what his mother had designed for him; she had set her heart on seeing him foremost in the race for worldly honors, and resisted with all her might his entrance on a career so different. She represented to him that for love of him she had in youth renounced all earthly joys, and that he must not think of forsaking her now when old age and its infirmities were fast approaching. It was all in vain. The same wave of ascetic fervor which was carrying away into solitude and the austerities of

monastic life the very elite of Christian youth, bore John into the mountains which surrounded his native city. For six years, two of which were spent in a hermitage, he gave himself up to a life divided between the study of the Scriptures and prayer, mortifying his body meanwhile with such rigor that his limbs were nearly paralyzed.

The urgent solicitations of his friends at length drew him back to Antioch, where the pallor of his countenance and his extreme emaciation touched all beholders with pity or veneration. Several years passed before he was ordained deacon. In 381 Meletius died. A rival Christian faction, with Paulinus as its bishop, had divided the church at Antioch. John, while yet a deacon, strove in vain to heal the schism. Flavian, successor to Meletius, appreciated his learning, eloquence, and disinterestedness. So great, indeed, was the esteem in which he was held throughout Asia Minor, that even before his elevation to the priesthood the neighboring bishops sought to raise him to the episcopal office. He shrank from the honor and responsibility, but induced his friend Basil to accept the proffered rank. In 386 John became a priest, and commenced his course as a preacher. He was justly considered even then as the shining light of the eastern church. In 397 the see of Constantinople became vacant by the death of Nectarius. For three months rival candidates and contending factions sought to no purpose to fill the coveted see.

The eunuch Eutropius, then all-powerful at court, and who had heard John's preaching, submitted his name to the emperor Arcadius. The latter approved of the choice; and forthwith a messenger was sent to Asterius, prefect of the East, who resided at Antioch, bidding him to secure by some stratagem the person of the presbyter John, and send him to Constantinople. John was invited by Asterius to accompany him on a visit to a new church just erected



outside of Antioch, and his chariot was driven amid an armed escort toward the Bosphorus. After the first emotion of surprise and anger, John thought he saw in all this the hand of an overruling Providence, and submitted passively. The episcopal chair of Constantinople, in which John now found himself, had a few years before been adorned by Gregory Nazianzen. Nectarius, whom Theodosius chose as his successor, had not even been baptized when, to his dismay, he, in the midst of the second general council, saw himself raised to such an exalted rank. But he discharged his episcopal functions with a careful piety, charming Theodosius and his court by his majestic presence and graceful manners, and dispensing in the patriarchal residence a princely hospitality to the many churchmen whom business drew to the capital.

Chrysostom brought a new spirit to these halls. He resolved to make his household a model for every household of churchman and layman within his jurisdiction, and his own life a mirror in which every bishop and priest should see what they must be themselves in order to be true shepherds in Christ's flock. He made a monastic frugality preside over his table and all his domestic expenses. The rich furniture of his predecessors and their abundant wardrobe of silks and cloth of gold were sold at auction, and the proceeds given to the poor. Nectarius had purposed erecting a magnificent basilica, and collected a large quantity of precious marbles and other rare building material. John did not hesitate to sell them for the benefit of the needy classes. The very sacred vessels which he judged too costly for the altar were similarly disposed of. This displeased the clergy, while the people were taught to attribute these reforms to parsimony or avarice. But when the poorly clad archbishop appeared in the pulpit of St. Sophia, his hearers forgot everything but that they possessed a man of God in their midst. It is impossible to

study his works without being impressed with his deep devotion to the people.

Hence, in Constantinople as at Antioch, whenever he preached the largest edifices could not contain the crowds who flocked to hear him. They surrounded him in the streets, pouring blessings on his head as he passed along; and when his liberty or his life was threatened at a later period, they watched night and day around his dwelling. "I love you," he one day exclaimed to the worshipping throng "I love you as you love me. What should I be without you? You are to me father, mother, brothers, and children; you are all the world to me. I know no joy, no sorrow, which is not yours." This popularity constituted one great source of his power, and he used it in his vain attempt at reform both in court and church. Eutropius, who had been mainly instrumental in his elevation, did not find favor with the archbishop, who denounced his tyranny and the corruption which he encouraged in every branch of the administration. He retaliated by having a law passed which repealed or abridged ecclesiastical immunities, and in particular limited the right of asylum granted to churches. John inveighed against the extravagance and licentiousness of the court.

