

SELECT ENGLISH WORKS

OF

JOHN WYCLIF

EDITED FROM ORIGINAL MSS.

BY

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VOL. II

*SERMONS ON THE FERIAL GOSPELS
AND SUNDAY EPISTLES.*

TREATISES.

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NOTICE.

SINCE the Introduction to the first volume was written, evidence, not hitherto noticed, has come to light, which identifies Wyclif as the author of this entire collection of Sermons beyond any reasonable doubt. This evidence consists of two distinct references made by Thomas Walden in his *Doctrinale* to passages, one of which will be found at p. 78, the other at p. 364, of the first volume of this work. Walden, a Carmelite friar, confessor to Henry V, and a man of great ability, died in the year 1430; his evidence, therefore, is very nearly contemporary. In ch. 86 of Book II. of the *Doctrinale*, he charges Wyclif with having multiplied his iniquity, 'concedens consequenter Spiritum Sanctum columbam, sicut septem spicae fuerant septem anni, et sacer panis est veraciter corpus Christi, immo et quodlibet esse, esse Deum.' The reader who will refer to Sermon XXX of vol. i. p. 78 will see that this is a plain description (though not quite a fair one, for the explanatory matter added by the preacher is omitted,) of Wyclif's commentary on the descent of the dove at the baptism of Christ.

Again, in ch. 66 of Book III. of the *Doctrinale*, Walden says, after declaring that he could with difficulty be persuaded that the Wycliffites had derived their doctrine of clerical celibacy from their master—'Tarde igitur mihi venit ad manus, quod in vulgari dicat in sermone evangelii natalis festi beati Joannis Baptistae Witleff. Hic possum, inquit, dubitare et tractare de statu et vitâ sacerdotum, qualiter sunt dotati et innupti contra auctoritatem divinam. Nam inhibuit Christus dotem, tam in se quam in apostolis, et approbavit nuptias apostolorum plurimumque aliorum.' This is an accurate translation of a passage which the reader will find at the top of p. 364 in the first volume.



Two sections of the Sermons, published in this edition, those on the Sunday Gospels, and those on the Gospels for the Proprium Sanctorum, are thus identified with Wyclif on the authority of Thomas of Walden. But as the entire collection is found in the best and oldest MSS., and is internally connected together in various ways, the authenticity of the whole is raised to the highest degree of probability.

The present volume contains the remaining two sections of the Sermons, those on the Ferial Gospels, and those on the Sunday Epistles. To these are subjoined two polemical tracts, the *Vae Octuplex* and the *Of Mynystres in the Chirche*, which accompany the Sermons in all the best MSS., and seem to have been regarded as intrinsically a part of the collection. The miscellaneous works, properly so called, are reserved for the third volume.

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LIII.	Imitatores mei estote. Phil. iii. 17.	370
	<i>Twenty-fourth Sunday after Trinity.</i>	
LIV.	Non cessamus pro vobis orantes. Col. i. 9.	373
	<i>Twenty-fifth Sunday after Trinity.</i>	
LV.	Ecce dies venit. Jer. xxiii. 5.	375

Vae Octuplex, or Eight Woes denounced against the Friars	379
Of Mynstris in the Chirche, an Exposition of Matthew xxiv.	393

EVANGELIA FERIALIA.

[THE gospels for the Sundays and Saints' days present no difficulty to the English reader, but when he comes to the 'gospels for the ferias' he may expect some words of explanation. In ecclesiastical parlance all the days of the week, except Saturday, are ferias. The name, however, is never applied to the first day, or Sunday; but Monday is the second feria, Tuesday the third, and so on, to Friday, the sixth feria: Saturday being, in ecclesiastical language, *Sabbatum*. This use of the term seems to have arisen in the following way. Among the Romans there were established feriae, or holidays; the thirty days of the *Feriae Latinae*, when the sacrifice was offered to Jupiter Latiaris on the top of the Alban mount on behalf of all the Latin communities, being the most important of these seasons. Among the early Christians the word soon came to be used mystically in the sense of a rest from sin (*feriari a peccato*), as well as in the original sense of a rest from toil and secular business. Easter, in the conception of the primitive Christian, was the central point of the year; it was the season at which, having accomplished his reconciliation with God, he commenced again the round of common duties and trials; and the week days following Easter day he called and kept as 'feriae,' abstaining on them from all secular work, but having undoubtedly the spiritual meaning of the term fully present to his mind also. Now just as all the Sundays in the year came to be regarded as involving a renewal on a small scale of the Paschal solemnity,—(Keble beautifully takes up the thought in his hymn for Easter day:—

'Sundays by thee more glorious break,
An Easter day in every week,')

so the week days throughout the year gradually came to be called 'feriae,' because the Paschal week days were so called. That Sunday should have been included numerically among the feriae must be accounted for by the influence of the spiritual acceptation of the word already mentioned; but the name of 'dies Dominica,' established since the times of the apostles, could not of course be superseded. Nor, again, could the seventh day of the week be called by any other name than 'Sabbatum,' consistently with a due reverence for the elder dispensation and the rest of the Creator; although it is practically treated as a feria for ritual purposes. (Ducange, Bingham, Wezer and Welte, *Kirchen-Lexicon*; the article in Herzog is tedious and confused.)

All the sermons which follow, except the last five, are on gospels taken from the 'Temporale' of the Sarum missal. The last five are on gospels appropriated to a few of those special occasions, for which the same missal, in the portion of it following the *Commune Sanctorum*, contains a great number of separate offices.]

SERMONS ON ÞE
FERIAL GOSPELS.

ÞE WEDNESDAI IN ÞE FIRSTE WEKE OF ADVENT
BIFORE CRISTEMASSE.

[SERMON CXXIV.]

Principium evangelii.—MARK i. [1.]

As men shulden trowe in Crist þat he is boþe God and man, so men shulden trowe bi hise wordis þat þei ben soþe, and wordis of liif. And þus Crist in his laste departing bad hise Apostlis to preche þe gospel. And in oþer place he bad þat Petre shulde fede his sheep; not wiþ bodili fode, siþ Crist wolde þat he hadde no moneye; and Mathew telliþ how a servaunt shal come to blisse for sich fode, and prelat þat fayliþ of sich foode shal be dampned depe in helle. And Luk seiþ þat he is blessid þat heer iþ and keepiþ Goddis word; and siþ a lordis word is worshiped after þe gretnesse of þis lord, and Crist is more wiþouten mesure þan ony kyng or erþeli lord, how loveþ þe peple Crist, but ¹ after þat it loveþ Cristis word? And þis bileve seiþ Poul, ȝif man love not Jesus Crist, he is cursid of God, and þat is more þan mannis curse. Cursid be he ² þat wolde ordeyne þat þe pistilis and þe gospels weren turned in to decrees or decretalis ³ of þe Pope. For as no word of Goddis lawe haþ ony strengþe, but as Crist spek iþ it, so no word of mannis lawe shulde be loved but if Crist speke it. For Crist is treuþe, and noo word shulde

The paramount
authority of
the words of
Christ.

1 Cor. xvi. 22.

¹ So in E; om. A.
decentis.

² So E; om. A.

³ So E; A has, *and*

be loved but for it is trewe. Take we noon heede to beestis skynnes, ne to enke, or oþer ornamentis, but to treuþe þat Crist spake, in which stondiþ oure bileve. For as we trowen þat Crist was man, so we trowen þat he spake þus; and his wordis myzten not be amended, siþ he is God þat seiþ þis treuþe. And for dispite of Cristis wordis, and for defaute of love of hem, ben many men¹ cursid of God; for þei maken Cristis wordis unworshipid, and magnifien þer owne wordis, as þei wolden take fro God his worshiþe. But, as Poul seiþ, noon shulde be trowid but aftir þat Crist spekiþ in him. As we ben certeyn of þe gospel, þat Crist, God and man, spake it, so we ben certeyn of þe treuþe, þat it is faire and profitable.

Þis^a gospel of Mark bigynneþ, how Crist was teld in þe olde lawe, and how al his lyf was figurid boþe in patriarkis and prophetis. Þis, seiþ Mark, *is þe bigynning of þe gospel of Jesus Crist, Goddis Sone. As is writun in Isay þe prophete: Many men ben Goddis sones, taken bi grace of þer fadir; but Crist is Goddis Sone kyndely, and þe same God wiþ him. Þe Fadir seiþ to þis Sone bi Isay þe prophete: Lo, I sende myn angel bifore þi face, which shal make redi þi wey tofore þee.* Þis aungel was Baptiste, þat witnesside þe comyng of Crist and hiþenese of his state, boþe to Godhede and to manhede. And sich an angel mai be clepid every good Cristen man, þat makip redi weie to Crist bifore Cristis laste comyng. Þis *Joon was a vois of a cryer in desert.* So Joon was vois of Goddis word, and knewe mekeli his own freelte; and so Crist criede in desert, bi Baptist þat was his whistle, siþ alle creatures ben instrumentis to Goddis word. For, as Isay seiþ, man is a sawe to God þat worchip. Þis vois criede þus to men; *Make ȝe redi þe weie of þe Lord, and make ȝe his paþis riȝtful.* Þis Lord haþ his heestis, comun kyngis weie², þat ech Cristene man shulde hold; and ȝif letting be in þis weye, men shulden wiþdrawe þis letting. And ȝif men wolen go bi paþis, and kepe þe counceillis of Crist, loke

¹ grete men, E.

² wayes.

^a In G the sermon begins at this point.

The office of
John the Bap-
tist as fore-
runner.

Is. x. 15.

þat þei croken not from him, ne fro þe endis þat he ordeyneþ. And þus þese neue religieuse, biside Cristis lawe, ben bi þap̄is; but to crokid and to foule to ony man to go to hevene, for hem wantiþ riȝtnesse þat þei feynen in þer signes. For þer signes serven of nouȝt but to crye her holynesse, þat þei ben bifore oþer chosen of God to his service; and so þei menen þat in blis þei ben¹ bifore seculer men. But it mai falle þat many men at þe dai of dome come bifore; and so þis Lord shal seie þanne, to shame of þes ypocritis, ȝyve ȝe stede to þis man, and remove hem from þis boord. For alle þes ordres ben leeves of wordis, and fantasies of feyned colouris; and so þes þap̄is ben not riȝt, for þei leden men to ypocritis placis.

Joon Baptist was in desert, waishinge, and prechinge baptysm of penanunce in remissioun of synnes. But þes neue ordris ben cowardis, for þei wolen have many felowis in citees nyȝ men, and in þer castelis þat þei maken; and preching wiþ penaunce þat þei done crokiþ fro Crist and fro Joon. And al þe regioun of Jude com out to Joon Baptist, *and alle þe men of Jerusalem; and þei weren baptisid of him in þe water of Jordan, and þei knowelichiden þer synnes*,—not wiþ rowning as men done now. *And Joon was clopid wiþ camele heer and a girdil of skyn aboute his leendis.* And so it semeþ to many men þat Joon hadde neiþer coote ne breche, for he wente after his power nyȝ þe staat of innocense; and so he fledde mannis craft, boþe in hilynge and in foode. For in state of innocence mannis craft shulde not serve here. *And Joon eet eerbis and hony of þe woode*, as he found hem in wilderness; and oþer housis hadde he noon but þis wilderness and cope² of hevene. And here shuldenoure ordris shame to seie þat Joon was of þer ordre, for his reule mut³ nede be first and a þap̄ to þer liif; but how suen þei Baptist, þat þus evermore reversen him? ȝif þei mai not lyve þus streitli, þei mai kepe hem fro fals wordis, for þanne þei synnen azens Crist and azens Joon Baptist, and so þei singen neiþer aftir Crist, ne moornen bi penance after Joon. *He prechide and seide; A strengre þan Y comeþ after me, whos kne- lere⁴, I, am unworþi to unbinde þe lace of his shoon. I baptise ȝou*

The example of John ought to confound the new religious orders.

¹ þey ben in blis, E.

² coope, E.

³ mote, E.

⁴ kneler, E.

in water, but he shal baptise you in þe Holi Goost. And here men seien comounli, þat þer ben þree baptisingis, — þe firste is baptising in water, þe toþer is baptising wiþ blood, but þe þridde baptising, moost nedeful and moost worþ, is purging of þe Hooli Goost; and þat mut God himsilf do, as in water and blood of Crist moten nedis þes two first be groundid.

ON FRIDAI IN FIRSTE WEKE OF ADVENT.

[SERMON CXXV.]

Venit Johannes Baptista.—MATT. iii. [1.]

On the work
of John the
Baptist.

Þis gospel telliþ, as þe nexte bifore, how Joon made redy þe weye to Crist. Mathew telliþ how, *Joon Baptiste cam in desert of Jude and seide, Do 3e penaunce, for þe rewme of hevene shal come ny3e.* Þis weye of God was ful slidir for men 3ovun to fleishli lustis, and þerfore Joon took þis word to make redi þis weye to men, for many men felden doun for slidirnesse of þis weie, and þerfore moste it have sum gravel, as Crist and Joon tau3te in þis tyme¹. Þis Joon is he of whom it is seid bi Ysay þe profett, þat seiþ, Þer is a vois of Goddis word þat criep in desert; make 3e redi þe wey of þe Lord, make 3e ri3t þe paþis of him. Drede we not for to graunte þat Joon Baptist is a vois, for þis word haþ many wittis, and oon of hem is taken here. As a vois is a soun² þe which is formed of a mouþ, and is formed of word of herte, freel in beyng, to þis word, so Joon Baptist was foormed of the word of Goddis mouþ, þe which word is Jesus Crist, more worþ þanne many Joones. And so seiþ Baptiste wittili and mekeli þat he is a vois, for he haþ noon beyng but of þe word of God wiþinne, and he haþ passage beyng in bodi, as a vois haþ. But as a vois bereþ þe witt of þe word wiþinne þe soule, so Baptist bare þe witt of Goddis word wiþouten error. Þis Joon hadde cloþis of þe heeris of camelis, and a girdil of skyn aboute his leendis, and þe mete of þis Joon was fruyte of þe erþe and hony of þe woode. For, as Ysay seiþ of Crist þat

¹ So in E; A has *teeme*.

² *soun*, G; *sound*, I.

he shal ete butter and hony, so eet Baptist eerbis and hony. For as Crist hadde witt of erþeli þing and hevenli, so hadde Baptist after Crist, as it was nede to gete him blis. Sum men seien þat locusta is a litil beest good to ete. Sum men seien it is an herbe þat gederitþ hony upon him; but it is licli þat it is an herbe þat mai nurishe men, þat þei clepen hony soukil¹; but þis þing varieþ in many contrees.

Panne wente out to Joon þe peple of Jerusalem, and al þe contrey aboute Jordan, and alle þe lond of Judee, and þei weren baptised in Jordan shryvyng to God þer synnes. And Joon hadde power to heere hem, for he was an hooli prophete and a bishopis sone, and, as holi writt spekij, he was a preest maad of God; but þis newe maner of shryvyng cam longe after bi þe pope. And þis Baptist was a witnesse more worþ þan þes philosophris, as Plato and Aristotle², boþe in liif and in witt.

ON WEDNESDAY IN ÞE SECUNDE WEKE OF ADVENT.

[SERMON CXXVI.]

Dixit Jesus turbis.—MATT. xi. [7.]

FOR Joon Baptiste tolde of Cristis advent, þerfore þes gospelis maken mynde of Joon Baptist, and Mathew tellij of Baptist wiþinne in his book, how he passeþ oþer in holynesse and vertue. Crist, þat mai not lye, seiþ first of þis Joon, *Sobli I seie to zou, among wymmens children roos noon more þan Joon Baptist*, in rysynge here in erþe. It semeþ þat Crist wolde seie þis logyk, þat þer roos noon more þan Baptiste, al if þer were sum man more þan was Joon Baptist, as Crist was a wommans child, siþ Crist clepiþ twies his modir womman; but Crist roos nevere þus, siþ Crist was nevere doun in synne. Baptiste was in original synne, whanne he was halewid wiþinne his modir; and so, alþif seintis in hevene ben more þan was Baptist here, neþeles þer roos noon more wommans child than was Baptist,

Is. vii. 15.

The greatness
of John the
Baptist.

¹ *bonysskil*, G; *bonyssokku*, I.

² *Arestotiles*, I.

sip for tyme þat he growide he was moost growinge hooli man. And herfore seiþ Crist aftir, *But he þat is lesse in þe rewme of hevene is more þan he*, for more hooli. Boþe aungelis and seintis ben more hooli now in hevene þan was Joon Baptiste for tyme þat he roos here. And here ben we tauzte wel, to preise men but in mesure, and passe not þe boondis of soþ for faging of men þat we speke of, as men seien þat freris done in þer preching of dede men. Crist seiþ not þat ech in blis is more þan ever is Baptist, but he seiþ þat ech in blis is more þan here is Baptist. And sum men seien þat Crist meenide þat he himsilf, þat is lasse in holi Chirche, for lowere and mekere, is more þan Joon Baptist.

But fro daies of Joon Baptist unto now þe rewme of hevene suffreþ fors, and violent men ravishen it. Here men seien comunli þat fro tyme of Joon Baptist, þat he hadde þus prechide Crist, many men disserveden heven. And, for no man comeþ to heven, but 3if he do werkes of penaunce, for þus men moten nedis scale¹ heven, and sip Crist seiþ þat noon comeþ to him but 3if he be drawun, boþe God and himsilf moten nedis violenten his bodi, and þus he ravisheþ þis castel bi a laddir maad of vertue. And so men moten do mouche strengþe and violence azen þer enemyes, and be strong in spiritual bateil to ravisshe þis rewme azens þe fend. For more hie stiyng is noon, and noon more medeful violence; and þus Joon was a myddil signe of þis goostli bateile. *For alle profetis and olde lawe tolden afer unto Joon, and 3if 3e wolen resseyve þis, Joon is Hely þat is to come.* Joon is not Hely personali, as Joon him silf confessiþ; but he is Hely figurali, as Crist seiþ here, þat mai not lye. And riht so þe sacrid oost is verry breed kyndeli, and Goddis bodi figurali, riht as Crist himsilf seiþ. And, for þis witt is notable, Crist seiþ, as he seiþ ofte, *He þat haþ eeren to heere, heere he*, þis sentence bi his mynde. And, for Crist is not God of dissencioun ne of striif, he telliþ here wise wordis in whiche his wisdom in hid. Alle oþer prophetis tolden fer þat Crist schulde come, but þei tolden not whanne. But Joon tolde wiþ his finger, Lo, here Crist þe loomb of God; and in þis Joon

¹ stize, E.

passide profetis, and so he is more þan a profete. For his office was to shewe Crist at eye; þat passij profetis. And undirstonde þou þes wordis of Crist, and no man mai þanne prove hem fals.

ON FRIDAI IN ÞE SECUNDE WEKE IN ADVENT.

[SERMON CXXVII.]

Johannes testimonium perhibebat.—JOHN i. [15.]

Joon Evaungelist tellij here how Baptist bare witness of Crist, and noon of þes gospels is contrarie to oþir alþif þei seien divers sentences. Þis Evaungelist tellij, þat *Joon bare witness of þe Lord, and criede seiynge, He þis was þat Y seide bifore, He þat is to come after me is maad bifore me, for he was bifore me.* Here it is no nede to graunte þat Crist was maad man in tyme bifore þat Baptist was maad, but bifore him in dignite, and so Crist was maad his priour, for Crist is heed of al þe Chirche, and so Crist was to come after Joon in his manhede, boþe in birþe in wombe, and in birþe of þe wombe. But aftirward Crist is to come after Joon at þe laste dai. And so, siþ alle þingis þat were or þat shal be ben present to God, Joon seiþ witteli and soþeli, þat he þat is to come after him is made bifore him. And cause of þis priorite is told in þis sutil word, þat Crist was bifore John as anentis his Godhede. For in ten wordis þat Crist spekij in þe bygynning of Joones gospel, Joon expressij Godhede of Crist by þis verbe, Goddis word was; and herfore Crist mut nedis be priour of al mankynde¹.

And of þe fulnesse of Crist we alle han take, grace for grace; not only for we han take grace for oure good werkes, but for gracious wille of God, þat mut nedis be evermore, we han take grace for a tyme propirli in oure soule. And so Crist is ful of grace bi his godhede þat ever was, and ful of grace bi his manhede, siþ it is oon persone wiþ God;

John's testimony to Christ.

Grace through Christ.

¹ *makyng*, E.

and so of fulnesse of Cristis grace taken alle þat ben Cristis lymes. *For lawe was ȝouun bi Moises; grace and treuþe is maad bi Jesus Crist.* It is knowun bi bileve how Moises toke þe lawe of God, þe which was truþe wiþouten eende, and nevere made but ȝouun. For alȝif Moises made two tablis, neþeles þes tablis weren not þe lawe. Grace þat men han in þer soule, for to come anoon to hevene, was maad bi Jesus Crist in openyng of hevene ȝatis, for Crist mut nedis be þe firste man þat shulde come in to hevene; and siþ al þat fel in þe oolde law was figure of Jesus Crist and he maad him silf man, it is seid þat treuþe is maad bi Jesus Crist whan he was man, for þanne figures ceesiden, and Crist was come, eende of hem. But, for it is needeful to bileve þes two kyndis of Crist, þerfore seiþ þis gospel, *þat God no man saw evere.* And clerkes seien here þat þer ben two manere of siȝtis of man. Open siȝt of þing present eiper to þe eye or to þe soule, and misti siȝt drawun afer, as men seen bi shadewes and bileve. And for þe first siȝt Joon seiþ, þat no man sawȝ here þe Godhede, for Moises wolde have seen þus the Godhede, and God certefiede to him þat no man shulde se him þus and lyve sich fleishli liif. For þis siȝt is kept to blisse, and to men þat God woll ravishe, as Poul hadde sum glymeryng of þe first siȝt, and oþer men þat God wole shewe, and ravishe hem fro fleishli liif, and telle to þer soule as him likiþ. But, for þis were over greet discomfort, þat men shulden no wise here se God, þerfore seiþ þe gospel after *þat, þe oon born Sone þe which is in þe Fadrís bosum, he haþ told out þe toper siȝt of God.* For, as Crist seep ever pleyntli þe Godhede wiþinne himsilf, so he grauntiþ it to trewe men to se it bi bileve. For þis misti siȝt, seiþ Poul, þat we seen now bi a myrrour in darknesse, but in heven we shal see God face to face. And so, for þing is hid in bosum, and Cristis Godhede is here hid from us, þerfore seiþ þis gospel þus, þat þis oon born sone is in his Fadrís bosum. It is betere to se God clereli, þan us to blabere here of hid þing.

ON¹ WEDNESDAI IN þE ÞRIDDE WEKE IN ADVENT.
MISSUS EST ANGELUS IS SEID ON ANUNCIACIOUN DAI AMONG
PROPRE SANCTORUM.

þE GOSPEL ON þE ÞRIDDE FRIDAY.

[SERMON CXXVIII.]

Exsurgens Maria.—LUC. i. [39.]

þis gospel telliþ þat fro þe tyme þat Marie was greet of þe aungel she was not ydil, but stiride as God movede her. *Marie roos up, seiþ Luk, and wente into monteyne contre wiþ haste in to þe citee of kynrede² of Judee, and entride into Zacaries hous, and grette Elizabeth.* For Gabriel told Marie bifore how Elizabeth was wiþ child, and what moneþ she hadde conseyyved, and how Joon shulde be born bifore Crist, but Marie was not tale wiis³ ne boostful as oþer wymmen, but grette mekely Elizabeth, and abood her wordis. þis gospel telliþ not how Marie tok a bour woman⁴, but went mekeli in hast to salute her cosyn. And siþ Joon was man þanne, and Marie cam so hastely, it semþ to many men þat Joon was man bifore Crist, and herfore seiþ þe gospel þat Marie wente out wiþ haste. þis resoun is not formed, but helpiþ wiþ oþer to moove men. *And it was maad þat whanne Elizabeth herde þe greting of Marie, þe zong child made joie in Elizabethis wombe.* And, as seintis seyn, siþ Joon shewide gladnesse wiþouten, he stiride in his modir wombe, as he hadde daunsid; and wiþ þis God movede Elizabeth to prophecie. *And Elizabeth was fulfilled of þe Holi Goost, and criede wiþ greet vois and seide, Blessid art þou among wymmen, and þe fruit of þi wombe is blessid. And whereof comeþ þis to me, þat þe modir of my Lord comeþ þus to me?* þis womman wiste by prophecie þat Marie hadde conceyved Crist, and how she was herfore blessid among wymmen, and she hadde woundir and deynte⁵ þat þis ladi visitide her. *For lo,*

The Visitation.

¹ Here G has,—‘þe Wednesdai gospel in þe þridde wook of Advent, and also it is red on Oure Ladi in Lente.’ I has,—‘þe nexte gospel, *Missus est*, is teld in þe Anunciacioun.’ See vol. i. p. 353. ² þe kynrede, E. ³ tale wyse, E. ⁴ a bore womman, E. ⁵ dedeyne, E.

whanne þe vois of þi greting was maad in myn eeren, þe zong child was glad for joie, as Y felide, in my wombe. And wiþ þis felyng of þis womman God ȝaf hir witt to prophecie þus. *And blessid be þou þat trowidest*, seide Elizabeth to Marie, *for þei shal be performed in þee þat weren seid to þee of þe Lord.*

Mary's life
magnified God.

And Mari spak not boostful jangling new wordis, þat weren impertinent, but heriede¹ God of al his grace, and stood in her first mekenesse. *My soule magniefþ þe Lord*,—for I confesse þat he is greet, and al þis good comeþ of him; and we ben his instrumentis,—*and þus my spirit makip joie in God þat is myn helpe.* And so þe liif of Marie makip God greet in word and dede, and so she serveþ to him boþe in bodi and in soule, but hir spirit is glad in þe bileve þat she haþ, þat bi þe manhede of her sone God shal be helpe to þe world. Oþir wordis þat suen of Maries song ben expowned to greet witt. And of þis Ladi shulden men take, and speciali erþeli ladyes, to be meke and homely; for so was þe Lady of þis world.

ÞE ÞRIDDE SATIRDAY GOSPEL IN ADVENT.

[SERMON CXXIX.]

Anno quinto decimo.—LUC. iii. [1.]

The preaching
of John the
Baptist.

LUK tellip in þis gospel what tyme Joon began to preche, and notiþ bi heþene lordis whos date was more knowe þanne, and bigynneþ at þe Emperour, not undir whom Crist was born, but him þat cam next after, þat Luk clepeþ Emperour of Tibir, þe which is a water at Rome². *Þe fiftene ȝeer of þis Emperour*, þat was unstable as watir, *whanne Pounce Pilate governede Judee*, not as lord of þat lond, but proctour of þe Emperour and justise to termyne causis, to pees, and to þe Emperours profit, and in þe same tyme was þe secounde, *Heroude, a fourþe lord of Galile*, but not so mouche as þe firste Heroude, for þe first

¹ So E; *berieden*, A.

² *water of Rome*, E.

³ Wyclif considers Tiberius as an adjective formed from Tiberis.

was clepid comunli kyng, and þis was clepid Tetrarca, for he hadde as þe fourþe part of þe rewme of Jude, and *Philip þis Herodis broþir hadde þe fourþe part of þe lond of þe contree clepid Bythynye¹ and Traconytidis, and Lysanye² was þe þridde lord þat hadde þe fourþe part of Abilene*,—undir þis Emperour of Rome, and þes foure worldli lordis; and two princis of preestis weren þanne, Anna and Caifas, þe word of *þe Lord was maad upon Joon, Zacaries sone, in desert*. Joon was movede of God, þanne abone þe þrittinge³ ȝeer of his eelde, to preche and to teche þe folk boþe in word and in dede. And so he took not falseli þis office for wynnynge, ne of þes two bishopis^a, but speciali of God, and he was nedid to do þus, as God haþ ever ordeyned. And so it semet to many men þat prelatis þat letten trewe preestis to preche freeli þe gospel ben worse þan þes two bishopis of Jewis. Summe bishopis ben glad of þes prestis, and summe ben evyle enformed bi freris. *And Joon cam in to al þe contre of Jordan, preching þe baptism of penaunce in remission of synnes, as it is writun in þe book of Sermouns of Ysay þe profete, þat seide þat, Joon was a vois of a criere in desert, Make ȝe redi þe wey of þe Lord, make ȝe his papis rizful*. Joon prechide not for worldli wynnynge, and so he fledde fablis and lesingis, but tolde opynli profitable treupe þat God puttide in his mouþ. For þus dide profetis bifore, and þis Baptist was eende of hem. Joon movede men to mekenesse, and to þenke on þe dai of dome, and seide þat *ech valey shal be fild, and ech mounteyn, more and lesse, shal be maad low*. Þis shal be at þe dai of dome, whanne þe erþe shal be pleynd and round, as ech meke man þat shal come to hevene shal be þanne fulfillid of blisse, and ech proud man þat shal be dampned shal be maad low bi peyne. And þis word shulde move men to mekenesse and to leve pride, and so it is ful nedeful to preche now as it was þanne. *And shrewid þingis shal be turned into rizful, and sharpe þingis to pleynd weies*. Þis is soip of þe erþe; but algatis of mennis hertis, for manye shrewide hertis of men shal turne to þe

¹ Bethany, E.² Lissany, E.³ þritty, E.^a i. e. of Annas and Caiaphas.

weye of riȝtwisnesse, and many sharpe men for to fyte shal be pacient and meke. *And ech man shal se fleishli Crist þat is helpe of God.* For at þe laste dai of dome shal Crist be þus seen of alle men; and sich sermons weren good to men, to teche hem vertues and to flee synne.

DE FOURÞE WEDNESDAI IN ADVENT.

[SERMON CXXX.]

Exiit sermo in universam Judeam.—LUC. vii. [17.]

As Joon cam bifore Crist in liif, so he cam bifore him in preching, and algatis Joon made redi men for to trowe in Crist. For þe sunne bifore he come sendiþ his list, and after he shyneþ; and in werkes of crafte þe rude man comeþ bifore, and subtil man comeþ aftir and makip fair. Luk telliþ þat, *word wente out of Jesus into al Jude, and in to al þe contre aboute, for woundris þat Crist dide.* And Joons disciplis tolden him of alle þes, þat weren seide of Crist. And Joon clepide þanne togidere two of hise disciplis, and sente hem to Jesus, and seide, *Art þou þe prophete þat is to come, or we abiden anoper betere?* Baptist seide not þes wordis for he hadde drede in þis bileve, but for he wolde þat his disciplis and oþer men weren tauȝte of Crist; and so he coveitide Cristis worship, and ordeynede þerefore many gatis. And whanne þes two disciplis camen, þei seiden þus to Crist; *Joon Baptist sente us to þee, and seide, Art þou he þat is to come or we abiden anoper?* And Crist in þat same our heelide many men of þer siiknesse, as summe of þer languishing, and sum of woundis, and sum of fendis, and to many blynde Crist ȝaf sight. And Crist answeride and seide to hem, *Going forþ, telle aȝen to Joon þingis þat ȝe han herd; for blynde men seen, and halte men goen; meselis ben maad clene, dese men heeren; dede men risen, pore men ben prechid good.* And he is blessid þat shal not be sclaudrid in me.

John sends
messengers
to Christ.

Dese wordis ben expowned in þe firste part of þe sermons ^a. And whanne Joones messengeris weren passid, began Jesus to seie of Joon to þe peple, *What wente ze to see in desert? Wher ze wente to se a reed wawid wiþ þe wynd? But what þing zeden ze out to see? Wher a man cled wiþ softe cloþis? Lo, þes men þat ben in a prescious cloþ, and in delicis, ben in kyngis housis. But what wente ze to se? wher a profete? 3he, Y seie to zou, more þan a profete. For þis is he of whom it is writun, Lo, Y sende myn aungel bifore þi face, þe which aungel shal make redi þi weie bifore þee. Certis Y seie to zou, þer is no man more profete among þe children of wymmen þan is Joon, but he þat is lesse in þe rewmes of hevenes is more þan he; as Crist seide bifore. But here it semep þat speche of Crist out-takip himsilf bi his wordis; and þes wordis ben sopeli seid azens alle capcious men.*

DE FOURÞE FRIDAY IN ADVENT.

[SERMON CXXXI.]

Videte et cavete.—MARK viii. [15.]

Þis gospel tellip how men shulden flee al ypocrisie, for among fyve pridis þis is moost perilous. And, for þis ypocrisie is boþe in religious and seculer lordis, þerfore biddip Crist to hise, *Se ze and fle ze fro þe sour dowz of Fariseis, and þe sour dowz of Heroude. And þei þouzten togidere, and seiden, þat þei hadden no breed, how were it þanne pertinent to telle hem of sour douz? And whanne þis word was knowun Jesus seide to hem, Wherto þenken ze þat ze have no breed? 3it ze knowun not, ne undirstonden; 3it zou herte is blyndid; ze havyng e izen seen not, and ze havyng eeren heeren not, but wanten witt. And ze þenken not whan Y brak fyve looves among fyve þousynd men, and how many cofynes ful of relif baren ze awey. And þei seiden þat twelve*

We are to flee hypocrisy.

^a See vol. i. Sermon XXVIII. Since he preached on the corresponding passage in St. Matthew, Wyclif appears to have discovered

the true meaning of the words *πρωτοὶ εὐαγγελίζονται*, which are mistranslated in both Wycliffite versions.

cofynes þei token of þe firste feeste. And Crist axiþ of þe secounde feste, *Whanne he fedde foure þousynd men wiþ sevene looves, and how many leepfullis of broke mete þei token aftir? And þei seiden, þei gadriden sevene.* And here we witen þat þes weren two feestis. *And Crist seide þanne to hem, How undirstonde ȝe not? þat Y speke to oþer entente, whanne Y speke of þe sour dowȝ, þat is clepid ypocrisie bi resoun of propirte of þing.* For riȝt as sour dowȝ infectiþ breed þat men shulden lyve wiþ, so ypocrisie fayliþ good werk þat mans soule shulde lyve wiþ.

Ipocrisie of Pharisees and of Eroude lastiþ ȝit, for newe ordris bigilen þe peple, boþ beggers and possessioneris, in þat¹ þei feynen hem holy to spuyle of hem þe worldli goodis. For certis Crist put nevere holynes in sich signes of ypocritis; but whanne þes signes crien hem holy, þei ben false to disseyve þe peple. And ȝif þes ordris ben holy, þei shulden hide þat, as Crist biddiþ; but where shulde rise þer wynnyng þanne, bi which þei spuylen þe peple? And þe ende of þe feendis ordenaunce, þat he castiþ bi þes ordris. But ȝit Heroude haþ suteris, as seculers þat now lyven; for as he feynede holynesse in sleying of Joon Baptist, so þei feynen holynesse in pursuying of trewe men. And for þes ordris of horedom, wiþ flatering þat is maad to hem, in false signes of horedoom, and knelyng as daunsyng, þei holden wiþ þes false ordris and harmen Cristis lawe and þe peple^a.

The cure of
the blind man.

But þe gospel telliþ aftir *how, Crist and hise camen to Bethsaida, and þei brouȝten to him a blynd man, and þei preieden Crist to touche him. And Crist took þe blynde mannis hood, and bidde him wipoute þe strete, and Crist, spitting in his ȝen, putte his hondis on him, and axide him wher he sawȝ ouȝt. And þis man lokide on Crist and seide, þat he sawȝ men walkyng as trees. Aftirward Crist putte his hondis upon his ȝen, and he bigan to see, and þis blynde man was restored, so þat he sawȝ clerely alle þingis. And Crist sente þis blynde man to his hous, and seide, Go into þi hous, and ȝif þou go out into þe strete, seie þou to no man.*

And Crist techiþ bi þes wordis þat neiþer men heelid shulden

¹ So Q; A reads, þat þat.

^a The whole of this paragraph is omitted in E.

be proud, ne preestis shulden booste among men of werkis þat þei done in Goddis name. And siþ Crist doip alle hise werkis suyngli, oon after anoþer, he telliþ in þe secounde miracle how Pharisees blynden lordis. For þei can telle ape signes, and lowting as it were holynesse, and wiþ sich wymmens sport bigile lordis wiþ ypocrisie. But as Crist ʒaf siȝt to þis blynde man, so he doip to sum sich lordis, but þis cunnynge is wonnen¹ wiþ hard^a, for bi proces of tyme lordis mai se þer coveitise and wanting of good affeccion, but worldli wille about þer muk. And þus, ʒif² Crist almyȝti myȝte make þis man anon to see, neþeles he dide þis þus, to teche how þis blyndenesse wendiþ away. First^b men seen men as trees, wandring wiþ men here; and sum profit þei conseiven of hem, boþe in cloistre and in houshold, for algatis þei eten mete, as diden þe prestis of Baal, and stonden in a prestis stede in þe houshold þat þei dwellen inne; and so þei taken litil goodis, but ʒif it be mete and drynke and cloiþ. But ʒif Crist liȝtith more þes lordis, and makip hem clerely for to se þat such cloistreris þat crepen out of þer cloistris ben quyke develis, to disseive men of þe world, and alle þer garmentis þat þei han ben atier³ taken of þe fend, to playe þer pagyn among men, and to disseive men as beestis. And þus þei perseive clerly goostli harmyng of þes fendis, for þei forsaken þer first ordre, and casten hem to bigile þe world. And þus bi fallace of þe fendis ben lordis disseived many weies, for þei stelen first þer patrimonye bi colour of ypocrisie, and seien þat boþe þei and þer eldris han trewe proctours of þes ordris; but þei tellen not how Goddis lawe forbediþ ony sich dowyng to be. And so þes þat swarmen out of þer cloistre tellen not how þere is þer lyf, and how þei weren out of þer cloistre as fishis wiþouten water^c. Þus þe fend swarmeþ his covent, and bigilip many lordis. And þis ipocrisie

¹ *wonne*, E.² *alȝif*, E.³ *tire*, Q.

^a The knowledge of the extent to which they are deluded by the friars is attained to with difficulty.

^b All that follows, to the end of the sermon, is omitted in E.