Arcadius dreaded the remonstrances which tended to rouse him from his unmanly love of ease, and the empress Eudoxia hated the man who dared to reprove openly her illicit amours. The courtiers and ministers of state shared their master's enmity, and only waited for an opportunity to make the archbishop feel the weight of their resentment. Eutropius fell into disgrace and fled for his life to the church of St. Sophia, where Chrysostom gave him a shelter, and protected him against the united rage of the courtiers, the military, and the populace. But it was only for a time. Eutropius was induced to leave his asylum, and perished by

the hands of Eudoxia's satellites. She now ruled with absolute sway both the emperor and the empire. Her avarice was equal to her ambition, and she went so far as to take open possession of a vineyard which the owner would neither sell nor give up to her. Chrysostom denounced her from the pulpit as a second Jezebel. This brought matters to a crisis. Theophilus, bishop of Alexandria, who had himself aspired to the succession of Nectarius, found new matter of complaint as well as of hatred against Chrysostom in the toleration which the latter extended to some monks expelled from Egypt and excommunicated on account of their attachment to Origen and his doctrines.

This caused the accusation of heresy to be made against the archbishop, although at that time no council had condemned the opinions attributed to Origen. Chrysostom summoned before himself every member of his clergy in order to examine into the scandalous reports about their relations with deaconesses and other women. He reformed or rebuked wherever he found just cause; and thus there was wide-spread discontent among the clergy. It had been reported to him that the episcopal office was bought and sold in the provinces dependent on his patriarchate. In the midst of winter he set out, visiting every diocese, and before; he returned to Constantinople deposed 13 bishops convicted of simony and immorality. He even extended his visitation into provinces which owed him no obedience, and there exercised the same rigor against the guilty. This raised a great outcry against him, and gave the advantage to his enemies. Eudoxia and Theophilus joined hands; and in 403 a council of 36 bishops assembled at Chalcedon, a suburb of Constantinople. There Chrysostom was accused, among other crimes, of pride, oppression of the clergy, inhospitality, avarice, gluttony, undue familiarity with women, and high treason.

He refused to appear before his self-constituted judges until their president, Theophilus, and three other bishops, his declared enemies, had been excluded. Meanwhile he continued to give his usual homilies in the cathedral, and the people watched unceasingly his coming and going lest any evil should befall him. He was found guilty and deposed from his see, and a new bishop was appointed by the council and approved by the emperor. At length his house was surrounded in the night by soldiers, and himself borne off into exile at Nicaea. The people on hearing this rose and besieged the imperial palace, demanding his instant recall. An earthquake happened at this very moment, and seemed even to Eudoxia a manifest sign of the divine displeasure. She rushed into the presence of Arcadius and besought him to lose not one moment in bringing back the exiled archbishop. But his return did not cause the court to mend its morals, nor the city to lay aside its love of the most costly pleasures. The connection of the empress with the count John was now a subject of comment in every household, while the courtiers tried to cloak over the scandal by showing new honor to Eudoxia, and she endeavored to divert the attention of the populace by inventing for them new games in the circus.

The erection of a silver statue to her in the square adjoining the church of St. Sophia was made the occasion of the most extravagant festivities, at a time when the people were suffering from want. The archbishop publicly reproved the people for their love of dissipation, and as openly blamed those whose vanity had caused this display. The empress took mortal offence, and threatened a second exile. The courtiers, too, replied to the archbishop's denunciation by inaugurating a new feast, in which the honors paid to the statue verged on idolatry. Chrysostom was not to be intimidated. On appearing in the pulpit, he

alluded in his commentary on the gospel to Herodias dancing, and demanding as a reward the head of John. The allusion was too transparent. This time the court resolved to take no half-way measures. A second assembly of bishops was summoned, more numerous than the first; and, although 42 among the number were faithful to Chrysostom, he was condemned. In 404, six years after he had been forcibly borne off from his native Antioch to assume the spiritual government of the capital, when every appeal to the Roman pontiff had only increased the rage of his enemies, and the efforts made to assemble a full council had proved abortive, he was compelled to set out for a second exile.