^c This was a common saying in the fourteenth century. In the de-

scription of the monk in the Prologue to the 'Canterbury Tales,' Chaucer writes,—

'He gaf not of that text a pulled hen.
That saith that hunters ben not holy men;
Ne that a monk, when he is cloysterles,
Is likned to a firche that is waterles;
This is to seyn, a monk out of his cloystre.'

of Heroude may be shewid bi þis reule, þat boþe monkis and freris assenten to werris wiþouten cause, and bringen þes lordis awerke, to make hem enemyes in many rewmes, and waste þer bodies and þer moneie. But ȝit þei feynen þat þei ben martris, but þe rewmes ben riche to God for martirdom þat þei han geten. Þus Cristene men suffisen not to telle þe cautelis of þese fendis, and how þei blynden worldli men wiþ false wordis of þer maistir.

PE FIRSTE WEDNESDAI AFTER OCTAVE OF TWELFÞE DAY.

[SERMON CXXXII.]

Cum audisset Jesus.—MATT. iv. [12.]

The beginning
of the preach-
ing of Christ.

Þis gospel telliþ whanne and how oure Lord Jesus bigan to preche. Mathew telliþ, *Whanne Jesus hadde herd þat Joon Baptist was taken, he wente in to Galile, and lefte þe citee of Nazareth, and cam and dwelte in Capharnaum.* Joon was trayed for he reprovede Heroude of his broþers wyf ȝat he held, and wiles weren cast for Joones deþ bi þe wickide womman Herodias; and Crist wiste wel how Joon shulde die, and whanne, and how gloriously, and so Crist began to preche and conferme Joones preching. For Crist took þe same teme, and held þe same forme of preching. *Capharnaum was a citee on þe see coostis¹ of Zabulon and Neptalym, so þat it were fulfillid þat was seid bi Isay þe profet², * Þe lond of Zabulon and þe lond of Neptalym is a weye of þe see on Jordan of Galile of heþene folk.** And it is knowun how kyng Solomon ȝaf þis Galile to a kyng þat gat him stones³ to his temple, and how þus men goen to þe see. *Þe peple, of þese two sortis, þat sat in derknesse of synne, saw a greet lizt, whanne it saw Crist þe sunne of riȝtwisnes, and while men sitten in lond of shadewe of deþ, is lizt sprungun unto hem.* In þis lond was þe shadewe of deþ; for þere was synne

¹ was a cite on þe see in þe coostis, Q: was a citee in þe coast, E. ² The words between asterisks are wrongly excluded from the quotation in A. ³ stonys, Q; A has sones.

of unbelieve, and many oþer unkindely synnes, þat maken shadewe of deþ to men. For many of þis contrey weren dampnyd, al 3if summe of hem weren saved; and þes men out of bileve þat shulden be dampned baren wiþ hem þat shadewe of þe secunde deþ, and derkiden oþer wiþ þis shadewe.

*From hens bigan Jesus to preche, and seie, as Joon Baptist seide, Do 3e penaunce, for þe rewme of hevenes shal come ny3*¹. Doing of penance was nedeful to þe peple þat þes men tau3ten, for þer weye was ful slidir for to go to hevene inne, siþ fleishli synnes weren in hem, and þei letten men to go to hevene; and it profitiþ mouche to men to go in good felouship. But Crist, þat is rewme of hevene, shal come ny3 and opene heven, and stoppe tempting of þe fend; and so men shulden helpe hemsilf, and bigynne at þeir nexte enemye, þat is þe fleish, to chastise it.

ON ÞE FIRSTE FRIDAY AFTIR OCTAVE OF TWELFÞE DAY.

[SERMON CXXXIII.]

Egressus Jesus.—LUKE iv. [14.]

DIS gospel telliþ how Crist prechide, aftir þe storie þat Luk telliþ. *Jesus wente out in vertue of þe Goost in to Galile.* Trewe men trowen as bileve þat þe Holi Gost ledde Jesus whidir ever he wente, and what dedis evere he dide. *And fame wente out þour3 al þe lond of him; and Crist tau3te in synagogis of hem, and was magnified of hem alle.* *And Crist cam in to Nazareth, where he was conseved and nurishid, and he entride bi his custome on Saturdai in to þe synagoge.* And hereof taken Cristene men custome to preche on Sundai, for it comeþ to us for Sabot in þe stede of Satirdai; and Crist hadde custum for to preche on Saturdaie, as Luk seiþ here; and so shulden preestis sue him, preching on Sabot þat is Sundai.

And Crist roos up to rede, and þe book of Ysay þe profete was

The preaching
of Christ at
Nazareth.

¹ The words *for—ny3* are wrongly excluded from the quotation in A.

3ouun to rede. And as Crist turnede þe book, he fond þe place where it was writun, Þe Spirit of þe Lord is upon me, wherfore he anoyntide me; to preche to pore men he sente me, and so þe Holi Goost bad me, preche to prisoneris for3yvenes, and to blynde men si3t, to leewe broken men in remissioun, to preche þe 3eer þat þe Lord acceptiþ, and þe daie of a3en3yuyng¹ a. Þis preching is al disusid, and turnid to pride and coveitise. For how ever men mai plese þe peple, and wiþ moneie wynne hem worship, þat þei prechen, and putten abak þe profit of þe peplis soule. Þis book was ordeyned of God to be red in þis place, for alle þingis þat felden to Crist weren ordeyned for to come þus. And so men seyen Crist hadde office of alle þe mynystris in þe Chirche. Crist lernede to rede whanne he wolde, and he preiside mouche Ysay; and þes ei3te wordis² red here of Crist han betere ordre þan we can telle; for þe Hooli Goost was on Crist boþe in his bodi and soule, siþ Crist was boþe God and man, and bi his manheed led of God. And þerfore þis Goost anoyntide Crist wiþ goodis of grace as fulli as ony man my3te be anoyntid. And þus Crist mut nedis preche to meke men þat wolden take it, for þis is þe beste dede þat man doiþ here to his breþeren. And so Crist prechide, to prisoneris for3yuyng of þer synnes, and to men blinde in wit, for to knowe þe wille of God, and leewe broken men in for3yvenesse of þer travaile. And Crist prechide þe 3eer of our Lord þat was acceptable bi him; for he made the 3eer Jubile; and daie of 3yuyng of mercy and of blis was prechid of Crist. And so alle þes ei3te wordis sownen in mercy and confort of Crist, to men þat ben in prisoun here for olde synnes þat þei have done.

And whanne Crist hadde folden þis book, he 3af it to þe servaunt, and he sat; and þe eyen of alle þat weren in þe sinagoge weren loking to him. And Crist bigan to seie to hem, þat þis dai is þis writing fild in 3our izen on me. For Isay seide þes wordis, as men þat profecieden of Crist. And alle men 3aven him witness; and alle men woundriden in þe wordis of grace þat

¹ for3yuyng, E.

² bokis, Q; om. E.

* The Vulgate, I do not know on what authority, inserts here at the end of the nineteenth verse, the words, 'et diem retributionis.'

camen of his mowþ. Of þis dede of Crist men taken, þat it is leueful for to write, and aftirward to rede, a sermoun; for þus dide Crist oure alper-maistir. For ȝif men mai þus turne þe peple, what shulde lette to have þis maner? Certis traveile of þe prechour or name of havyng of good witt shulde not be þe ende of preching, but profit to þe soule of þe peple; and howeuer þis ende comeþ beste, is moost plesing to God. And curiouse preching of Latyn is ful fer fro þis ende; for many men prechen hemsilf, and leewe to preche Jesus Crist; and so sermons done lesse good þan þei diden in meke tyme.

ON ÞE SECUNDE WEDNESDAI AFTER OCTAUE OF TWELFÞE DAI.

[SERMON CXXXIV.]

Egressus Jesus abiit.—MARK vi. [I.]

ÞIS gospel telliþ how Crist dide in profitinge to his Chirche. *He wente out* of a mannis hous whos douzter he reiseid from deþ to liif. And þis wenche was þe firste bodi þat Crist quykenede of þree; and she was a wenche of twelve ȝeer age, þat Crist reiseid wiþinne þe hous. *And Crist wente pennes to his contre, and his disciplis folewiden him, and in þe same Sabot day he bigan to teche in þe synagoge. And many þat herden woundriden in his lore, seiying, Wherof comen alle þes þingis to him? and what is þe wisdom þat is ȝouun þus to him, and sich vertues don bi his hondis? Is not he þis Josephis sone and Maries?* And Joseph was a forgere¹ of trees², þat is to seie a wriȝte. And Crist hadde name of his fadir in reprof of his pore kyn. And so þei seiden þat Crist was *broþir of James and of Joseph and of Jude and Symount*, for alle þes weren his auntis children. *Ne ben not hise sisters wiþ us here? And þei weren harmed bi sclandre of him.* Men mai seie soiþ dispitously, as siche cosyns among þe Jewis ben clepid breþeren and sistris; and þei nemeden hem for þei weren pore. *And Jesus seide to hem*

Christ not accepted in his own country.

¹ *forcer*, E. E gives it right.

² This clause is wrongly included in the quotation in A;

þat þer is noo profete wipouten honoure, but in his contre, in his hous, and in his kynrede. For in strange contre men marken þe dedis, and in þes homly placis þe kyn. *And Crist myzte not þer do ony vertue, but þat he heelide a fewe sicke men, þe while he leide his hondis on hem.* And here men taken of oure bileve, þat þing which God haþ ordeyned not to be may not be; for alle þingis moten nedis be þat God haþ ordeyned. But Crist myzte, ȝif he hadde wolde, have done here miraclis at his wille; but Crist saw ever Goddis ordenaunce, to which he mut nedis assente. *And Crist woundride of his kyn, for þe untreupe þat þei hadden.* Crist woundride of many þingis, which þingis he wiste ful wel. For Crist hadde foure maner of knowngis; bi sum he woundride, and bi sum oper not. Crist, in þat he was God, hadde þe same witt wip þe Fadir, and in þat þat he is blessid, Crist saw clerely alle þingis^a. Crist bi his bodili wittis hadde knowng as oper men, and now he gat sich knowing, and now he failide þereof. And, bi þis, Crist hadde comune knowing, bi which he knewe þingis generalli.

ÞE SECUNDE FRIDAY AFTER OCTAVE OF TWELFÞE DAL.

[SERMON CXXXV.]

*Descendit*¹ *Jesus.*—LUKE iv. [31.]

Þis gospel tellip more of Crist how he traveileide in his Chirche. *Crist wente out of his contre, wher he was born and was dispisid, and cam down to Capharnam, þat was a cite of Galile, and þer Crist tauzte upon Satirdaies.* *And þei wondriden in his lore, for his word was in power.* Crist spak sadli, as a Lord þat hadde power above þe lawe, and to adde to þe lawe, and telle how it schulde be undirstonden². *And in þat synagoge was a man þe which hadde a foul fend; and þe fend criede bi þis man wip a greet vois, and seide, Suffre now*³, *what is to us*

¹ So E and Q rightly; A has *Ascendit*. ² So E; A and Q read 'how it undirstood.'
³ So E; A excludes 'suffre now' from the quotation.

^a That is, by the beatific vision.

and to þee, *Jesus of Nazareþ*? Art þou come to leese us? *Y woot þat þou art Goddis seint.* Þis fend knewe Cristis manheed, and sumwhat he knewe of his Godhede; and he wolde seie þat Crist in þus punishing þe fendis dide no dede of mercy, siþ at domesdai þei shulden have ful peyne; and þis fend was nedid to confesse Cristis holynesse. *But Jesus blamede þis fend, and seide, Be þou doumbe; and he wente out fro þis man. And whanne Crist hadde cast out þis fend, he wente fro þe man, and noiede him not. And drede was maad in alle men, and þei spaken togidere and seiden, What is þis word? for in power and in vertue Crist commandiþ unclene spiritis, and þei goon out. And fame of Crist was publishid into ech place of þe contre.*

Here we mai se þat Crist held not wiþ fendis, for þei seiden treuþe, and baren witnessse of his holynesse; and wolde God þat we diden þus! For þanne we shulden not serve to fendis for worldli þingis þat þei 3yven us; and we shulden not take false witnessis þat ben hired for worldli goodis; but we shulden take clene witnesses in a clene cause of treuþe. For many men seien þe soþe, and God hatip hem for her unclene liif; siþ he þat is in synne synneþ, al3if he seie þe treuþe. And so in Engelond ben many men afer aqueyntid wiþ þe fend: for alle þes þat ben false meenys wolen have witnessse of oþer men; and þis falliþ ofte bi coveitise, and¹ oþer synnes þat men don.

Application of the gospel.

ON ÞE ÞRIDDE WEDNESDAI AFTER OCTAVE OF TWELFÞE DAL.

[SERMON CXXXVI.]

Intravit Jesus in synagogam.—MARK iii. [1.]

Þis gospel telliþ how Crist reprovede Phariseis and men of lawe, for þei chargiden moche þat Crist shulde do myraclis in þer Sabotis. Mark telliþ how, *Crist entride in to þe synagoge, and þer was a man þat hadde a drye hond. And þei aspieden him, 3if he wolde heele men in Sabote, þat þei wolden accuse him.*

The cure of the man that had the withered hand.

¹ and, Q. E; A has of.

And Crist seide to þe man þat hadde a drie hond, of humors, Rise in to þe myddel. And Crist seide to hem, Where it be leweful to do wel in þe Sabot, or men shulden do yvel in þe Sabot? wher it is leweful to make a mannys liif saaf, or lese mannys liif in Sabot? But þes foolis holden þer pees. For þei myȝten not denye þat ne spiritual werkes, in which bodies worchen, shulden be don algatis in Sabot, as preiyng and service in þe Temple, wiþ oþer werkes þat preestis usen; and þes goen nere¹ bodili werkes þan to heele a man bi miracle. Also it was leweful to hele a mannys soule in sabot, for þanne shulden þei algates traveile for þe helpe of mannys soule. But bi þes werkes þat Crist dide was mannys soule heelid; not oonli for Crist bi his Godhede helide men, ne oonli for Crist tauȝte hem þe bileve, but for þei sawen Goddis power worche in Crist, and knewen bi him many treuþis of bileve þat þei knewe not bifore. And so, as Crist arguiþ, ȝif Cristis werkes weren of þe fend, God wolde not worche þus so graciously in Crist. And, as Crist reproveþ hem in þe gospel of Luk, it was leweful and usid among Jewis comunli þat þei wolden helpe out of þe lake a beest in þe Sabot; myche more Crist shulde helpe in þe Sabot a siik man. For ȝif Crist lefte þus his Fadriss werkes in þe Sabot, Crist hadde consentid to menniss harm, and wiþholden yvele his power.

And Crist, lokynge on hem wiþ ire, hadde sorewe on þer blyndnesse, and seide to þe man, þat he shulde stretche out his hond, and þis man stretchide out, and his hond was restorid. And þus myȝten þes blynde foolis wite þat Crist dide lewefully; for ellis at comandement of Crist wolde not God þus have heelid þis man. And þus men han a drie hond þat wanten werkes of grace.

¹ *near*, Q, E.



ON þE ÞRIDDE FRYDAY AFTER OCTAVE OF TWELFþE DAY.

[SERMON CXXXVII.]

Circuibat Jesus.—MATT. iv. [23.]

ÞIS gospel telliþ of Jesus preching, how bisili he tauzte his Chirche. For Mathew telliþ þat, *Jesus wente aboute al þe contre of Galile, techinge in þe synagogis, and prechinge þe gospel of þe rewme of hevene.* And so Crist tauzte þe olde lawe, and fillide it wiþ þe newe lawe; and þus tauzte Crist oure prelatiſ, not to¹ be idil in þer holdis, ne spuyle moneye of þer sugetis whanne evere þei visitiden hem, but to preche þe gospel of God and moove men to good liif and blis. *And Crist helide al languyſhing and al sykenesse in þe peple.* But disciplis of Anticrist agreggen þe siiknesse of þer folk, for þei maynteynen synne for moneie, and 3yven cursid ensauple of liif. For men þat þus turnen fro Crist moten nedis synne in visitinge, and² oþer þat assenten to hem synnen in manere bi siche prelatiſ. *And opynyoun of Crist wente þourz al þe lond of Siry.* And God 3yve þat Cristis liif were þus wel knowun in Cristyndom, for þanne myzten men sue Crist, and take no werkis but ensauplid³ of him. *And þei offriden to Crist al þo þat hadden hem yvel bi diverse siiknesse, as lunatikes and paralitykis, and Crist heelide hem.* Lunatikes ben sich men þat han cours of þer siiknesse bi movyng of þe moone, and þanne þe fend wrouzte in hem. Paralitikes ben þo men þat ben siike in þe palesy, þat mai not rihtli move þer partis for feblenesse of þer senewis. *And myche folk sueden Crist.* Sum men sueden Crist for lore of Goddis lawe and weye to hevene; sum men sueden Crist for helpe, for Crist heelide many bodies; sum men sueden Crist for mete, for Crist fedde men ofte bi myracle; sum men sueden Crist for woundris þat þei sawen Crist do, for Crist dide more wondirful werkes þan men don in somer games; and sum men sueden Crist to accuse him in word and dede. And þus, for summe of þes or manye, summe folk sueden Crist.

Christ preach-
ing and work-
ing miracles in
Galilee.

¹ So E; om. A. ² So E, Q; om. A. ³ So E: A has *ensauple*.

ÞE FOURÞE WEDNESDAI AFTER OCTAVE TWELFÞE-DAI.

[SERMON CXXXVIII.]

Factum est autem.—LUKE ix. [57.]

Self-sacrifice
involved in
following
Christ.

Þis gospel telliþ how Cristis disciplis moten han hem in lyvyng. *It fel*, seiþ Luke¹, *whanne Crist and hise disciplis wenten in þe weie, oon seide to Crist, I shal sue þee whidir ever þou shalt go. And Jesus seide to him, Foxis hav dennis, and briddis of þe eir hav nestis wher þei shal reste, but certis mannis sone hap not where he shulde reste his heed.* Crist answeriþ here to þe þougt and entent of þis man, for þis man was coveitous, and saw Crist do many woundris, and if he myzte have dwelt wiþ Crist, and lerned to do sich curis, he myzte have be rich man in haste, for him and for alle hise. To þis entent answeriþ Crist, and seiþ, þat þer ben þre manere of men. Þe firste men ben foxis þat han hid tresour, as comunli ben marchandis. And sum ben gentil men and riche of þer rentis, and þes, as briddis of þe eir, fleen in to þer nestis. But þe þridde manere of men ben Crist and hise apostlis; þat han no richesse her propre, but lyven goostli liif, and upon mennis almes. And þus þis mannis entent acordide not wiþ Crist.