Feeble in body, but unbroken in spirit, the high-souled old man traversed Asia Minor, and took up his abode in Cucusus, a town of the Armenian Taurus. Again the indignant populace arose to demand his recall; but, although in their fury they burned to the ground the senate house and the metropolitan church, the emperor firmly withstood all their clamor. The devoted adherents of the exiled archbishop would not acknowledge while he lived the jurisdiction of any other, and, under the name of "Johannites," they worshipped apart until his remains were brought to Constantinople in 438. For about 18 months Chrysostom resided in Cucusus, when an attack of the Isaurians compelled him to take refuge in the distant stronghold of Arabissus. In the latter place, as in the former, he continued to be the light and life of the Asiatic church. At length a new decree banished him to the remote desert of Pityus. On foot, bareheaded, beneath a burning sun, he was driven pitilessly along by his military escort, until he broke down on reaching Comana in Cappadocia. He felt that the end was at hand; and putting on a white robe, he dragged himself feebly a few miles further to the

tomb of St. Basiliscus, where he laid himself down to rest for ever.

The surrounding country flocked to his obsequies, and honored his remains as those of a man of God. Thirty years later the entire population of Constantinople, headed by Theodosius II., welcomed the relics back with solemn pomp and rejoicing. Chrysostom was a voluminous writer. The best edition of his works is that of the Benedictines, in Greek, with a Latin translation (13 vols, folio, Paris, 1718-'38; reprinted in Venice, 1734-'41; in Paris, 1834-'39; and in Migne's Patrologia, 1859-'60). A translation into English of his homilies is contained in the "Library of the Fathers " (Oxford, 1842-'53). Most of his works are homilies and commentaries on the Bible. A minute analysis of his writings is contained in Butler's " Lives of the Saints." His biography has been written, among others, by Neander (2 vols., Berlin, 1821-'2; 3d ed., 1848), Perthes (English translation, Boston, 1854), Rochet (Paris, 1866), and Stephens (" St. Chrysostom, his Life and Times," London, 1872).

## **St. Chrysostom as a Homilist.**

*By the American Editor of the Homilies on Philippians, Colossians, and Thessalonians*

THESE Homilies are often less complete in exposition than those on earlier books of the New Testament, and in literary excellence will not compare with the Homilies on the Statues, and many other discourses given at Antioch. But to the student of preaching, they are quite as instructive, if not really more so. Here at Constantinople

the great preacher was burdened with administrative details, and harassed by Court intrigues, so that his sermons were often given with far less than his earlier careful preparation, and seem to have been generally left afterwards to the mercy of shorthand reporters, and of editors who sent them forth when he was in banishment or in the grave. Any minister who has winced to see an unwritten sermon or other address of his own in the morning paper, with the accumulated and interlaced mistakes of reporter, compositor, and proof-corrector, can sympathize with the situation. But in fact the preacher thus appears in undress, and his methods may be in some respects the subject of a more profitable inspection. You see the sermon in about as imperfect, and sometimes distorted, a condition as it is seen in the actual delivery by many of the congregation. You see the frequent questions, the abrupt turns of phrase, the multiplied repetitions, by which a skilled and sympathetic preacher, keenly watching his audience, strives to retain attention and to insure a more general comprehension. You are drawn near to him, and almost stand by his side.

John of the Golden Mouth is, upon the whole, our very best example,—most richly instructive and fruitfully inspiring,—in respect of expository preaching, which is of late beginning to be more highly valued and more frequently attempted in our country than ever before. We have many good models in Scotland, some in England, and a few at home. Nor should the student ever forget Luther, or fail to profit by the peculiar methods of some recent Germans; but one who is reasonably endowed with historical sympathy can learn most from Chrysostom. The study of an ancient preacher is in this respect like the study of the Greek and Latin classics, that it demands sympathy with ideas and persons far away from ourselves, thus broadening the intellect, invigorating the imagination, and deepening in us

a true feeling for all that is human. One who is at first without interest in Chrysostom, perhaps even repelled by the extravagant expressions, the heaped-up imagery, the frequent bad taste (at least, according to our standards), of this eminently representative Asiatic Greek, is precisely the man that ought to read Chrysostom, if he wishes to educate himself in the broadest and highest sense. Study the great preacher till you can thoroughly appreciate and heartily enjoy him. This will be much aided, of course, by reading a biography, as that by Stephens, or the long article in Smith's Dictionary of Christian Biography, or the introductory biographical sketch in the ninth volume of this series. You very soon find that he is profoundly in earnest, and all alive. Christianity is with him a living reality. He dwells always in its presence and companionship. We may discern what seem to us grave errors of doctrinal opinion, but we feel the quickening pulses of genuine Christian love and zeal. And how fully he sympathizes with his hearers! He thoroughly knows them, ardently loves them, has a like temperament, shares not a little in the faults of his age and his race, as must always be the case with a truly inspiring orator or poet. Even when severely rebuking, when blazing with indignation, he never seems alien, never stands aloof, but throws himself among them, in a very transport of desire to check, and rescue, and save. Is there, indeed, any preacher, ancient or modern, who in these respects equals John Chrysostom?