And here telliþ Crist us in þe gospel of Mathew, how he was pore man as anentis worldli lordship, and so he shulde not seke to Crist for þis worldeli eende, for Crist myzte not change þis staat for comyng of sich a fals man. And here mai we se how oure newe religieuse varien fro Crist, for þei han propre housing, and goodis in þis housing, as hadde not Crist wiþ hise apostlis. Crist hadde alle þingis, but not þus worldli. *Crist seide to anoper man, Sue þou me. And he seide, Sire, lete me first go and birie my fadir. And Jesus seide to him, Suffre þat dede men birie þer dede.* And here mai we see how Crist determinede how sum men þat lyven in þe world ben dede to Godward, and we mai se ever how we shulden leve

¹ So in E; A wrongly includes 'seiþ Luk' in the quotation.

goode werkes for doing of þe betere; siþ it is werk of mercy to birie dede men^a, and 3it Crist wolde þat þis man levede þis and suede him. For he synneþ gretly þat leueþ þe betere, and chesip þe worse; and þus dede men to God don good to þe world. And over þis we mai se how falsely oure newe religiouse moven men bi þis gospel to come to þer religioun. For þei shulde purge hem silf bifore, and make hem pore as Crist was. But Crist seide to þis man, Go þou and telle þe rewme of God; but to þis ben men unable, for tyme þat þei ben in þes ordres, for þei shulden able hem after Crist, and apostlis þat weren of his scole. But fro þe tyme þat hem wantide þis maistir, þei gedereden¹ not coventis togidere, siþ Crist was propirli Maistir, and myzte not faile in his leeding. But now foolis and sinful men lede oþer foolis into þe diche. And so, siþ Cristis religioun is betere þan þes newe ordres, þes men synnen gretli þat taken hem and leven Cristis. For Cristis ordre myzte occupie ech man as myche as he myzte do; and no drede it myzte occupie men betere þan þes newe ordres. And so, as Crist bad þis man suffre deed men to birie dede men, so men shulden suffre þes newe ordres, þat ben clepid dede houndis, and sue Crist in his ordre, as Crist bad þis man do. And 3if þes ordres pursuen trewe men and emprisonen þer owne breþeren for sich treuþe of þe gospel, þei ben worse þan Heroude was; and in þis same dampnacioun ben myzti men of þe world þat defenden þes newe ordres, to do þes synnes and oþer moo. For whoever assentiþ on þis wyse makip him gilty wiþ þe doere; and þus Eroudes ypocrisie shulde be fled of men of þe world.

But þe bridde man seide to Crist, Sire, Y shal sue þee, but first 3yve me leewe to telle to hem þat ben at hoom. And Jesus seide to him, No man þat puttip his hond to þe plouz, and lokyng azen, is able to þe kyngdom of God. Crist wolde here þat whoever hadde an hooli purpos to lyve wel, he shulde not leve þis purpos for no movyng of þe world; siþ we ben as tiliyng men, to ere oure lond, and sowe it aftir; and lokyng abak in þis crafte makip errour in sich tilieris. For sich men taken in veyn þe

The danger of looking back.

¹ So Q; *geriden*, A; *gydren*, E.

^a To bury the dead, is the last among the seven corporal works of mercy.



grace of God, þat leeven goode werkes for movynge of þe world, or counseyle¹ to lesse goode werkes. And þus alle þes newe ordris, þat leeve fredom of Cristis ordre for goodes þat ypocritis han getun to þes newe feyned statis, done here aʒens Crist, and unable hem silf to come to heven. We shulden þenke on Lothis wif, how she for lokyng abak was turned into a lumpe of salt, to teche us to love Cristis ordre.

DE FOURÐE FRYDAI GOSPEL AFTER OCTAVE ON TWELFÐE DAL.

[SERMON CXXXIX.]

Offerebant Jesu parvulos.—MARK X. [13.]

Þis gospel telliþ how Jesus lovede litil children in kynde and figure. For siþ Crist ordeynede litil children to growe to men, and este to seintis, it is noo drede Crist lovede þis age, as alle oþer agis of men. But for children of þis age lyven ofte as innocentis, and ben not broken wip worldli falsehede, þerfore Crist lovede þis figure. And þus seiþ Mark, *þat he folk offriden litel children to Jesus, þat he shulde touche hem.* And þis was a grat sacrament, but God woot whi þis Chirche putte it not among sacramentis². *And disciplis of Crist lettiden hem þat offreden þer children. But whanne Jesus saw þis, he tok it hevely, and seide to hem, Suffre ʒe litel children to come to me, and forfende ʒe hem not, for of sich maner children is þe rewme of hevenes. Soþli I seie to ʒou, þat whoever takiþ not þe rewme of God as a ʒonge child, shal not entre in to it. And clippinge hem, and puttinge his hondis on hem, Crist blesside hem.* And herfore techiþ Petre his peple þat þei shulde coveite mylk, as new born ʒonge children, havynɡ witt wipouten disseit. For as mylk nurishiþ sich children, so bileve nurishiþ Goddis children; and as children loven mylk, for a litil bifore þei weren sich substance, so Cristen men shulden love bileve, for þei han lyved

Christ will have the little children brought to him.

1 Pet. ii. 2.

¹ So in E; A reads *conceile*.
mentis, E.

² *whi þis is not put among oþer sacramentis, E.*

in bileve of Goddis Sone. And herfore seiþ Salomon: Take 3e out¹ litil foxis þat schrapen² doun þe vines; for savery lore of hevenly þingis, þat shulde growe in Cristis Chirche, is distried bi worldli men, þat lyven bi cautels as foxis. And herfore seiþ Crist in þe gospel, whanne he was manassid of Heroude, Go 3e and seiþ to þat fox, Lo, Y caste out fendis, and make helpis to daye and to morowe; and in þe þridde dai Y am deed, but not 3it. And siþ it mut nedis be þat Crist lyve in þree 3eer after, Crist myzte not leve for Heroude to do goodis to his Chirche.

ON FYFÞE WEDNESDAI AFTER OCTAVE.

[SERMON CXL.]

Homo quidam habuit.—MATT. xxi. [28.]

Þis gospel dividip þe Chirche in two partis, and reproveþ þe toon. Þe parable þat Crist seiþ is told of hym in þes wordis. *O man hadde two sonys, and he going to þe first seide, Sone, go to day and worche in my vyneserde. And he answeringe seide, Y nyle; but aftirward he, moved bi penaunce, wente forþ. And þis fadir came to þe toþer sone, and bad also þat he shulde worche, and he answeride and seide, I go, sire; but he wente not. Which of þes two dide þe fadirs wille?* axide Crist of þes Jewis. *And þei seien to him þat þe firste.* For he dide in dede his fadirs wille, and þe toþer as a fals sone bihipte wel, but dide falsely. *And Jesus seide to þe Jewis, Sobeli I seiþ to 3ou, þat puplicans and hooris shal go bifore 3ou in þe Chirche. For Joon Baptist cam to 3ou in þe weie of riztwisnesse, and 3e trowiden not to him, and dide not as he tauzte 3ou, but puplicans and puteyns³ trowiden to him, and diden aftir him; and 3e, seynge al his liif, hadden neiþer⁴ penance after for to trowe to Jones sentence. For þe Jewis sawen Joon dede for reprovyng of Heroudis synne; and 3it þe Jewis hadden no sorowe for feynt levying⁵ to þus stonde for treuþe in*

The parable
of two sons.

¹ us, E. ² sbrapen, G.

³ booris, G; putaynis, I.

⁴ never, E.

⁵ So E: A has bileevyng.

Goddis cause. And for þis parable is ful good for many men to knowe, þerfor biddiþ Crist aftir þat, *he þat haþ eeris to heeren, here he þes wordis, wiþ ere and herte.*

Interpretation.

Þis parable of Crist is þus expowned. Þis fadir is God himsilf; þes two sones ben two folk, þe Jewes and heþene men. Þe heþene men ben þe firste sone, for þei weren bifore þe Jewis, and also bifore Ebreus, as men mai se in Goddis lawe. Goddis vyneserde is holy Chirche, þat was fro þe bigynnyng of þe world. And God bad þes boþe sones to traveile and profite to his Chirche; for whanne ever God biddiþ charite, þat stondiþ in þe ten heestis, God biddiþ to traveile in his Chirche, as þe secounde Table techiþ. Þis first sone was first untrew, and seide he wolde not serve to God, for he wolde not take bileve, ne graunten in dede to be Goddis servant. Þe toþer sone seide he wolde, and dide¹ in many patriarkis. But aftir þis firste sone was moved of God bi kyndely skile to serve him and lyve wel, as in Joob and Jetro, but largely whanne heþene men token bi apostlis Cristis feiþ. And þanne þe toþer sone of þis fadir weren folk out of bileve, for fro þat tyme þat prestis rengniden, and killiden Crist for his treuþe, þei weren fals to þis day, and noyous to hooly Chirche. And þus bi jugement of þe Jewis Crist concludide hem softly. And þus may men parte þe Chirche in seculer men and in clerkes. Seculer men ben þe first sone, and clerkes ben þe toþer sone. And clerkis and preestis lyveden first wel, and speciali in Cristis tyme, for Crist and hise apostlis also weren boþe preestis and clerkis, and þei traveiliden moost in þe Chirche, and maden it large and flourishinge; siþ þat Crist bouȝte his Chirche, and toke it into hevене wiþ him. But now ben þes two sones turned. For feiþ and good religioun stondiþ in seculer men, and in preestis ben wordis wiþouten good dede. Preestis seien þei suen Crist, and kepen next þe liif of him, siþ in hem stondiþ holy Chirche, as mannis liif stondiþ in his soule. * And^a men þat knowen þe worldis state seyen þat þe popis and cardinales, bishopis and religious, ben moost fer fro Cristis liif, and so þis parable of

The laity are now better than the clergy.

¹ *grauntide, E.*

* The passage between the asterisks is not contained in E.

Crist dampneþ hem for her falshede*. But take we alle þis witt of Crist; for we þat biheten to serve Crist, and gon abak as false soones, maken us silf þe secounde sone, and so þis parable of Crist is nedeful to ech man here.

WEDNESDAI GOSPEL NEXT AFTER SEPTUAGESME SONDAI.

[SERMON CXLI.]

Egressus Jesus ibat.—MARK IX. [29.]

ÞIS gospel telliþ how Crist tauzte þe Chirche to flee pride, and algatis prestis, for pride is more perilous in hem, as it was in aungels. Mark telliþ how, *Jesus wente out bi þe contre of Galile*, and he wolde not tarie þere, ne dalye wiþ men of þat contre, and herfore seiþ þis gospel þat *Crist wolde not knowe ony man*, for he wente privyly wiþ his apostlis as it was best. *But Crist tauzte his disciplis, and seide to hem, þat mannis sone shal be betrayed in to mannis hondis, and þei shal sle him, and fro þat he be slayn, he shal rise on þe þridde dai. And þei knewen not þis word, and dreden to axe him þerof. And þei camen to Capharnaum, and Crist, whanne he was in þe hous, axide his disciplis þing þat he knewe, What tretiden ze in þe wey? And þei weren stille.* For it semeþ þat þei wolden not þat Crist hadde wist of þis trete; and it semeþ þat Crist was from hem, and herde hem not whanne þei tretiden þis; for he myzte, as he wolde, be fer fro hem, and þei togidere, for þe moste of þrittene persones myzte wel go bi hem silf; and þe twelve myzten go togidere, and speke privyly, þat he herde¹ not. But it semeþ over þis þat Cristis word movede hem to trete þis². Crist tolde hem a litil bifore, how he shoulde be slayn from hem; and alþif þis word marride hem, for þei undirstooden it not wel, neþeles þei þouzten on þingis þat myzten come after þis, and so, ȝif þei shulden lyve togidere, which shulde be more of hem, and who shulde be þer capteyn, to whom all oþer shulde obeishe.

Against pride,
especially in
the clergy.

¹ So E; *berden*, A.

² þus, E.

And þis semeþ God to teche, whanne þis gospel techiþ þus, þat þes postlis tretiden þanne which shulde be more of hem. For þus telliþ God next aftir, *Forsoþe þei disputiden in þe weye which shulde be more of hem*¹. And God varieþ here for sum cause, and seiþ not which of hem shulde be more. For ȝif men ben al atwynne² and not in oo companye, ȝit oon of hem is more, alȝif he be not þe more of hem.

And Crist sitting, clepide þes twelve, and seide, ȝif ony of ȝou wole be þe firste, he shal be þe laste of alle and servant of alle, for he must be moost meke of alle oþer. *And Crist toke a child, and putte him in þe myddil of hem; þe which child whanne Crist hadde biclippid, he seide þus to hem, Who ever takip oon of þes*³ *children in my name resseyveþ me, and whoever resseyveþ me, resseyveþ not me, but my fadir.* It is told bi fyve ensaumplis how in sich speche of Crist is undirstonden þis word 'principally,' and þanne þe witt is good and sutil. And, for þis lore is profitable to governaile of holy Chirche, þefore seiþ Crist, as he seiþ ofte, *He þat hap eeris to heere, heere he.* And in þis point synnen specialy gretteste of þe Chirche, for þei suen not Crist heere but Anticrist and þe world. Loke þe pope first and his cardinalis, where þei taken no worldli worship, but ben þe laste, moost servisable, and moost meke of alle oþir. More foul pride and coveitise is in no Lord of þe world. Go we to bishopis bineþe þes, and riche abbotis, fadirs in coventis, and þes axen worldly worshipis, and bi þis mai men knowe hem. ȝif þou wil wite which of þes is more, loke which takip more worldly worship. And ȝif þou go down to freris, þat ben beggeris, and shulden be mekerste⁴, more worship of þeir breþeren takip no man in þis world, as bi kneling and kissing of feet; take þou þe ministre of freris⁵ and oþer service at mete and bedde, more þan ony bishop doiþ. And so Cristis reule in þes preestis is more reversid þan in worldli lordis. And siþ þei professen and seien þis gospel boþe in word and in oþ⁶, it is open þat þes false ypocritis disseyyve þe peple, and harmen þe Chirche. But

The clergy from the pope downwards, sin against the gospel rule of humility.

¹ So in E; A wrongly excludes these words from the quotation.
² a twyn, E. ³ syche, E, and the Wycliffite versions. ⁴ mekest, E.
⁵ as by knelyng, wiþ kyssyng of fete, takip þe mynystre of freris, E. ⁶ mouþ, E; but A is evidently right.

alle þe gossellis tellen þis reule as moost profitable to þe Chirche. And here þes prelatis smatchen pride, and venymyn þer sugettis after hem. And þis venym cam myche in fro þe tyme þat þe Chirche was dowyd. For it is comune proverb, he þat more haþ, more shulde he be worshipid. And alle spechis ben of worldli worship, for þei tellen not bi goostly worship.

ÞE FRYDAI GOSPEL NEXT AFTER SEPTUAGESME SONDAY.

[SERMON CXLII.]

Qui non est mecum.—MATT. xii. [30.]

CRIST telliþ men in þis gospel how þei shulden serve him, and which synne shal be forgovun and which synne is dampned for ever. Mathew telliþ þat Crist seiþ first *þat, Whoever is not wiþ him, he is azens him.* For generalte of þis Lord, siþ¹ he is boþe God and man, he² axiþ service of ech man, for ech man mut serve Crist, oþer doinge or suffringe. And proude men þat wolen not suffre moten evere sue Crist in helle, and þis suffringe noieþ moost to proude men þat wolden not worche. For doying is, kyndeli, above and more worþi þan suffring. Of oþer lordis it nedieþ not þat he be azens hem, whoever is not wiþ hem; for many men in þis world ben impertinent^a to erþeli lordis, for neiþer þei ben servantis to hem, ne þes lordis þeir worldly lordis; but Crist mut nede be Lord of alle, siþ he is boþe God and man. And þis sentence shulden lordis lerne, and alle maner of ydil men, to wite wher þei ben wiþ Crist, or þei ben azens him. For certis, 3if þei ben azens Crist, þei ben servantis of þe fend, and as þer traveile is moche, so þeir hir³ is peyne wiþouten eende. And so ech idil man, for he is not wiþ Crist, mut nedis be azens Crist, and so on þe fendis side. And so, *Who gederiþ not wiþ Crist, scateriþ* algatis wiþ þe fend. Crist gederiþ men in

How Christ is to be served, and of the unpardonable sin.

¹ seiþ, E.

² om. Q; and, E.

³ byre, E.

^a That is, 'have nothing to do with.'

love and in acord and unite, but þe fend doiþ þe contrarie, for he wole part men fro God; and þus God loveþ pees, and þe fend loveþ striif. *And herfore Y seie to zou, þat ech synne and blasfemye shal be forzovun to men, but þe Spirit of blasfemye shal nevere be forzovun.* Here synne and blasfemye ben clepid synnes of men, but þe Spirit of blasfemye is clepid þe fendis synne, for it lastiþ to mannis ende, and so aftir for evermore; and þis is synne azen þe Holy Goost, and shal nevere be forzovun, neiþer in þis liif ne in þe toþer, for þere is not synne forzovun þus¹. And as þe Hooli Goost is goqd, eende wiþouten ende, so þis synne speciali is yvel, ende wiþouten ende. And so þis mai be wel clepid, synne azens þe Hooli Goost. And to þis entent spekiþ Crist whanne he seiþ after in þis gospel, *And whoever seie a word azens mannis sone, it shal be forzovun him, but whoever seie azen þe Hooli Goost, it shal not be forzovun him, in þis world ne in þe toþir.* But here men shal undirstonde þat whoever synneþ azens oo persone of God, synneþ azens hem alle þree, siþ alle þree ben oo God; but he synneþ propirly azens þe Sone þat synneþ of ignoraunce. And 3if a man myzte synne of noun power, he synnede properle azens þe Fadir; but Poul seiþ þat God suffriþ not a man be temptid over þat he mai. And he synneþ propirli azens þe Holi Goost, þat wantiþ good wille to turne to God in þis liif, and þis man mut nedis be dampned, siþ his synne must ever laste. So it mai be undirstonden on two maneres þat men synnen azens þe Fadir. Oþer þat þei synnen bi noun power þat þei han of God, wiþouten þer owne defaute, bi synnes þat þei han don bifore; and þus mai no man sin propirli azens þe Fadir. On oþir maner synnen men azen þe Fadir and al þe Trinite, whenne þei done synnes bifore, bi which þei ben hardid azens God, and muten nedis synne to þer eende, as God haþ ordeyned for þer synne bifore. For þe firste cause þis gospel leveþ synne azen þe Fadir of hevене.

And of þis it sueþ wel, siþ al men in erþe ben trees, *þat þei shulden make good trees and þe fruyt of hem good, or ellis yvel trees and þe fruyt of hem yvel.* For ech man mut be

¹ om. E.

wiþ Crist or ellis be aþens Crist, and synne aþens þe Holi Goost or ellis not synne aþens þis Goost. *And so of þe fruyt is þe tree knowun*, wheþir it shal ever more be greene or ellis be brent in þe fier of helle. And so Crist coman d not þat þes men shulden do þus, for ech man mut nede do þus, as he mut nede be savyd or dampned. But Crist telliþ how men moten take nedis þat þat sueþ herof. And þis sentence is sharp, but just bi Goddis jugement. And so Crist semeþ to teche here¹ þat alle þingis moten nedis come, but semeþ to telle ferþere how þes men² moten nedis be dampned, for synnis þat þei han do bifore moten nedis brynge forþ more synne. And þus seiþ Crist here, *þe addir kyndelis, how mai þe speke good þingis, siþ þat þe ben þus yvel?* boþe in þour eldris and þou. And þis is open speche, siþ alle þingis moten nedis come; and ellis it semeþ veyn speche, and wordis told wiþouten witt. And so Crist telliþ þat for þer synne þes men moten nedis be dampned. *For of aboundance of herte spekiþ þe mouþ*, of ech man. *A good man of good tresour bringiþ forþ good þingis*, as he mut nedis; *and an yvel man bringiþ forþ yvel þingis of an yvel tresour*, as he mut nedis.