His homilies are not directly a model for us, as regards the construction of discourse. The early Christians disliked to hear, or make, a smoothly symmetrical and elegantly finished oration like those of the secular orators. They wished for familiar and free addresses, such as we call a prayer-meeting *talk*; and this was precisely the meaning of their words "homily" and "sermon." The preacher took up his passage of Scripture—usually somewhat extended—in a



familiar way, sentence by sentence, with explanations and remarks, as he saw occasion; sometimes we find Chrysostom actually returning to go over the passage again, that it may suggest further remarks. At length, he would be apt to seize upon some topic of doctrine or practice which the text had directly or remotely suggested, and discuss that by way of conclusion, not infrequently wandering far off into the thoughts which one after another occurred. Now, modern taste requires much more system and symmetry in building a discourse. The Schoolmen taught their pupils to analyze and arrange, and modern preaching has taken the corresponding form, for good and for ill. An expository sermon of to-day must be much more systematic in its explanations, and much more regular in its entire construction, than those of the ancient preachers. Admirable models in this direction are furnished in Scotland. But while conforming to modern taste as to structure, one may learn much, very much, from the preachers of the early centuries, especially from Chrysostom, in respect of freedom, versatility, and skill in practical application. The modern careful preparation and orderly arrangement, combined (*mutatis mutandis*) with the ancient freedom and directness, and reduced to harmony and vital symmetry by zealous practice, might constitute the best type of expository preaching.

And it may be repeated that Chrysostom is not least helpful in these expository talks on the shorter epistles of Paul. Though often appearing fragmentary, they lay bare his habitual processes and reveal his most vigorous powers, and are not wanting in passages that burst into passion or shine in splendor.

Their value is increased rather than lessened for thoughtful readers by the restoration of the true text. The Oxford translation of the Homilies on these Epistles was published

(1843) before the appearance of the corresponding volume of Field's critical edition of the Greek text (1855). The translation was based, for Philippians, on the edition of Chrysostom's Works by the English scholar Savile (1612), with some comparison of the Benedictine edition by Montfaucon (1718), and the Paris or Second Benedictine edition (1834-1839); and for Colossians and Thessalonians, on the Paris edition, with comparison of Savile. There was also occasional use of some collations from one MS. for Philippians, and one or two more for Thessalonians. Field has pointed out that the Benedictine and the Paris, and other editions, including that of Migne (1863), really followed, with slight alteration, the text of Savile. But the earliest edition of Chrysostom's Homilies on the Epistles of Paul, published at Verona in 1529, presents a very different text; and Field's careful study of collations from four MSS. for Philippians, six for Colossians, and five for Thessalonians, together with the Catena, satisfied him that the Verona edition had in general given the true text, and he has reproduced it, with such alterations as the MSS. generally agreeing with it appeared, in his judgment, to require. The American editor was at first inclined to think that Field had been unduly influenced by the Catena, which would naturally abridge its extracts, particularly in drawing from an author so efflorescent and repetitious as Chrysostom, and which had often appeared to do so when he was studying it throughout the Gospel of Matthew. But after going through Philippians with the construction of a composite text, which was felt to be inconsistent and unsatisfactory, like that of the Oxford translator and that of Migne, the editor was not far advanced in Colossians before he saw clearly that the Verona text as rewrought by Field was, beyond question, generally correct and greatly to be preferred. Accordingly the whole of this portion, Philippians as well as the rest, has been conformed to Field's text, except in occasional passages, where Field's

own MSS. were thought to indicate otherwise, and these have been pointed out in the foot-notes if they possessed the least importance. The foot-notes also present some few specimens of the numerous enlargements and explanatory changes or transitional additions by which the altered text printed by Savile and his followers sought to piece out and smooth into literary propriety the rough, fragmentary, and sometimes obscure expressions of the true text. It was only when nearly all this work had been done that the editor observed that some other portions of the Oxford translation were originally based on Field's text, which for those portions had appeared in time for the purpose. Thus his part of the work has in fact become assimilated to the American edition for Matthew, and for Acts and Romans.

The *translation* of the Oxford edition shows general excellence, and frequent felicity of English expression. Besides the numerous cases of differences in text, the translation has been altered where the syntax seemed to be misunderstood, where the passion for variety of rendering (as often in the common or authorized English version of the Bible) had obscured the verbal connection of passages, &c. It is possible that the American editor, in his love for Chrysostom's freedom and downrightness, has sometimes gone to the opposite extreme from that of the translators in England, and become too baldly literal.

The foot-notes in square brackets are from the editor. The others are from the Oxford translators, being retained except where they were superseded by the change of text or of translation, or for some other reason appeared to be no longer useful. Their references to other volumes of the Oxford edition have been conformed in the paging to the American edition for Matthew, Acts, and Romans, and the Statues; elsewhere the pages were simply omitted.—J. A. B.

## ***Commentary On the Epistle of St. Paul to the Galatians.***

The Oxford Translations Revised, with Additional Notes, by Rev. Gross Alexander, D.D., Professor of New Testament Greek in Vanderbilt University, Nashville, Tenn.

### **Preface**

ST. CHRYSOSTOM'S Commentary on the Epistle to the Galatians is continuous, according to chapter and verse, instead of being arranged in Homilies, with a moral or practical application at their close, as in his exposition of other Epistles. It was written in Antioch, as Montfaucon infers from a reference which the Author, makes upon Chap. i. ver. 16 (p. 20) to other of his writings, which certainly were written about the same time in that city. Vid. Hom. de Mutal. Nom., Tom. III., p. 98, Ed. Ben. The year is uncertain, but seems not to have been earlier than A.D. 395.

The Homilies on the Epistle to the Ephesians have been by some critics assigned to the Episcopate at Constantinople, in consequence of certain imperfections in their composition, which seemed to argue absence of the comparative leisure which he enjoyed at Antioch. There is a passage too in Homily XI., pp. 231, 232, which certainly is very apposite to the Authors's circumstance in the court of Eudoxia. Yet there are strong reasons for deciding that they too were delivered at Antioch. St. Babylas and St. Julian, both saints at Antioch, are mentioned familiarly, the former in Homily IX, p. 205, the latter in Homily XXI., pp. 342, 343. Monastic establishments in mountains in the

neighborhood are spoken of in Homily VI., p. 165, and XIII., p. 248; and those near Antioch are famous in St. Chrysostom's history. A schism too is alluded to in Homily XI., p. 230, as existing in the community he was addressing, and that not about a question of doctrine; circumstances which are accurately fulfilled in the contemporary history of Antioch, and which are more or less noticed in the Homilies on 1 Corinthians, which were certainly delivered at Antioch.

Moreover, he makes mention of the prevalence of superstitions, Gentile and Jewish, among the people whome he was addressing, in Homily VI., fin., p. 166, Homily XII., fin., p. 240, which is a frequent ground of complaint in his other writings against the Christians of Antioch: *vid.* in Gal. p. 15; in 1 Cor., Homily XII., §§13, 14; in Col., Homily VIII., fin.; *Contr. Jud.* I., pp. 386-388.

Since Evagrius, the last Bishop of the Latin succession in the schism, died in A.D. 392, these Homilies must have been composed before that date.

As to the Translations, the Editors have been favored with the former by a friend who conceals his name; and with the latter, by the Rev. William John Copeland, M.A., Fellow of Trinity College, Oxford.

J.H. NEWMAN

## Chapter I.

*Verse 1-3.—“Paul, an Apostle, (not from men, neither through man, but through Jesus Christ and God the Father, who raised Him from the dead;) and all the brethren which are with me, unto the Churches of Galatia: Grace to you and peace from God the Father, and our Lord Jesus Christ.”*