But, for þis synne growiþ faste, bi oþere þat men chargen to³ litil, þerfore prophecies Crist of þes men and þis synne, *Sopheli, I seie to þou, þat of ech ydil word þat þes men shal speke, þei shal þyve resoun þerof in þe dai of jugement*. And þis techiþ Crist, þat litil synnes shulden be fled, for þei moten bringe forþ more synnes, and general jugement mut be of hem. *For certis of þi wordis shal þou be maad just, and of þi wordis þou shalt be dampned*. Þes wordis mai be undirstonden of þe grete persone of mannis kynde, of whiche summe shal be saved, and summe aftir shal be dampned. And þis semeþ more clere þan þe witt þat telliþ þis condiciounly; þat ȝif God ordeyne þee to blis, and þou speke here wordis, þou shalt be justified of þi wordis, for sich men don alȝatis good; and ȝif God ordeyne þee to peyne and þat þou speke here many wordis, þou shalt be dampned for þi wordis, for sich men don algatis yvel; and so alle men shulde take hede to þere wordis þat þei ben goode.

¹ So E; A has *beren*.² So E; om. A.³ *but*, E.

ÞE WEDNESDAI GOSPEL NEXT AFTIR SEXAGESME SONDAI.

[SERMON CXLIII.]

Coepit Jesus docere ad mare.—MARK iv. [I.]

The parable of
the sower.

Þis gospel telliþ, as many oþir^a, how in foure maneres is seed sowun; and þus men ben diverseli disposid to take þe seed of Goddis word. Mark telliþ how, *Jesus bigan to leche men at þe water, and myche peple was gederid to him, so þat he wente into a boot, and in þat boot, in þe water, Crist saat and tauzte þe puple, so þat Crist sat in þe boot, for prees, and þe peple was on þe lond. And þus seiþ Mark þat, al þe puple aboute þe water was on þe lond, for þei shopen hem as wel as þei myzten to heere Cristis word. And Crist tauzte hem in parablis many þingis, and seide to hem in his lore; Heere 3e. Lo, a sower went out to sowe, and þe while he sowiþ, sum seed fel biside þe weye, and foulis came and eeten it. But oþer seed fel on stony placis where it hadde not myche erþe, and þis sprong up soone, for it hadde not depe erþe; as seed þat is in hoot place, and growiþ not depe in þe erþe, comeþ above þe erþe soone, but it dwyneþ anoon. And þus seiþ þe gospel, Whanne þe sunne was risen it brente up, and, for it hadde no rote, it driede up. And þe þridde seed fel among þornes, and þes þornes over growiden þis corn, and lettiden it for to þryve, and so it 3af no fruyt. Þe fourþe seed fel on good erþe, and it 3af fruyt, steyng up and wexinge, and o seed brouzte forþ þritty, anoþer 3af sixty, and þe þridde an hundred. And Crist seide after þis parable, Heere he þat haþ eeres to heere.*

Interpretation
of the parable.

Crist techiþ us of þis seed þat it is Goddis word. But alle we heeren Goddis word, alþif it growe not in us, and þerfore we shulden tilie oure lond to bringe fruyt of þis seed. Þis seed is strengþe of Goddis lawe, þat mai not perishe for yvel men, but synne of hem may lette hem to bringe forþ fruyt of þis seed. Þe first seed taken sich men þat ben encombrid

^a See vol. i. Sermon XXXVIII.

wiþ þe world, and bisynes þat þei han hardiþ¹ þe herte, and lettij hem to kepe þis seed in þere mynde, and in þer wille to love God. Foulis of hevene ben yvel spirits, þat taken away þouþt of þis seed. Þe secounde seed þryveþ not for tempting of mannis fleish, but whanne þe sunne 3yveþ hem good, lustis letten þis seed to growe. And herfore seid Daviþ, Y shal drede of hyennesse of þe dai^a; for comounly sich riche men han many temptingis, and litil devocioun. Þe þridde seed is sown among riche men of þe world; and bisynesse of richesse lettij þis seed for to growe. Þe fourþe seed growiþ wel, in good hertis wel defoulid; for lond wel eerid and wel dungid is able to bere good fruyt. So men þat sorewe of þer synnes, and þenken on þer owne freelte, grown in vertues of þe soule and serven God perfitli. Þes þree degrees of þis growing tellen þree profitis of men. Sum ben chast to þer spouse Crist, as virgyns and oþer good men; and þes holden þe ten comandementis for love of þe Trinite. Þe secounde fruyt, of þe sixtiþe² greyn, telliþ³ trewe doctours of þe Chirche; for þei holden Goddis heestis in hem silf, and doublen hem in þe puple. Þe þridde seed, of an hundrid greyn, bitokeneþ þe hiþeste charite, whanne a man suffriþ deef for to susteyne Goddis lawe, and puttiþ wel his owne liif for þe profit of þe Chirche. And loke we to what greyn Goddis word growiþ in us.

ÞE FRIDAI GOSPEL AFTIR SEXAGESME SONDAI.

[SERMON CXLIV.]

*Interrogatus Jesus Phariseis*⁴.—LUC. xvii.⁵ [20.]

Þis gospel telliþ of þe dai of dome, and of þe perils þat shal come bifore. And Mathew telliþ more opinli of boþe þes in his book. Luc seiþ þat, *Jesus was axid of þe Phariseis whanne Goddis rewme comeþ*. And it semeþ þei wolden wite whanne al þe Chirche shal come to hevene; for þanne shal be þe day

The day of judgment and the signs preceding it.

¹ So in Q and E; *bardid*, A. ² *sixty*, E. ³ So in E and Q; *tellen*, A. ⁴ *a Phariseis*, E, G, I. ⁵ So in E, rightly; A has xvi.

* 'Ab altitudine diei timebo;' Ps. lvi. 3 (lv. Vulg.)

of doome, and in þat dai shal þis rewme come. *Crist answeride to þes Phariseis, and seide, Goddis rewme cometh not wip keping, of cerymonyes.* And þus þre ordris in Cristis tyme unabliden hem to be of þis rewme, for bi keping of þer ordris þei lesten keping of Goddis heestis. And so myȝten boolde¹ men seie to þes ordris þat ben to day, for as þer weren in Cristis tyme Essey, Saducey, and Pharisey, so þer ben now in oure tyme, freris, chanons, and monkis. And alle þes þree distriede Crist, for bringinge in of newe lawes, and for turninge from his lawe, for þei token not wel Goddis word. And so it semeþ to be to dai; for alle þes þree newe ordris comen not to þe þrittibe greyn, and certis þei comen not þanne to hevene. For ȝif a man do al his power, al his witt, and al his wille to kepe þe lawe of Jesus Crist, ȝit unneþis wole it suffise; myche more ȝif a man scateride his vertues aboute newe lawis. But þus done alle þes newe ordris; and so myche þei failen in Goddis lawe; and þus hoordom of Goddis word is brouȝt in to maynteyne freris.

Friars, canons,
and monks.

The pope and
the secular
clergy.

But, for þe peril of þe Chirche stonðiþ not al in þes newe ordris, but in ypocrisie of preestis, and speciali of þe pope, þerfore seiþ Crist þus, þat trewe men, *shal not seie, Lo, here, lo, here,* is Cristis vicker² þat haþ ful power of Crist, þat sendiþ mennis soulis to hevene as soone as he wole do þis. For siþ Crist is heed of hooli Chirche, and oþer men ben but his lymes, herfore seiþ Crist soþly, *Lo, Goddis rewme is wipinne ȝou.* For Cristis manhed was among hem, and his Godhede wipinne hem; and so, love Crist and kepe his lawis, and it is ynowȝ to þee. And þus, seiþ Crist to his *disciplis*, for hem and oþer Cristene men, *Daies shal come whanne ȝe shal desire to see oo dai of mannis sone, and ȝe shal not se him þanne²,* for he shal be stied to heven. Lord, ȝif Crist cam now doun, and reproveþ þes ypocritis for dowing aȝens his lawe, litil wolden þei telle bi him, so þat he were unknowun to hem. And þanne, *þei shal seie to ȝou, Lo, heere, lo, here,* is Cristis viker; *but wole ȝe not go, and sue hem not,* siþ þei ben false, and suen not Crist. And as anentis þe daie of dome, *as liztning shyneþ over al þis world,* for tyme þat man can not telle, *so Crist shal come to þe*

¹ *goode, Q.*

² So in E; A includes the words in the quotation.

dome, and gidere men of al þis world. *But first mut Crist suffre many þingis, and he reprovod of þis kynrede. And as it was in Noies¹ daies, so it shal be in Cristis daies. Þei eeten and drunken, þei weddiden wyves, and wymmen weren zovun to weddingis, to þe daie þat Noie² wente into þe ship, and þe flood cam, and loste hem. And also it was don in Loths daies, whanne fyve citees weren sonken; þei eeten and drunken, þei bouzten and solden, þei settiden and bildiden; and þat dai þat Loth wente out of Sodom, fier and brymstone reynede from hevene, and loste alle þes fyve cities. And after þes þingis³ it shal be, in what day mannys sone shal be shewid. In þat hour, he þat shal be in þe roof, and his vesselis in þe hous, come he not doun to take hem; þanne⁴ he þat is lord of þis world assente he not to Anticrist for holding or filling of his goodis. And he þat lyveth in comune traveile, turne he not azen þanne, to defende Cristis viker, ne to fizte in his cause. And so neiper men of armes ne comunes shulden fizte for þes popis.*

Have ze mynde of Lottis wyf, and loke not azen fro Goddis lawe; for þis womman was dispitouseli deed, for she lokede azen as God forfendide. Whoever sekith to save his liif, he shal lese it; and whoever shal lese here his lyf, he shal quykene it in heven. For whoever holdip Goddis lore, zif he lese here his liif þefore, he shal lyve blisfulli in hevene whanne cawardise shal be dampned. Y seie to zou, in þat nyzt, þat þe dai of dome shal be on þe morowe⁵, shal þer be two in o bed; þe toon shal be taken, and þe toper left. Two shal be grynding togidere; þe toon shal be taken, and þe toper left. Two shal be in þe feeld; þe toon shal be taken and þe toper left. For sum shal have rizt devocioun, and summe of þes þree shal faile þis oile. And þe disciplis axiden Crist, Sire, where shal þes þingis be? And Crist seide to hem, Wherever þe bodi be, þiþir shal þe eglis be giderid. For whidir ever comeþ Cristis bodi, þidir shal his seintis come. Seke þe gospel of Mathew, for þere is þis more opynly toold.

¹ Noes, I; Noyes, E. ² Noe, G, I. ³ So in E; A excludes *And . . . þingis* from the quotation.

⁴ So in E; A includes in the quotation.

⁵ So in E; A om. *þe morowe*, and includes the other words in the quotation.

DE GOSPEL ON ASHE WEDNESDAI.

[SERMON CXLV.]

Cum jejunatis.—MATT. vi. [16.]Against hy-
pocrisy and
covetousness.

Dis gospel telliþ how men shulden faste, and flee algatis ypocrisie, for alle goode werkes of men shulden be don to plesse God; for God þat is ful of treuþe hatip ypocritis feynyng. And so Crist seiþ bi Mathew þat, *whanne ever men fasten, þei shulden not wille to be sorewful as ypocritis, for þei putten þer face out of fourme, to seme fastinge to men.* Þus dide ypocritis in Cristis tyme, and ȝit þer ben men of þat soort. For many ordris and men ben glad to have lene and pale visagis, for sich men ben moche worþ to preie God, as þei seien, and so þei wynnen moche good bi ypocrisie of siche men ^a. But Crist forbediþ þis ypocrisie, and seiþ, *Sopeli, Y seie to ȝou þes men han take þer hire.* For ypocritis han here þer mede, and hem leeveþ no meede in stoore at þe dai of dome, ne aftir. And þefore, *Þou, whanne þou fastist, anoynte þi heed, and waishe þi face, þat þou be not seen fastyng to men, but to þi fadir þat is hid, and þi fadir þat seep in privy shal quyte to þee.* Here wolde not Crist mene þat ech man, whanne he shulde fast, shulde anoynte his heed wiþ oile, and waishe his visage to be faire, but þes wordis shal be referrid to þe werks of þe soule. It is knowun bi Goddis lawe þat þe heed of mannis spirit is his power to undirstonde; and þat shulde algatis be anoyntid, for it shulde be maad clene; and his entent shulde be riȝtid¹, þat he have devocioun to God, and þat his fleish serve to his soule, þat his spirit serve betere to God, and make þat God love him wele. And þis devocioun is þe oyle þat shulde be in his soules heed. And he waisheþ his soule face, whanne he temperiþ his soule þus to resoun, þat he be neþer dissolute ne to sorewful to

¹ So in E and Q; *rettid*, A.^a This sentence is omitted in E.

men, but algatis triste¹ to Goddis reward for service þat he doiþ to him. And as man, redinge on a book, takij noon hēde to þing biside, so man in servynge God takij noon heede to fame of men, but þat his name be writun in hevene, and so in þe book of liif. And þus resoun nedij men to faste and ete in such a mesure, þat þei ben strengere to serve God; and þus men failen in boþe sidis. For sum men feden to myche þer fleishe, and sum men punishen it to myche; but it is sikir to chastise it, so þat it rebelle not aȝen þe soule, for man þat wole wende sureli wandrij fer fro þe brynke. But resoun techij þat neiþer eting ne fasting is medeful bi himsilf, but good entent and clene makij mannis soule devoute to God.

The right use
of fasting.

And so resoun techij men þat noon shulde do his dedis to men but to God, and hope² his mede, for he is þe Lord þat we serven. Þat man doiþ his werk to men þat hopij reward of men, and he doiþ his werk pryvyly to God, þat hopij mede oonli of God. But summe werkes men moten do unto knowing of men, as ben preching and almes dede, and werkes of þe secounde table; but beware þat þi entent be not medlid wij fame of men. For þis wole fordo þi oile, and lette it to shyne wij grace. But, for al good shulde be do to God, and men shulde hope mede of him, þefore biddij Crist aftir, *Nyle ȝe gedir tresouris to ȝou, in erpe, where rust and mouȝte³ distriþ hem, and where þeyys delven out and stelen; but gedere to ȝou tresouris in hevene, wher noon of þes foure þingis fallen. For wherever þi tresour be, þere is þi herte, and þere lyvest þou.* But ech man shulde lyve in hevene, as lyveden Poul and oþer seintis. And so Crist techij how we shulden lyve to us silf and to oure breþeren. Þat man lyveþ aȝens him silf, þat gederij to mouche money, for rust wole shende sich metal, and doiþ myche harm to mannis entent. Also þes men harmen hem silf, þat maken hem to moche atier, for boþe þe mouȝte doiþ hem harm, and þei harmen pore men and hem silf, siþ þei shulden leve sich bisynesse and þenke on God and hevenli blis. And þeves breken sich mennis housis, and stelen tresoure þat þei han gederid. And ȝif men lyven a meene staat, as men shulden in

All for the
glory of God.

¹ So E and Q; A has *to triste*. ² So E; A has *kepe*. ³ *mouȝte*, G; *mopþes*, I.

staat of innocence, alle þes perilis shulden be fled, and algatis forȝeting of God. And þefore make þi tresoure in God, for þis Lord mai not faile, and þis tresoure mai not perishe, to be unredi whanne þou hast nede. And so serve þis Lord wel, and grounde in him þi reward, and dispise mennis reward. For þou shalt lyve ever aftir þis liif, and certis God wole þanne rewarde þe oþer in blis or in peyne, for lyf þat men lyven here mut nedis have sum fruyt aftir. And as God is þi tresour in þi fasting and in þi preier, so be he þi tresour in þi money and þi cloþis, and shortli in alle þi goodis þat þou woldist have aftir þi deep; for God is trewe executour, and mai not faile to þee in goodis þat þou ȝyvest to him, for noo þing mai perishe in him. And ofte tymes false executouris largen þe synne of þe deed, for þei ȝyven occasioun to falsnesse þat executours¹ doon. And so þe state of innocence is more siker, and þe staat nyȝ it. Lyve þou pore liif as dide Crist, and leeve to prisoune goodis here.

ÞE GOSPEL ON ÞURSDAI IN QUINQUAGESME IS RAD ON ÞE
BRIDDE SONDAI AFTIR OCTAVE ON TWELFÞE DAY^a.

ON FRIDAY GOSPEL IN QUINQUAGESME.

[SERMON CXLVI.]

Audistis quia dictum est.—MATT. v. [43.]

Þis gospel telliþ how oure love shulde be stretchid to alle men, boþe to frendis and enemys, for alle men ben oure neiȝboris. And þus seiþ Crist bi Mathew, *ȝe han herd þat it was seid to olde men, þou shalt love þi frend, and þou shalt hate þin enemy. But certis I seiþ to ȝou, Love ȝe ȝoure enemyes, do ȝe good to hem þat hate ȝou, and preie ȝe for hem þat pursuen ȝou and chalengen ȝou falsly.* And þis þing shulde ȝe do, *to be sones of*

¹ So in E and I; *secutours*, G; A has *seketours*.

^a See vol. i. Sermon XXXIV; the that for the Sunday in question, gospel for the Feia is the same as omitting the first four verses.

your fadir þat is in hevne, þat makip his sunne springe on goode men and yvele, and reyneþ upon just and unjust. Þes heretikes þat blyndiden þe peple bi Goddis lawe in Cristis tyme maden þis truauntis argument; 3if God biddip þat Y shal love my frend, he biddip bi contrarie witt þat Y shal hate myn enemye. But þes foolis knewen not þat þis sueþ al oonli whanne antesedent¹ and consequent ben convertiblis in kynde. But Crist seiþ, þat is þe firste treuþe, þat we shulden love boþe frendis and enemyes, for boþe þes ben neiþboris in kynde, and we shulden alle love oure neiþboris. Also bi Cristis resoun here we shulden bi oure myzt sue God, but God loveþ boþe yvel and good. Lord, whi shulde not we do so? siþ hate is an² hevvy dede, and doiþ harm to him þat hatip; and love is a lizt dede, and doiþ good³ on ech side. Also, he þat is now myn enemy mai liztli after be my frend, but þe lizterste³ meene to þis eende were to sue God in love. Lord, whi shulde Y hate þat man þat soone after is betere þan Y, and profitip to men and to þe Chirche more þan Y shal evere do? And siþ noon of us woot now wher þis be soþ of our enemye, what blyndenesse shulde dryve us to hate him now wiþouten love? And þus seiþ Poul bi Goddis lawe, þat in lovyng of þi enemye þou shalt hepe upon his heed coolis of fier, to make him hoot; for þe lizterste⁴ victorie is to love þi enemy. What fool wolde leeve þis, and take a fendis meene and an hevvy?