The exordium is full of a vehement and lofty spirit, and not the exordium only, but also, so to speak, the whole Epistle. For always to address one's disciples with mildness, even when they need severity is not the part of a teacher but it would be the part of a corrupter and enemy. Wherefore our Lord too, though He generally spoke gently to His disciples, here and there uses sterner language, and at one time pronounces a blessing, at another a rebuke. Thus, having said to Peter, “Blessed art thou, Simon Barjona,” (Matt. xvi: 17.) and having promised to lay the foundation of the Church upon his confession, shortly afterwards He says, “Get thee behind Me, Satan: thou art a stumbling block unto Me.” (Matt. xvi: 23.) Again, on another occasion, “Are ye also even yet without understanding?” (Matt. xv: 16.) And what awe He inspired them with appears from John's saying, that, when they beheld Him conversing with the Samaritan woman, though they reminded Him to take food, no one ventured to say, “What seekest Thou, or why speakest thou with her?” (John iv: 27.) Thus taught, and walking in the steps of his Master, Paul hath varied his discourse according to the need of his disciples, at one time using knife and cautery, at another, applying mild remedies. To the Corinthians he says, “What will ye? shall I come unto you with a rod, or in love, and in a spirit of meekness?” (I Cor. vi: 21.) but to the Galatians, “O foolish Galatians.” (Gal. iii: 1.) And not once only, but a second time, also he has employed this reproof, and towards the conclusion he

says with a reproachful allusion to them, "Let no man trouble me;" (Gal. vi: 17.) but he soothes them again with the words, "My little children, of whom "I am again in travail:" (Gal. iv: 19) and so in many other instances.

Now that this Epistle breathes an indignant spirit, is obvious to every one even on the first perusal; but I must explain the cause of his anger against the disciples. Slight and unimportant it could not be, or he would not have used such vehemence. For to be exasperated by common matters is the part of the little-minded, morose, and peevish; just as it is that of the more redolent and sluggish to lose heart in weighty ones. Such a one was not Paul, What then was the offence which roused him? it was grave and momentous, one which was estranging them all from Christ, as he himself says further on, "Behold, I Paul say unto you, that if ye receive circumcision, Christ will profit you nothing;" (Gal. v: 2.) and again, "Ye who would be justified by the Law, ye are fallen away from Grace." (Gal. v: 4.) What then is this? For it must be explained more clearly. Some of the Jews who believed, being held down by the prepossessions of Judaism, and at the same time intoxicated by vain-glory, and desirous of obtaining for themselves the dignity of teachers, came to the Galatians, and taught them that the observance of circumcision, sabbaths, and new-moons, was necessary, and that Paul in abolishing these things was not to be borne. For, said they, Peter and James and John, the chiefs of the Apostles and the companions of Christ, forbade them not. Now in fact they did not forbid these things, but this was not by way of delivering positive doctrine, but in condescension to the weakness of the Jewish believers, which condescension Paul had no need of when preaching to the Gentiles; but when he was in Judaea, he employed it himself also. But these deceivers, by withholding the causes both of Paul's condescension and that of his brethren, misled the simpler

ones, saying that he was not to be tolerated, for he appeared but yesterday, while Peter and his colleagues were from the first,—that he was a disciple of the Apostles, but they of Christ,—that he was single, but they were many, and pillars of the Church. They accused him too of acting a part; saying, that this very man who forbids circumcision observes the rite elsewhere, and preaches one way to you and another way to others.

Since Paul then saw the whole Galatian people in a state of excitement, a flame kindled against their Church, and the edifice shaken and tottering to its fall, filled with the mixed feelings of just anger and despondency, (which he has expressed in the words, “I could wish to be present with you now, and to change my voice,”—Gal. iv: 20.) he writes the Epistle as an answer to these charges. This is his aim from the very commencement, for the underminers of his reputation had said, The others were disciples of Christ but this man of the “Apostles.” Wherefore he begins thus, “Paul, an Apostle not from men, neither through man.” For, these deceivers, as I was saying before, had said that this man was the last of all the Apostles and was taught by them, for Peter, James, and John, were both first called, and held a primacy among the disciples, and had also received their doctrines from Christ Himself; and that it was therefore fitting to obey them rather than this man; and that they forbade not circumcision nor the observance of the Law. By this and similar language and by depreciating Paul, and exalting the honor of the other Apostles, though not spoken for the sake of praising them, but of deceiving the Galatians, they induced them to adhere unseasonably to the Law. Hence the propriety of his commencement. As they disparaged his doctrine, saying it came from men, while that of Peter came from Christ, he immediately addresses himself to this point, declaring himself an apostle “not from men, neither through man.” It was Ananias who baptized



him, but it was not he who delivered him from the way of error and initiated him into the faith; but Christ Himself sent from on high that wondrous voice, whereby He inclosed him in his net. For Peter and his brother, and John and his brother, He called when walking by the seaside, (Matt. iv: 18.) but Paul after His ascension into heaven. (Acts. ix: 3, Acts ix: 4.) And just as these did not require a second call, but straightway left their nets and all that they had, and followed Him, so this man at his first vocation pressed vigorously forward, waging, as soon as he was baptized, an implacable war with the jews. In this respect he chiefly excelled the other Apostles, as he says, "I labored more abundantly than they all;" (I Cor. xv: 10.) at present, however, he makes no such claim, but is content to be placed on a level with them. Indeed his end object was, not to establish any superiority for himself, but, to overthrow the foundation of their error. The not being "from men" has reference to all alike for the Gospel's root and origin is divine, but the not being "through man" is peculiar to the Apostles; for He called them not by men's agency, but by His own.

But why does he not speak of his vocation rather than his apostolate, and say, "Paul" called "not by man?" Because here lay the whole question; for they said that the office of a teacher had been committed to him by men, namely by the Apostles, whom therefore it behooved him to obey. But that it was not entrusted to him by men, Luke declares in the words, "As they ministered to the Lord, and fasted, the Holy Ghost said, Separate me Barnabas and Saul." (Acts xiii: 2.)

From this passage it is manifest that the power of the Son and Spirit is one, for being commissioned by the Spirit, he says that he was commissioned by Christ. This appears in another place, from his ascription of the things of God to

the Spirit, in the words which he addresses to the elders at Miletus: "Take heed unto yourselves, and to all the flock, in the which the Holy Ghost hath made you bishops." (Acts xx: 28.) Yet in another Epistle he says, "And God hath set some in the Church, first Apostles, secondly prophets, thirdly teachers." (I Cor. xii: 28.) Thus he ascribes indifferently the things of the Spirit to God, and the things of God to the Spirit. Here too he stops the mouths of heretics, by the words "through Jesus Christ and God the Father;" for, inasmuch as they said this term "through" was applied to the Son as importing inferiority, see what he does. He ascribes it to the Father, thus teaching us not to prescribe laws to the ineffable Nature, nor define the degrees of Godhead which belong to the Father and Son. For to the words "through Jesus Christ" he has added, "and God the Father;" for if at the mention of the Father alone he had introduced the phrase "through whom," they might have argued sophistically that it was peculiarly applicable to the Father, in that the acts of the Son were to be referred to Him. But he leaves no opening for this cavil, by mentioning at once both the Son and the Father, and making his language apply to both. This he does, not as referring the acts of the Son to the Father, but to show that the expression implies no distinction of Essence. Further, what can now be said by those, who have gathered a notion of inferiority from the Baptismal formula,—from our being baptized into the name of the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit? For if the Son be inferior because He is named after the Father, what will they say seeing that, in the passage before us, the Apostle beginning from Christ proceeds to mention the Father?—but let us not even utter such a blasphemy, let us not swerve from the truth in our contention with them; rather let us preserve, even if they rave ten thousand times, the due measures of reverence. Since then it would be the height of madness and impiety to argue that the Son was greater than the Father because

Christ was first named, so we dare not hold that the Son is inferior to the Father, because He is placed after Him in the Baptismal formula.

“Who raised Him from the dead.”

Wherefore is it, O Paul, that, wishing to bring these Judaizers to the faith, you introduce none of those great and illustrious topics which occur in your Epistle to the Philippians, as, “Who, being in the form of God, counted it not a prize to be on an equality with God,” (Phil. ii: 6.) or which you afterwards declared in that to the Hebrews, “the effulgence of his glory, and the very image of His substance;” (Heb. i: 3.) or again, what in the opening of his Gospel the son of thunder sounded forth, “In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God;” (John i: 1). or what Jesus Himself oftentimes declared to the Jews, “that His power and authority was equal to the Father’s?” (John v: 19, John v: 27, &c) Do you omit all these, and make mention of the economy of His Incarnation only, bringing forward His cross and dying? “Yes,” would Paul answer. For had this discourse been addressed to those who had unworthy conceptions of Christ, it would have been well to mention those things; but, inasmuch as the disturbance comes from persons who fear to incur punishment should they abandon the Law, he therefore mentions that whereby all need of the Law is excluded, I mean the benefit conferred on all through the Cross and the Resurrection. To have said that “in the beginning was the Word,” and that “He was in the form of God, and made Himself equal with God,” and the like, would have declared the divinity of the Word, but would have contributed nothing to the matter in hand. Whereas it was highly pertinent thereto to add, “Who raised Him from the dead,” for our chiefest benefit was thus brought to remembrance, and men in general are less interested by

discourses concerning the majesty of God, than by those which set forth the benefits which come to mankind. Wherefore, omitting the former topic, he discourses of the benefits which had been conferred on us.