Rom. xii. 20

And here techen þes newe ordris a newe cast of þe fend, þat English men moten fizte bifore wiþ enemyes of oþer londis, for ellis þei wolden first fizte wiþ us, and synne on boþe sidis shulde be more. But here fallen þes ypocritis, þat conseilen not to pees but to fizte. For Poul biddip God forbede þat men synne to do good. And siþ oure werris wiþ oþer londis smatchen synne on many sidis, who shulde move us to go bifore and to fizte þus wiþ þes londis? Lore þat Crist techip here were to do oure enemyes good; and þis is a fendis lore, contrarie to Cristis lore. And þus failliþ þe fendis falsheed þat moveþ men for to werre, for, as he seiþ, pees endip werre, and ech man shulde coveite pees. Soþ it is þat pees is ende of alle

Bellicose and unchristian teaching of the friars.

Rom. vi. 15.

¹ antecedent, E.² So E; A has as.³ liztiste, E.⁴ liztist, E.

synnes þat ben don, for þe pees of Cristis Chirche, whanne it regneþ hool in hevene, is ende of alle synne here, and of alle dampnyng of fendis, for a good eende is getun boþe bi good meenes and yuele, siþ God mut algatis have his ende, whatever meenes be maad. And seie we to þes fendis here, þat pees is good for to have, and also it is good to have þis pees bi Cristis meenes. Crist ordeynede pees to be getun bi mekenes and bi pacience, and bi doing of good for yvel, but þe fend shapiþ þe contrarie. And certis Cristis meene is more liȝt, more short, and more sikir, for fendis men contynuen werre and maken fals pees to more werre. Crist proveþ þat oure love shulde be alargid to oure enemyes; *For ȝif we loven oure frendis for her love*, and love not, over þat, oure enemyes, *how shulde we have þus hire of God? siþ publicans done þus. And ȝif ȝe greeten oonli ȝoure breþeren, shal ȝe not over þis grete ȝoure enemyes? ne done not heþen men þus?* But ȝif ȝe¹ wolen have hire of God, ȝe moten sue God bi his love; and God biddiþ ȝou love ȝour enemyes riȝt as God himsilf doiþ. And siþ þis is perfit doynge, as trewe men moten nedis graunt, *Be we perfit among us, as oure fadir of hevene is perfit.*

And for þis touchiþ mannis lawe, þat weneþ þat it is ynouȝ to lyve and do as þe world axiþ, alȝif God bidde þe contrarie, þerfore seiþ Crist aftir, *Take ȝe hede þat ȝe done not ȝour riȝtwisnesse bifore men, to be seyn of hem, for ellis shal ȝe have no mede at ȝour fadir þat is in hevene.* For kepyng of mannis lawe haþ reward here in erþe, and kepyng of Goddis lawe haþ his mede aftir wiþ God. And þerfore, *whanne þou doist þin almes, nyle þou trumpe bifore þee, as ypocritis done in synagogis and stretis for to be worshiped of men. Sobeli, Y seie to ȝou, þes men han resseyved þer hire. But whanne þou doist almes, loke þi left side wite not what þi riȝt side doiþ; þat þi almes be in hid, and þi fadir þat seeþ² in hid shal ȝyve þee hire of blisse.* Þe riȝt side of a just man ben riȝt werkes and goode maneris, but þe left side of him ben yvel maneris wiþ his werkis, as ypocrisie³ bringiþ wiþ him yvel maneris, ȝhe, wiþ goode dedis. *And whanne ȝe preien, ȝe shal not be as ypocritis, þat loven to stonde to preie in chirchis and*

¹ So E; A has *we*.
ypocritis, A.

² seeþ, E, G, I; see, A.

³ ypocrisie, Q, E;

corneris of stretis, for to be seen holi of men. Sobeli, Y seie to zou, þes men han resseyved þer mede. And 3if þat freris lyven þus; whanne þei walken þourȝ contreis, þat þei ben stille, wiþouten touns, and in touns bidde þer bedis, and algatis þat þei singe þe þridde dai bifore þe peple, and so in ðpir goode dedis þei seken þer wynnyng and worship of þe peple, who dredip þat ne þanne þei ben ypocritis, and harmen hemsilf and eke þe peple? *But þou, whanne þou shalt preie, entre into þi couche, and shitte þe dore, and preie þi fadir, and þi fadir þat seep in hid, shal zelde þee þi mede.* But here men witen wel þat Crist biddip not men preie algatis in bed or in couche, for he wole þat men preien in chirche; but þer soulis shulden be in reste, and leeve þouȝtis of þe world and þenke restyngli on God, to whom þei bidden þer preier. And þanne þei shitten þer dore, whanne þei suspenden þer wittis for to þenke on worldli þingis, but principalli to þenke on God. And alȝif þis preier be hid, God þat shal zelde knowip it wel.

And here men mai knowe heretikes, þat shewen hem holi to þe peple, for þei conseilen to werris, and al þat wynneþ hem worldli goodis. And so þei putten abak Goddis lawe, and so God, for a litil muk. Þis men shulden seie bi charite, 3if þei loven God more þan þes men. For just love stondip in foure þingis,—in love of God and his lawe, in lovyng of holi Chirche, and of þingis þat fallen þerto. And so 3if men loven freris, þei shulde love þes þree bifore, and telle how þei synnen aȝens þes þree, boþe for þes þree and for þe freris; for he loveþ not his neizbore þat leeveþ to blame him sharpli whanne he seep him do amys; for so dide Crist þat may not synne. Freris seyn þat men shulden fiȝte, for Crist bad men sille þer cootis and bie hem swerdis, but wherto but for to fiȝte? Here men seien þat þes freris ben not worþi for to be blessid, but for to be Brent, for þis witt þat þei putten to Goddis lawe. But many freris han many cootis, þat sillen hem not and bien hem swerdis, and so freris don aȝens Goddis counceils þat Crist bad to his apostlis. Also Crist reprovede Petre aftir, for he fouȝte wiþ swerd, and so Crist wolde not þat men bouȝten swerdis for to fiȝte on þis manere. Also, siþ Crist is al witti, he wiste bifore þat he seide þes wordis þat þei hadden two swerdis, and how þes two weren

Against the
friars' urging
men to war
against the
antipope.

ynouȝ; and siȝ alle þingis is bifore Crist, þis sufficiencie lastiȝ longe. And so Cristis bidding to bigge swerdis to fiȝte contrarie de himsilf, for he seide anoon aftir þat two swerdis ben ynouȝ, but what wisdom were þis to bigge þus swerdis more þan ynouȝ? And so boȝe wordis of Crist, and dedis of apostlis aftir him, þat bouȝten neiȝer bifore ne after þus swerdis maad of iren, shewen þat Crist mente swerd of þe Holi Goost. And so a mannis tonge is sum deel shapen as a swerd maad of steel. And so, siȝ tunge brekiȝ boon, al if þe tunge himsilf have noon, and of wordis þat comen of tunge is sum man justified and sum men ben dampned, boȝe here and in helle, Crist undirstood bi swerd here discrete speche wiȝ þe tung And þat is needeful for to have whanne a man shulde be slayn, þat he speke neiȝer unmekeli to terre¹ men for to fiȝte, ne spare not to seie þe soȝe mekeli in Goddis cause. And þes two egges of swerd persen² to þe soul, as Poul seiȝ.

Heb. iv. 12.

ÞE SATURDAI GOSPEL IN QUINQUAGESME.

[SERMON CXLVII.]

*Cum sero*³ *factum esset.*—MARK vi. [47.]

Þis gospel telliȝ, as Matheu doiȝ, how Crist enformede his disciplis, and confortide hem to bileve in him, and to sue him in þer liif. *Whanne þe evenyng was maad, and þe boot was in þe myddil of þe water, and Cristis disciplis weren in þat boot, Crist abood aloone in þe lond. And Crist, seinge hem traveilinge in rowyng, for þe wynd was contrarie to hem, aboute þe fourþe vigile of þe nyȝt cam Crist to hem, walking on þe water, and he wolde go biside hem. And þei, whanne þei sawen him walkinge on þe water, gessiden þat it was a fantum, and crieden, for sich siȝt makij men to drede anyȝtis; for alle þes disciplis sawen him, and þei weren disturblid. And anoon Crist spak wiȝ hem, and seide to hem, Triste ȝe, Y am, and þefore, nyle ye drede. Þei*

Christ comforts his Church in tribulation.

¹ ter, G.

² persen, Q.

³ So E; A has *cero*.

weren in doute wheþer it were Crist or a fantum þat þei sawen, but Crist put hem out of doute, and shewide þat he was Lord of water; and so alle dedis þat Crist dide here mai wel be seid ful of miraculis. *And Crist wente up to hem in to þe boot, and þe wynd ceeside anoon, and þei woundriden more wipinne hemsilf. For þei undirstonden not of fyve looves a litil bifore, how Crist fedde fyve þousynd men, and ȝit þer leste myche mete; for þanne myȝte¹ þei soone have wist þat erþe and water obeishen to Crist, for it is as myche wondir to fede þis folk þus wip erþeli fode, as to wandre þus on þe water, or to make þe wynd ceese. And, as many men þenken, þe miracle of breed is myche more, for Crist myȝte so sette water and eire þat þei musten nede stonde sadly, as an eye mai so be sett þat greet þristing myȝte not breke it, and so may men go on þe eyre ȝif it be closid wipinne leþer. And þus aposllis herte was blyndid, on many weies, boþe in resoun and vertues. For þei weren ȝit unperfit, and Petir, after þat Crist was risun and went to hevene, synnede many weyes.*

And whanne þei weren passid þis water, þei camen to þe lond of Genazareth, and þei token þe lond. And whanne þei weren went out of þe boot, þei knewen him betere anoon. And men, rennynge al þat lond bigunnen to bringe sick men in beddis, on ech side where þei herden þat Crist was. And whidir ever þat Crist wente into stretis or louns, or into citees, þei putteden siike men in þe streetis, and þei þreieden Crist þat þei myȝten touche at þe leste þe hemm of his cloþis, and how many þat touchiden him weren maad saaf bi vertue of Crist. Oupir² undirstonding of þis gospel mai be taken of þe storie, how Crist is above his Chirche, and confortiþ³ hem in þer anoies, for þe boot bitokeneþ þe Chirche, and þe water tribulacioun.

¹ myȝten, E.

² oþer, Q, E.

³ So E; A has confortid.



ÞE MONDAI GOSPEL IN ÞE FIRSTE WEKE OF LENTE.

[SERMON CXLVIII.]

Cum venerit filius hominis.—MATT. XXV. [31.]

The last judgment.

Þis gospel telliþ in what forme Crist shal come to þe laste dome, and preyse just men, and reprove oþere, for werkis of bodili mercy; and þes werkes ben more knowun þan oþir betere werkes of þe soule. Crist seiþ, *Whanne mannis sone shal come in his majeste*, þat is at þe dai of dome, to deme al mankynde, and alle blessinge aungels shal come from hevene to bere cumpany to þis comyng, *þan Crist shal sitte on þe sete of his majeste*, as kyng. *And al folk shal be gederid bifore him*, boþe good men and yvel. He shal come in his manhede, and þefore he clepiþ him mannis sone, and he shall come as kyng and heerde, and þus he clepiþ him þes two names; he is kyng of þe Chirche above, and heerde of men heere in erþe. *And Crist shal departe hem atwynne, as herd departiþ¹ sheep fro kidis; but he shal putte sheep on his riht side, and þe kidis on his left side.* Alle saved men shal be sheep, for þei shal ever do fyve goodis²; and alle dampned men shal be kidis, for þei shal wante þes fyve wiþouten eende. For scheep² ben goode for to ete, and getis fleish is unsavery. But seintis in heven shal ever dunge³ men here or ellis in hevene, for oure erþe shal evere be plentenous, and ech seint profitiþ to oþer. And so we eten goostli þer bodies whanne we þanken God of þer blis, and we eten þer inwardis whanne we knowe vertues of þer soulis, and how þer synnes, bi grace of God, weren clensid, as weren ouris. Þer skyn profitiþ whanne we seen in hem þe book of liif, and alle þingis. Her wolle profitiþ whanne þei cloþen oure soulis, for ever seintis hilen oure soulis. Þis profit han seintis togider, but kidis wanten algatis cloþing. Soþeli dampned men in helle done ever good to seintis in hevene, for þer blis is more savery for

¹ So E; *departid*, A.

² So E; A has *kidis*.

³ *donge*, I.

^a See Sermon LXXVII. p. 254.

peynes þat þei seen in hem, and herien riȝtwisnesse of God for fairnesse of his dome. *Þanne shal þe kyng seie to hem þat shal be on his riȝt side, Come, ȝe blessid of my fadir, and han þe rewme maad redi to ȝou fro þe makyng of þe world. For Y hungryde, and ȝe ȝaven me to ete; Y was þirsti, and ȝe ȝaven me to drynke; Y was herborweles, and ȝe herboriden me; I was nakid, and ȝe hiliden me; I was siik, and ȝe visitiden me; Y was in prisoun, and ȝe came to me.* Crist telliþ not here þe sevenþe werk, þat is to birie dede men, but þat is toold in Tobies book, and þis seint is preisid þefore; but þat is þe leste of þes sevene, for þe Chirche is susteyned bi quyke bodies. *Þanne shal just men answeere to Crist, and seie, Lord, when sawe we þee in þese statis, hungry, or þirsty, herbordeles, or nakid in bodi, syke, or in prisoun, and we diden þus to þee, Lord? And þe kyng answeerynge shal seie unto hem, Sobli, Y sei to ȝou, as longe as ȝe diden to oon of þes my leste breþeren, ȝe diden to me.* And so men, bifore þat Crist was bore, and men fro þat he was styed to hevене, may take part of blis, for sich werkis þat þei diden.

But here men douten comunli, wher þes sixe werkes of mercy shal be don ever to Cristis lymes, or sum tyme to men þat shal be dampned. But here men þenken, bi þis gospel, þat worldli men shulden have entent to do alle þes to Cristis lymes, and not to fendis þat shal be dampned. And so men knowen of yvel liif shulde¹ wante þes werkes of mercy, as strong beggers, and proude and riche men on oþer side; and so it semeþ to many men, þat neiþer freris, ne shrewid preestis, ne knowun riche beggers, or men þat feynen hem, or ellis men þat shal be dampnid, shulden take of men þes werkes of mercy^a. But, for we knowe not who shal be saved, but supposen bi mennes liif, ȝif we doen good diligence and failen to do þes to Cristis lymes, Crist wole heele oure dedis of errour, and do þefore profit to his lymes. And, for þis traveile is doutous, and many² be truauntis takyng þis almes, þefore Crist and hise apostlis diden seven werkes of mercy goostli, and þat is betere and sikerer þan þis, as þe soule is betere þan þe bodi. But

¹ *scbulden*, E.² So E; A has *may*.^a This whole sentence, from 'as strong beggers' to 'mercy,' is omitted in E.

The bliss of the Saints enhanced by the knowledge of the sufferings of the damned.

Tobit ii. 9.

Crist telliþ in þe gospel of Luk, how men shal do þer bodili almes to pore feble men, and pore lame and pore blynde. And, for personis shulden be pore men and feble, to do boþe þer office and travaile for þer sustenaunce, þerfore þei mai take þis almes. But loke þat þei bigylen not God on oo side ne on oþer, neþer to take gredily þis almes, ne to spende it to largely, ne to be ydil in goostli werkes, þat God haþ lymytid hem to do. And so men shulden many weies be wiys in þer werkes of mercy. For it is noo wisdom to norishe a fend þat semeþ sich, ne to nurishe a newe staat þat haþ no ground in Goddis lawe. Soip¹ it is þat Poul travelide wiþ his hondis to spare þe peple, and so shulden preestis now do, ȝif God ȝaf hem as he dide Poul. And so we synnen fele tymes, boþe in oo werk and oþer, and ofte tymes ben yvel ydil fro goode werkes þat we shulden do.

Þanne shal Crist seie to hem þat shal be on his lefte side, Wende ȝe fro me, ȝe cursid men, in to fier þat shal laste evere, þat is ordeyned to þe fend and to his aungels, þat doon his werkes. And þanne Crist shal rehearse þes sixe, how þes fendis failiden in hem, and how þei shal axe, whanne Crist was in þe state þus to be helpid; and Crist shal answeere, þat whanne þei helpiden not oon of his breþeren in his name, þei helpiden not him; and þerfore shal þei be dampned in Cristis dome. Þis þing mai be souner done þann we mai blame² it here. And trowe we not þat ne at þis dome men shal be dampned for oþer synnes, for al þe synne þat dampned men han doon shal be cause of þer dampnacioun. And many men wiþ ȝounghe children weren undisposid to do siche werkes, and ȝit sum of þes shal be saved and sum of þes shal be dampned. For alle saved men ben oo bodi, as alle dampned men ben oo bodi; and whanne þei helpen, or leeven to helpe, to do sich dedis of þe bodi, þanne þei done sich dedis or leeven to do sich dedis. And herfore kyngis and worldli lordis ben in perils in þis matere. For þei mayntenen religiouse ofte tyme, to spuyle þer tenauntis, and to emprisoun þer owne breþeren, aȝen þe dedis þat Crist dide here. And ignoraunce excusij hem not, þat ne þei synnen þus grevously, for þei shulden cunne Goddis lawe, and wite how God wole be served.

¹ soþ, E.² blaberen, Q, E.

PE FIRSTE TEWISDAI GOSPEL IN LENTE.

[SERMON CXLIX.]

Cum intrasset Jesus.—MATT. xxi. [10.]

Dis gospel tellip how Crist wrou3te to þe profit of his Chirche, and 3it many envious men reprovyden him for his dede, but 3it he lettide not herfore to do Goddis wille as he knewe. And þes dedis of Crist shulden teche us to do iliche. And 3if we suffren in þis caas, þenke we how Crist suffride first, and 3it in Crist was no defaute, but we failen ofte folili. But make we not blynde men oure jugis, but lerne we witt of Goddis lawe. And certis, whanne a man is blynd for to governe his owne liif, he is myche more blynd for to governe a gretter¹ puple; but he worchip, as Phariseis, moost for pride and coveitise; and þes moten nedis blynde him to reule himsilf or opir men. Matheu seiþ, *Whanne Jesus hadde entrid in to Jerusalem, al þe cite was moved, and seide, Who is he þis? But þe puplis seiden, He þis is Jesus, þe prophete, of Nazareth of Galilee. And Jesus entride into Goddis temple, and caste out alle bieris and selleris in þe temple, and turnede up so down þe bordis of monyeris², and þe charis of hem þat solden dowves. And Crist seide to hem, It is writun, þat myn hous shal be clepid þe hous of preier, but 3e han maad it a denne of þeves.*

Christ purifying the temple.

Crist wente first in to þe temple for to teche his Chirche aftir to bigynne to purge preestis; for þei ben y3e and stomak to opir, and 3if þei ben hool þei traveilen wele, to hele þe remenaunt of þe Chirche. And herfore Crist spak so ofte a3en þe synnes of þe preestis. Þe synne of pride and coveitise was in preestis in Cristis tyme; and herfore þei ordeyneden in þe temple þat men shulden bigge and selle þerinne, for þus roos wynnyng of offringis to þe preestis in þe temple. And þus monyours hadden money to make chaungis, boþe more and

¹ *myche*, E.

² *monyours*, G, E.

lesse, þat men myȝten redily have offring, of what staat þei weren. And to þis serveden dowves to pore men for to offre. And þus don men to daye. Preestis suffren hem to make þer chaffare in þe Chirche, for litil of hern, but wynnynȝ shal algatis come to hem, or ellis þei shal not be suffrid þere. And þus, ende wherfore þe Chirche was ordeyned is turned fro preier in to synne. Þes men þat ben nye þe pope knowun of þes two oþer dedis, boþe of changing of money, and ȝyvyng of jewillis to bigge chirchis. And so þes men sellen dowves, þat sillen chirchis bi symonye; and ȝif þe pope do not þis first, oþere done it to his wynnynȝ.

And Crist, for to conferme þis loore, dide many miraculis in þe temple. For Matheu seiþ þat, *Þer camen to him blynde men and lame in þe temple, and Crist helide hem. But princis of preestis, and scribis, seyng þes woundris þat Crist dide, and þe children criyng in þe temple, and seiynge, We preien to Daveþis sone, maken us saaf, hadden dedeyn, and seiden to him, Heerist þou what þes children seien?* And Jesus seide to hem, *Ȝhe, redden ȝe nevere,* how Daviþ seiþ to God, *þat of þe moup of ȝong children and soukinge þou hast maad heriyng?* And Crist lefte hem, and wente out of þe citee to Bethanye, and dwelte þere, and tauȝte hem of þe reume of God. And so bi þis lore of Crist men mai wite what prelatis shulden do; þei shulden heele blynde men in Goddis lawe, and stire feble men to worche his workes; but ȝif þei ben blynde and feble wiþ þer pride and coveitise, how shulde þe puple be heeled, þat is þus led wiþ sich prelatis? Certis pore preestis and seculer men shal herie God, as diden children; for Crist seiþ þat ȝif children be stille, stoness shal crye instede of hem. And as hie preestis, wiþ scribis, lettiden children for to speke, so þes bishopis and newe scribis letten preestis to telle Goddis lawe.

The poor
priests hin-
dered from
preaching.



ÞE WEDNESDAI GOSPEL IN ÞE FIRSTE WEKE IN LENTE.

[SERMON CL.]

Accesserunt ad Jesum.—MATT. xii. [38.]

Þis gospel telliþ how Scribis and Fariseis temptiden Crist, and how Crist propheciede of hem, and whiche ben his goostli kyn. Matheu telliþ how, *Þe Scribis and Phariseis camen nyz to Jesus, and seiden, Maister, we wolen see a signe of þee.* Þei sawen many miraclis þat Crist dide in men; and þei wolden have seen sich wondris in hevene; and þanne muten þei nedis have seid, þat heven and erþ obeishiden to him. Soþli alle creaturis obeishiden to Crist, for þei mai nozt do but zif þat he bidde hem. And so it is seid bifore how water and eir obeishiden to Crist; and in þe passioun of Crist, whanne he semide left of power, al þe erþe quakide whanne þat Crist diede, and þe sunne was maad derk, and þe eclips was don bi miracle; for as Deniss¹ seiþ, þe moone, azens his kyndeli movyng, puttide him undir þe sunne, and lastide þere a long while^a. But sich obedience of fier² kepþ Crist to þe laste dome.

But Crist, seinge þat sich signes weren þanne unprofitable, seiþ, *þat yvel kynrede and kynrede of hoor doom sekþ þus signes, oþer þan Goddis lawe biddiþ.* And so þei wolen have signes maad biside Goddis wille. And in þis apostasie traveilen alle þes newe ordris, as zif þei wolden putte vertue and religioun in þer clopis. But Crist cowde nevere putte þes þingis but in hooli spiritis. And so þei seien þat figure and colour is þe sacrid

¹ *Seynt Denys, G; dyvynis, Q; Denys, E.*

² *fyer, E.*

^a Wyclif probably got this reference from Nicholas de Lyra. The passage occurs in the *Épistle* of St. Dionysius the Areopagite (so called,—but modern critics are nearly agreed in assigning the works which pass under his name to an unknown author of the fifth century), to Polycarpus. The writer attributes the darkness at the time of the Crucifixion to an eclipse of the sun (*της εν τω σωτηριω σταυρω γε-*

ρονίας εκλειψέως); and appeals to the experience of Apollophanes himself, the person against whom he is arguing, to remind him of a similar phenomenon which they two had seen at Heliopolis in Egypt, when the moon, though it was not the time of conjunction, marvellously eclipsed the sun; (*παράδοξως τῷ ἡλίῳ τὴν σελήην ἐμπότουσαν ἐωρώμεν.*) See the works of S. Dionys. Areop. (Paris, 1615.)

Christ's answer to the Jews seeking a sign.

oost, but þis kynrede of hoordom can not grounde þis^a. Crist, groundid in mekenesse, wolde not make sich signes to þes veyn religiouse for to shewe his hyenes; but Crist tolde in what signe shulde be shewid his mekenesse. And þefore seiþ Crist þat, *Þis kynrede shal have no signe, but þe signe of Jonas þe prophete; for þei han nede of mekenesse. For as Jonas was in a whalis wombe þre daies and þree nyztis, so shal mannīs sone be in þe herte of þe erþe þree daies and þree nyztis.* Bigynne þou þe kyndely daie at mydnyzt, as þe Chirche doiþ, and þanne on Good Friday hadde Crist sixe houris in þe sepulchre, and foure and twenti houris he dwelte þere on þe Saturday; and he hadde sixe houris þerinne upon Pask day. And so he was in þree daies, but not bi þes þree daies^b þere. But as herte is hard to regard of mannīs fleishe, so stoon is hard to regard of oþer erþe; and for Crist was þis tyme in stoon, þefore he seiþ þat he shal be in þe herte of þe erþe, as Jonas was in þe whael. And drede we not to graunt þat Crist was closid in stone; for þat bodi was Crist þanne, alzif it was þanne deed. And here is risun a newe ordre, to close men quyk in stoones, to sle þer desiris to þe world and to þer fleish. But þis is an over myche similitude of an ape; but ȝif a man were wood, it myzte do good to close him þus. But apostlis couden not knowe of this biring of Crist, þat þei or ony quyk man shulde be biried þus in stoon. Stoon is contrarie to mannīs liif; but þes foolis wolden passe Crist. Muse we not here whi Jonas was even so myche tyme in þe wombe of þe whal, as Crist was in þe sepulchre, or if he wente in þe same our, and cam out þe same oure. We bileve as we shulden þe wordis of þis gospel, and we bileven þat it was so, ȝif þat Crist wolde have it so. *Þe men of Nynyve shal ryse in dome wiþ þis kynrede, and þei shal dampne it; for þei diden penaunce at þe preching of Jonas, and lo, more þan Jonas is he þis, bi boþe þe kyndis þat Crist hap. Þe Queen of þe Souþ shal rise in þe laste doom wiþ þis kynrede, and she shal dampne it; for she cam fro eendis of þe lond to heere wisdom of Salomon, and lo, more þan Salomon is here.* Wheþir þat þis folk shal be saf or be dampned, þei shal

^a This sentence is omitted in E. these three days, but not *during* the
^b He was in the sepulchre, in whole of them.

bere þanne witnes azens þis kynrede wurse þan þei. And so, as man shal dampne himsilf, so alle creaturis shal dampne him þanne, and witesse to Cristis dome þat it is fulli riȝtnesse¹. And so Crist tauȝte in his word, how þe fend was comen aȝen to þis kynredè worst of alle, as it is toold in anoþer stede^a. And to þe þridde part of þis gospel, of Cristis modir and his breþeren, it is told also bifore how þis gospel undirstondiþ^b.

ON ÞURSDAI IN FIRSTE WEKE IN LENTE.

[S E R M O N C L I .]

Dicebat Jesus ad eos.—JOHN viii. [31.]

Þis gospel telliþ how þat Crist heendly reproveð² Jewis, and tolde hem þer wickide wille, to make hem to sorowe for þer synne. Joon telliþ how Jesus seide to hem þat trowiden to him of þe Jewis. (Þei trowiden þat he was a trewe man, and lovede treuþe, and dampnede synne; but þei trowiden not in him, siþ þei trowiden not þat he was boþe God and man, and cleveden not to him bi love, as done men þat trowen in Crist.) Crist biheetiþ to þes men, *If ȝe dwellen in my word, ȝe shal be verrelī my disciplis, and ȝe shal knowe þe treuþe, and þe treuþe shal make ȝou free. Þe Jewis answeriden to him, We ben þe seed of Abraham, and we serveden nevere to man; how seist þou of us, þat we shal be free? But Jesus answeride to hem, and telde hem how he undirstood þer ben many fredoms, and many þraldomes contrarie to hem. Þe moost þraldom and worst of alle is þe þraldom of synne; and herfore seiþ Crist þus, *Sopeli, sopeli, Y seie to ȝou, þat ech man þat doiþ synne is a þral of synne.* And so God mai not do synne, for he may do noo þing, but sich þing as serveþ him in þat þat he doiþ it. But synne wole be lord of man, in þat he doiþ synne. For unkyndely making bringiþ forþ wondirful gendrure, and ȝit þis mut nedis be, bi þe lawe þat God haþ ordeyned. *But þe servant dwelliþ not ever more, but þe sone dwelliþ in þe hous evermore.**

¹ riȝtuys, G; riȝtwise, E.

² reproveð hendely, G.

^a See vol. i. Sermon XLII. *ad finem.*

^b See vol. i. Sermon CXI.

Christ reprov-
ing the Jews.

For synne hap þis propirte, þat synne makip his sone þral, and puttip him out of Goddis hous, to serve þe fend ever in peyne. But Goddis sone lyveþ contrarie liif, for he dwellip ever in Goddis hous. *Perfore if þe sone make 3ou free, 3e shal be verrili free.* And he meniþ bi Goddis sone, him þat mai oonli bie mankynde, for he is Goddis sone in kynde, and þe same God wiþ his Fadir. *F woot wel þat 3e ben Abrahams children, but 3e casten for to slee me, for my word takip not in 3ou.* And so þei castiden to sle him, þe which is boþe God and man, and shulde be fadir to hem and make hem free, 3if þei shulden þryve.

*I speke, seiþ Crist, þat Y saw 3 at my fadir, and 3e down þo þing þat 3e sawun at 3our fadir. But þei answeriden, and seiden to him, Abraham is oure fadir. And Jesus seiþ to hem, 3if 3e weren Abrahams sones, 3e shulden do Abrahams werkes; but now 3e casten to sle me, a man þat spekip treuþe to 3ou þe which Y have herd of God; þis þing Abraham dide not. 3e don þe werkes of 3our fadir. And þe Jewis seiden to Crist, We ben not born of lecherie; o fadir we han, God. Perfor Jesus seide to hem, 3if God were 3our fadir, certis 3e shulden love me, for Y proceedide of God. For bi my Godhede, Y was ever born, and bi my manhede Y cam in tyme, to make mannis kynde free. For Y cam not of mysilf, but he hap sent me. Whi knowen 3e not my speche? Certis, for 3e may not here my word. Oft tymes is heeryng takun for heeryng of þe soule, whanne witt and wille comen togidere, and conseyven þe treuþe. And þus þei myzten not heere Cristis wordis, for þei moten nedis be dampned. And perfore seiþ Crist aftir, 3e ben of þe devel, 3our fadir, and 3e wolen do þe desires of 3oure fadir, þe devel. Certis God and al þe Trinite wolde þat Crist were deed, and so wolde the fend, wiþ Jewis; but þei varieden in maner; for God wolde for a good eende, and þat Crist diede hoolili, but þes wolden for a wickide eende, and þat Crist diede synfulli; and conformyng of willis stondip moost in maneris. And þus seyen sum men, þat God wolde, and þe holi Trinite also, slee Crist, and þat Crist were deed. But Crist wolde not sle himsilf, al3if he wolde þat he were slayn, for his manhed wolde not slee him. *Þe fend, 3our fadir, was mansleere fro þe bigynninge of þe world, and he stood not in treuþe, for þer is no treuþe in him.* And heere men seyn,*

for þe litil while þat þe fend stood and synnede not is not þe speche of Crist here, for¹ it was bigynnyng of tyme unsensible to mannis witt, but gediring of many instances. Oþir men seien þat Crist takij treuþe for covenable beyng in vertues; and so þe fend stood nevere in treuþe, but hadde evere synne þat God knewe. *Whanne þe fend spekij lesyng, þanne he spekij of his owne, for þe fend is lyzere and fadir of þis lyzing. But Y, sij Y seie þe soþe, 3e trowen not to me.* For mankynde is dividid in two parties bi two fadirs, but Crist is meene betwixe hem two, and mai on no maner synne. And þerfore Crist axij þe Jewis, *Which of 3ou shal snybbe me of synne? 3if Y seie þus treuþe, whi trowe 3e not to me? He þat is on Goddis half, heerij Goddis wordis;* and sij it is al oon, to be on Goddis half, and to heere hise wordis, he þat is not on Goddis half, herij not hise wordis. And so, he þat wole knowe þis gospel, he haþ nede for to knowe how al þing þat shal come moot nedis come bi Goddis wille; and how þei ben two children, of oo fadir þat brouzt hem forþ. Summe ben children bi kynde, and summe bi suyng in vertues; and so we moten ben alle Goddis children in kynde, and we shulden be alle Abrahams children, suyng him in vertues.

ON FRYDAI IN ÞE FIRSTE WEKE IN LENTE.

[SERMON CLII.]

Erat dies festus Judaeorum.—JOHN V. [1.]

Þis gospel tellij of a miracle þat Crist dide to a syk man, to reproof of Phariseis, and in tokene to change þe Sabot. John seiþ, *Þer was a feeste daie of Jewis, and Crist wente to Jerusalem.* And muse we not what feeste þis was; wheþir it was Pask or oþer feste. For God wole þat we wite herof þat þis was a feest of Jewis. *And þer is at Jerusalem a water þat men waisshe hem inne,* as it were a water of fishe; but many men speken of þis water. *It was called in Ebrew Bethsaida;*

The cure at the pool of Bethesda.

¹ herefore, E.

and it is licy of þe gospel þat þis water was closid wip stoon, and hadde fyve portis, to come þerto. And men camen, whanne þei hadden leewe to be heelid þere of þer sykenesse, as in hye feestis of þe temple, whanne þei hadden solempnite. Bokis seien, bineþe bileve, how Adam sette many kindis of þe fruyte þat he eet of, and of þis fruyt cam oo tree, of which was Cristis cross maad, and þat tree was in þis water^a. And Goddis aungel movede þis tree, and ȝaf vertue to þis water, to hele hem of þer siikenesse þat camen first aftir in þis water. But leewe we þis bineþe bileve, and stonde we in wordis of þis gospel, and trowe we þat in Jerusalem is suche a water as þe gospel seiþ, wher þei washiden sheep of þe temple in þis water. Muse we not, but Jerom seiþ þat Bethsaida is in Ebrew an hous of fruytis or hous of beestis^b, and probatos in Ebrew is a bishop¹ in oure langage.

And in þes portis lay a greet multitude of siike men, of blynde men, of crokide men, and of dryed men, in þer partis, abiding movyng of þis water. For þe angel of þe Lord cam down on certeyn tyme into þis standing water, and it was moved þanne; and whoever cam down first into þis water, was maad hool in what siikenesse he was holdun. And þer was a man þere þat hadde eizle and þritti ȝeer in his siikenesse. And Jesus seide to him, whanne he saw him ligginge, and he wiste þat þis syke man hadde long tyme in his sykenesse, Wolt þou be hool? seide Crist to him. And þe siike man seide to Crist, Sire, Y have no man þat whanne þe water is moved he putte me in to þe water; for þe while þat Y come, anoþer comeþ down bifore me. And Jesus seide to him, Rise, take þi bed, and go. And anoon he was maad hool, and toke up his bed, and wente his wey; and it was Sabot in þat day. And þe Jewis seiden to him þat was hool, It is Sabot; it is not leveful to þee to take away þi bed. And he answeride to hem, þat man þat made me hool seide to me, Take up þi bedd and go. And þei axiden him, What man is þat, þat seide to þee, take

¹ *scheep*, G, E.

^a The marvellous legend here referred to may be found related at length in the postil of Nicholas de Lyra on this text.

^b In the treatise 'De Nominibus Hebraicis' St. Jerome explains 'Bethsaida' by 'domus frugum vel venatorum.'

up þi bed and go? But þis man þat was maad hool wiste not which þis man was. And Jesus bowide away fro þe puple þat was set in þat place. Aftirward Jesus foond him in þe temple, and seide to him, Lo, þou art maad hool, now nyle þou synne more, lest ony worse¹ þing falle to þee. And þis man wente forþ, and tolde to þe Jewis þat Jesus was þat man þat made him hool.

Jesus hadde wille to mak men hool in þe Sabot, aȝens þe Jewis, and to telle þat men shulden on holy daye be bisye to make good preieris, and how þe Sabot shulde be turnede fro Satirdaie to þe first ferie^a. Þes Jewis weren wrooþ þat Jesus wrouȝte þus, for he lettide hem of her wynnyngis, and tolde litil bi þer sermonies², þat þei kepten as þer bileve. And Jesus provede ofte tymes, bi many goode skills and opyn, þat it was leveful to worche þus. But þe preestis trowiden not to him, for þei puttiden no difference betwixe bileve and ceremonies. And þus keypyng of þe Saboot was sumwhat a comandement and sumwhat cerymonial, to figure þat Crist shulde reste in þe tombe al þe Satirdai. And, for þis is passid now, and we trowen not³ þis aftir to come, þerfore we kepen Sundaye as Sabot, but not as þe sevenþe dai, but as þe eiztiþ daye, to abide þe eiztiþe age. And so oure Sabot lastiþ one, but þe tyme of þe day is varied.

ON SATIRDAI IN FIRSTE WEKE IN LENTE.

[SERMON CLIII.]

Assumpsit Jesus Petrum.—MATT. xvi. [1.]

Þis gospel telliþ how þat Crist was transfigurid in siȝt of þree apostlis, and so was þis word soþ, þat þer ben sum þat stonden here þat shal not taste deep, til þat þei see mannis sone comyng in his rewme. Mathew telliþ how *Jesus toke Petre, James, and*

¹ So E; A has *worst*.

² *serymonyes*, E.

³ caret in G.

^a In the Missal and Breviary, Sunday, though called 'Dominica,' reckons numerically as the first

Feria, Monday as the second, and so on, to Friday the sixth Feria; Saturday is Sabbatum.