But here the heretics insultingly exclaim, "Lo, the Father raises the Son!" For when once infected, they are wilfully deaf to all sublimer doctrines; and taking by itself and insisting on what is of a less exalted nature, and expressed in less exalted terms, either on account of the Son's humanity, or in honor of the Father, or for some other temporary purpose, they outrage, I will not say the Scripture, but themselves. I would fain ask such persons, why they say this? do they hope to prove the Son weak and powerless to raise *one* body? Nay, verily, faith in Him enabled the very shadows of those who believed in Him. to effect the resurrection of the dead. (Acts. v: 15.) Then believers in Him, though mortal, yet by the very shadows of their earthly bodies, and by the garments which had touched these bodies, could raise the dead, but He could not raise Himself? Is not this manifest madness, a great stretch of folly? Hast thou not heard His saying, "Destroy this Temple, and in three days I will raise it up?" (John ii: 19.) and again, "I have power to lay down my life, and I have power to take it again?" (John x: 18.) Wherefore then is the Father said to have raised Him up, as also to have done other things which the Son Himself did? It is in honor of the Father, and in compassion to the weakness of the hearers.

"And all the brethren which are with me."

Why is it that he has on no other occasion in sending an epistle added this phrase? For either he puts his own name only or that of two or three others, but here has mentioned the whole number and so has mentioned no one by name.

On what account then does he this?

They made the slanderous charge that he was singular in his preaching, and desired to introduce novelty in Christian teaching. Wishing therefore to remove their suspicion, and to show he had many to support him in his doctrine, he has associated with himself “the brethren,” to show that what he wrote he wrote with their accord.

“Unto the Churches of Galatia.”

Thus it appears, that the flame of error had spread over not one or two cities merely, but the whole Galatian people. Consider too the grave indignation contained in the phrase, “unto the Churches of Galatia:” he does not say, “to the beloved” or “to the sanctified,” and this omission of all names of affection or respect, and this speaking of them as a society merely, without the addition “Churches of God,” for it is simply “Churches of Galatia,” is strongly expressive of deep concern and sorrow. Here at the outset, as well as elsewhere, he attacks their irregularities, and therefore gives them the name of “Churches,” in order to shame them, and reduce them to unity. For persons split into many parties cannot properly claim this appellation, for the name of “Church” is a name of harmony and concord.

“Grace to you and peace from God the Father, and our Lord Jesus Christ.”

This he always mentions as indispensable, and in this Epistle to the Galatians especially; for since they were in danger of falling from grace he prays that they may recover it again, and since they had come to be at war with God, he beseeches God to restore them to the same peace.

“God the Father.”

Here again is a plain confutation of the heretics, who say that John in the opening of his Gospel, where he says “the Word was God,” used the word Qeo" without the article, to imply an inferiority in the Son’s Godhead; and that Paul, where he says that the Son was “in the form of God,” did not mean the Father, because the word Qeo" without the article. For what can they say here, where Paul says, apo Qeou Patro", and not apo tou Qeou>v And it is in no indulgent mood towards them that he calls God, “Father,” but by way of severe rebuke, and suggestion of the source whence they became sons, for the honor was vouch-safed to them not through the Law, but through the washing of regeneration. Thus everywhere, even in his exordium, he scatters traces of the goodness of God, and we may conceive him speaking thus: “O ye who were lately slaves, enemies and aliens, what right have ye suddenly acquired to call God your Father? it was not the Law which conferred upon you this relationship; why do ye therefore desert Him who brought you so near to God, and return to your tutor?

But the Name of the Son, as well as that of the Father, had been sufficient to declare to them these blessings. This will appear, if we consider the Name of the Lord Jesus Christ with attention; for it is said, “thou shalt call His Name Jesus; for it is He that shall save His people from their sins;” (Matt. i: 21.) and the appellation of “Christ” calls to mind the unction of the Spirit.

Ver 4.4. “Who gave himself for our sins.” Thus it appears, that the ministry which He undertook was free and uncompelled; that He was delivered up by Himself, not by another. Let not therefore the words of John, “that the Father gave His only-begotten Son” (Jo. iii: 16.) for us, lead