Joon his broþir, and ledde hem into an hyze hill aside, for oþer apostlis sawen it not. And Crist was transfigurid bifore hem, and his face shoon as þe sunne, and his cloþis weren maad white as þe snow. And þus men seien þat transfiguring is turnyng into glorious forme, þat men seen not wiþ þis eye bi figure þat þei seen now; as Cristis face, whanne it shynede as sunne, was not seen figurid as oures ben now. And þus many men supposen þat in blis men han noo cloþis, for al þe bodi of man in blis shal shyne as now doiþ þe sunne; and so no filþe of a mannis bodi shal be shameful in blis, and so shal cloþis be more unnedeful þan þei weren in staat of innocence. For þanne shulde man han etun and diffied¹, and delyvered him of superfluyte, but oþer wise it is now in blis, and so shal þer be no nede of cloþis. Þe whitnes of Cristis cloþis here figurid not þes freris abitis, but oonnesse of colour of Cristis cloþis tellid þat he was stable in vertues, and medling of freris cloþis tellid unstableness of þes ordris. And lo, Moises and Hely apperiden to hem, spekinge wiþ Crist. Þes spiritis myzten liztli take hem bodies, and leeve hem este wiþouten peyne; and þes two profetis desiriden moche to see þe manhed of Crist, and so þei weren gladdid in þis more þan þei weren bifore. But Petir answeringe seide to Jesus, Sire, it is good us to be here. If þou wilt, make we here þree tabernaclis; to þee oon, to Moises oon, and to Heli oon. And it semed þat Petre wolde þat þes tabernaclis weren large, þat þes þree apostlis myzte sitte in þes þre tabernaclis. And zit þe while þat Petre spak, lo, a shynyng cloude shadewide hem, and lo, a vois cam of þe cloude, seiynge, Þis is my loved sone, in whom it likide me wel; heere ze him. And þes disciplis, heeryng þis, felden in þer visagis², and dreden myche. And Jesus cam nyȝ, and touchide hem, and seide to hem, Rise zee, and nyle ze drede. And apostlis, listinge up þer eyen, sawen no man but Jesus oon. And as þei camen down þe hill, Jesus comandede to hem and seide, Tell ze no man þis sȝt, til þat mannis sone rise fro deed. Muse we not here, as foolis, how þes two profetis weren cled, and what wordis þei spaken to Crist, and whanne þer bodies weren dissolvyd; for in þis forme þat Mathew tellid wole God þat his Chirche rest here.

¹ defied, I; G and Q agree with A.

² facis, E.

ON SECUNDE MONDAI IN LENTE.

[SERMON CLIV.]

Ego vado et queritis.—JOHN viii. [21.]

Dis gospel tellip how Crist reprovede þe mansleres of wickide Jewis. Joon tellip how, *Crist seide to cumpanyes of Jewis, I go, and ze shal seke me, and ze shal die in zour synne; whidir Y go, ze mai not come. Þerfore þe Jewis seiden, Whidir is he þis to go, þat we shal not fynde him? Wher he shal slee himsilf, for he seip, Whidir Y go ze mai not come? And Crist seide to hem, ze ben of biþeþe, and Y am of above; ze ben of þis world, and Y am not of þis world. Þerfore Y seie to zou, þat ze shal die in zoure synnes, for if ze trowen not in me, ze shal die in zour synne.* And so þes Jewis slown hemsilf bi deþ of soule, þat is þe worste deþ. Þe Jewis þouzten þat Crist þouzte longe bi his liif, and wolde go away and slee himsilf. But Crist wolde seie, þat he schulde stie in to hevene; and þidir myzten þei not come, for þei musten nedis be dampned. For he wiste how þei schulde synne, and ever heepe, and not amende. *Þerfore seiden þe Jewis to Crist, Who art thou? And Jesus seide to hem, I am a principle þat speke to zou^a.* A principle is an out cause, as Crist was cause of alle þingis, and as he seide, he was above, and telde his godhede in a manere. *Y have many þingis to speke to zou, and to juge, but wite ze wel Y shal not speke fals, ne juge amys for hate, for he þat sente me is trewe, and Y am treuþe, and þo þingis þat Y have herd of God, Y speke in þe world. And þei wisten not þat he seide þat his fadir was God. And so seide Jesus to hem, Whanne ze han hied mannis sone, þanne shal ze knowe þat Y am; and Y do not¹ of myself; but as þe fadir*

Christ reprov-
ing the Jews.¹ *ουχι*, G, E, I.

* Translated from the Vulgate, 'Principium qui et loquor vobis,' a mistranslation for which it is difficult to account of the Greek words, *την αρχην ο τι και λαλω*

ειμην; since, whether we read *οτι* or *ο τι*, no ancient MS. gives any countenance to the 'qui' of the Vulgate. See Dean Alford's note on the passage in his Greek Testament.

tauzte me, þes þingis Y speke. And he þat sente me is wiþ me, and he haþ not left me alcone; for Y do even þo þingis þat ben plesyng to him. Wordis of þis gospel, as ben wordis of Joon comunli, ben ful of sutil witt, as men mai see þat here taken hede; but leewe we þis, and telle þe storie aftir þe comune witt of men.

PE TEWISDAY GOSPEL IN ÞE SECUNDE WEKE IN LENTE.

[SERMON CLV.]

*Super cathedram Moysi*¹. MATT. xxiii. [I.]

The pride and self-seeking of the Pharisees surpassed by the modern hierarchy.

ÞIS gospel of Matheu telliþ how Crist reproveþ þe pride and falshede of Scribis and Fariseis, þat many weies bigiliden þe puple. Mathew telliþ how, *þes two folk saten upon Moises chaier.* Scribis ben doctours of Jewis, and writun þe sentence þat þei zyven, and lyven more secularly þan lyven þes Phariseis; but boþe calengiden to be maistris, and reule þe puple as Moyses dide, and as þe pope seiþ now þat he is Cristis viker in erþe; and² so þes seiden þat þei hadden Moises power, and weren proud of þis staat. But þes weren lesse yvel þan is þe pope in tyme of grace; for sich vikeris wexen worse for þer pride and coveitise, and, for grace of Crist is more, þefore þere falling is more synne. Þes folk helden hem in þes boundis, þat þei knewen and seiden Goddis lawe, but in practike of þis lawe stood þer falsheed and þer pride. *And þefore,* seiþ Crist aftir, *alle þingis þat þei shal sei to zou, keþe 3e and do in dede, but aftir werkes of hem nyle 3e do, for þei seien and doon not.* Þei spaken þe treuþe of þe lawe, but þei practisiden it amys. But now oure prelatis ben so blynde þat þei speken and doon amys; and þe puple shal not do aftir þer wordis, for þei erren fro Goddis lawe and maken hem newe lawis, and so þei speken and techen. And þus, for blyndenesse of þes prelatis, þei synnen boþe in word and dede, more þan þes folk diden after Moises. For

¹ *Moysi, E.*

² *om. Q.*

popis ben ferþere fro Crist þan þes folk weren fro Moises, and moche more falsly ben Cristis vikeris, boþe in synne of word and dede. *For þes folk bynden grevous chargis, and sich as men mai not bere, and putte hem on mennis shouldris ; but þei nyl move hem wiþ her synger.* And so don vikeris of Crist to day, for harde penaunces þei putten on men, which sownen þer lordship and coveitise. As penaunce þei putten, aȝen resoun, þat þei mai not grounde bi lawe, and ȝif þei dispensen þerwiþ, it shal be bouȝt ful dere for money, and þus þei schewen¹ pride for þer power, and smyten þe puple wiþ coveitise. And þus þei encresen annuel rentis, as þei diden wiþ þe rewme of Ynglond, and oblishiden it in nyne hundrid mark^a to ȝyve þe pope ȝeer by ȝeer. But ȝif þei dredden knowing of þer fraude, þei wolden make hem to grete lordis, for þus þei myȝten encrese þer rentis bi siche penaunces as þei wolden.

And þes Scribis and Fariseis don alle þer werkes for þis eende, þat þei ben seen of men, glorious and hye in power, and so þei traveilen in coveitise ; *for þei alargen þer philacteries and maken hem grete hemmes.* Men seien þat þes philacteries weren scrowis², writun wiþ Goddis heestis, and tatchid³ on þer left arm, to have þes heestis ever more in mynde. Þe hemms⁴ þat weren in þer clopis touchiden þe staat of þer ordris, as prelatis don to day wiþ halywid clopis, and þes newe ordris wiþ þer abitis. But algatis men don worse now, for in stede of philateries men maken gret volyms^b of newe lawes þat ben not Goddis

¹ So E ; A has *sbetwiden*.
taccid, I.

² *scrouwes*, H.
⁴ *bemmes*, G ; *bemmis*, I.

³ *tachid*, E, G ;

^a Why *nine* hundred marks ? The sum which King John bound himself to pay yearly to the Roman see was 1000 marks (see Raynaldus sub anno), of which 700 were to be for England, and 300 for Ireland. 'Volumus et stabilimus ut Ecclesia Romana mille marchas sterlingorum percipiat annuatim septingentas scilicet pro regno Angliae, et trecentas pro regno Hyberniae.' In his paper, written in 1366, against the obligation on the part of the king and country to pay this

tribute, Wyclif speaks of it as the 700 marks, excluding Ireland from consideration. Probably therefore he on the present occasion wrote nine instead of seven simply by an oversight.

^b The writer alludes to the various authorized compilations (by this time formidable in number and bulk) of the Canon Law ; such as the Decretum of Gratian, the Decretals of Gregory IX, the Clementines of Gregory X, and the Extravagants of John XXII.

comandementis ; and men ben nedid to use þes lawis, boþe in doing and studyng. And siþ þei mai not alarge mennis wittis, but raþer maken þer wittis unable, þei neden men to leve Goddis lawe, and so to leve þe love of God. And siþ God bindiþ alle men to love hym of al þer herte, in al þer wille, and al þer mynde, and þes prelatis letten þis, þei binden men aþens God to breke his mandementis and to be dampned, and fouler synne was nevere doon fro þe bigynnyng of þe world. Þes ordris magnefien þer abitis, and seyen þe pope haþ confermed hem. And so seyen summe, þat who ever die in hem shal nevere more come to helle^a. And as þei maken þer abitis myche, boþe in widnesse and sidnesse¹, so þei maken þer vertue myche ; and al is ypocrisie, wiþ coveitise of worldli goodis, and ydilnesse fro Goddis lawe. *And þei loven first seetis at soperis, and first charis in synagogis, and gretingis in þe chepyng, and ben clepid maistris of men.* And in þes foure traveilen oure prelatis, boþe more and lasse. For to bigynne at þe freris ; þei coveiten alle þes foure ; for þei wolen sette wiþ lordis and ladies at þe mete ful dignely, and in chirchis þei han þer places bifore alle oþer men, so þat þei mai not be more nyȝ to worldly stat þan þei ben. And algatis þei wolen be gret among comunes² of men, and beñ clepid maistris and doctours for þe hyenesse of þer name. But Crist forbiðiþ þis hyenesse, and biddiþ us, *Nyle ȝe be clepid maistris, for þere is oon oure maistir*, þat haþ wiseli þis name. And in þis synne of worldli pride han we synned, and ȝit done. *And nyle ȝe clepe to ȝou fadir on erþe, for þer is oon ȝour fadir in hevene.* And in þis synnen abbotis, and oþer prelatis of þe Chirche. And þis synne techiþ Crist, whanne he fendide clepe to us siche fadirs upon erþe, for fadirs þat brouȝten us forþ techiþ and clepiþ us kynde to have. *And be ȝe not clepid maistris, for ȝour maistir is oon, Crist. He þat is more of ȝou, shal be ȝoure servant ; for he þat hieþ him shal be lowid, and he þat lowiþ him shal be hyed.* How evere men speken here al þis

¹ *sydenesse, I ; sydenesse, E.*

² *comuntees, G, Q ; comunetis, I.*

^a — they who to be sure of Paradise
Dying put on the weeds of Dominic.
Or in Franciscan think to pass disguised.
Milton, *Paradise Lost*, Bk. iii.

This was actually done by, amongst others, Alfonso II, of Naples ; see the curious account in Philippe de Comines, Bk. vii. ch. 14.

heþene maner of worship þat is not groundid in Goddis lawe smatchip pride, and shulde be lefte. For how shulden we prestis be lordis, siþ it is synne in seculer men? and prestis synnen in double assent, whanne þei leven to snibbe bi¹ þis synne.

ON WEDNESDAI IN SECUNDE WEKE IN LENTE.

[SERMON CLVI.]

Ascendens Jesus Jerosolymam.—MATT. XX. [17.]

CRIST tellip in þis gospel of his mekenesse and his passioun, and how þat alle oþer shulde sue him in manere of liif. Matheu tellip how þat, *Jesus, stynge unto Jerusalem, toke privyly his twelve disciplis*, and tolde hem how he shulde suffre þere. Þis he tauhte privyly; for men þat wolen neer sue Crist, moten lerne þis lore in dede, and not alle men taken þis lore. Crist tellip hem how, *þei wenden wilfulli to Jerusalem, and mannis sone shal be traied² to princis of preestis, and to scribis, and þei shal dampne him bi deþ, and þei shal take him to heþene men, to be scorned and turmentid, and to be put on þe crosse; and he shal rise on þe þridde daie.*

Christ foretells his passion.

Þanne cam to Crist his aunte, þat was modir of James and Joon, and þes two disciplis camen wip hir. And she lowtide, and axide sum what of him. And Crist seide to her, *What wolt þou? And she seide to him, Seie þou þat þes two my sones sitte, þe toon at þi riht side, and þe toþer at þi left side, in þi rewme. And Jesus answeride, and seid to hem, 3e witen not what 3e shal axe. Mai 3e drynke þe cuppe þat I am to drynke? And þei seiden, þei myzten suffre as he. And Crist seide to hem þanne, Certis 3e shal drynke of my cuppe; but to sitte at my riht side and my left side fallip not * to my manhede* to 3yve to *3ou, but to my Godhede to 3yve*³ hem, to whom it is ordeyned of my Fadir. And, heeringe, ten oþer disciplis hadden dedeyn of þes two breþeren. And*

¹ caret in G and I; E has *undernyme þis synne.*
bitrayed, E.

² bitraied, G;

³ *——* passages excluded by G from the quotation.

Jesus clepide hem to him, and seide, 3e wilen wel þat princis of heþene men ben lordis of hem, and þei þat ben more among hem, usen power upon hem. But it shal not be so among 3ou; but whoever wole among 3ou be maad more, be he 3oure ministre; and whoever wole be first among 3ou, he shal be 3our servaunt. As mannis sone cam not to be served, but to serve, and to 3yve his lyf¹ azen-biyng for many. Þes wordis ben many tymes expowned, but þer sentence is forȝetun. For no drede Crist wolde here forbede preestis worldli morenesse; but who reversiþ more þis word þan done preestis now adaies, boþe in worldli lordship and worldli worship þat þei taken? And þis is ground of oþer synnes þat rengnen among preestis.

ON ÞURSDAI IN SECUNDE WEKE IN LENTE.

[SERMON CLVII.]

Non possum ego.—[JOHN V. [30.]]

Witness of
various kinds
born to Christ.

Þis gospel telliþ wordis bi whiche Crist confermede his lore, and tauȝte men to be meke, and to knowe þeir owne freelte. Jesus seide to þe puple of þe Jewis, *I mai do nouȝt of mysilf, but as I heere, so I juge.* And Crist spekiþ of his manheed, þat hadde al his beyng of þe Godhede, as his personalte² was of his Fadir. But Crist seiþ here sopli þat, *his jugement is just, for he spekiþ not his wille, but þe wille of him þat sente him.* And þis is þe sixte place in which þe gospel spekiþ þus; þat Crist 3yveþ to his Fadir, and takiþ from him, sich þingis þat fallen not principalli to him, but principalli to his Fadir. For no drede Crist souȝte þe wille of þe Trinite, boþ bi his Godhede and his manhede; and 3if men wolden kepe þis, þer jugement shulde be just. For men failen in jugement for covetise of worldli goodis, and personel affeccions, and levyng to loke to Goddis wille. And 3if þis were þe heed point in jugement of sich men, to loke þat þeir jugement were trewe, and to þe profit of þe Chirche, and ellis leve þis jugement, as contrarie to Goddis

¹ *bimsilf*, G.

² *personalite*, G, H.

wille, þanne þer jugement shulde be just, and Goddis lawe have his cours. *ʒif Y bere þis witnessse of mysilf, it is not soþ; for al sinful þing is fals, al ʒif it have beyng of treuþe; þer is anoper persone þat berip witnessse of me, and Y woot þat þis witnes is soþ þat he berip of me. ʒe senten to Joon Baptist, and he bare witnessse to treuþe. But Y take not witnessse of man; but þes þingis Y seie, þat ʒe be saaf. Joon was a lanterne brennyng and shynynge; and ʒe wolden for a while be glad in his list. But Y have witnessse more þan Joon, for my werkis and my fadir beren witnessse of me.* And so eche trewe man shulde have witnessse of his werkes, for trewe liif tellip a trewe man, and fals lyf a fals man. And siþ þe Fadir berip witnessse of Crist, al þe Trinite berip witnessse of him. And þis þing knewe¹ not þe Jewis; and herfore seiþ Crist þus, *þat þei herden nevere þe vois of þe fadir, ne þei sawen never þe forme of him.* He seep² here þes þingis³ of þe Fadir, þat trowip hem in þat þe Fadir doiþ hem⁴; and so he trowip in þe Fadir. But in þis failide⁵ þe Jewis. *And his word ʒe han not dwellinge in ʒou, for to him þat he sente ʒe trowen not. Seke ʒe þe writingis of Goddis lawe, in whiche ʒe gessen to han blissid liif; and þes writingis ben þo ilke þat beren witnes of me. And ʒe wolen not come to me, þat ʒe have þe blissed liif. Crist takip not his clerete of men. But he knewe wel þes Jewis, þat þei han not Goddis love in hem. Y cam, seiþ Crist, in name of my fadir, and ʒe token not me; but ʒif anoper come in Goddis name, þat Anticrist shal ʒe take.* For⁶ þis kynrede is smytun now among men þat ben clepid hooli Chirche, and þei taken wiþ a full wille þe pope as þe viker of God. And þe same cause is here and þere, for he makip hem worldli wynnyng⁷, and to lyve gloriously here, and þat þei seken, and not þer blis. *How mai ʒe trowe bileve, þat seken to have glorie to-gidere, and ʒe seke not þe glorie, þe which is of God al oone?* And þis is principal cause whi men turnen fro Cristis lawe.

Perfore nyle ʒe gesse þat Y am to accuse ʒou at þe fadir; þer

¹ *knewen, I; knowen, E.* ² *seip, E.* ³ *wordis, E.* ⁴ *þat he trowep hem in þat þe Fadir doiþ hem, E.*
⁵ *ʒayleden, E.* ⁶ *All that follows, to the words 'How mai ʒe trowe,' is absurdly included by A in the Scriptural extract. E gives the passage rightly.*
⁷ *have worldly wynnyng, E.*

is oon þat accusiþ þou, þat is, Moises in whom 3e hopen. For 3if 3e trowiden to Moises, 3e shulden trowe peraventure¹ and to me, for he wroot of me. And 3if 3e trowen not to his lettris, how shal 3e trowe to my wordis? Þis Moises wroot of Crist, and seide, a prophete shulde rise of Jewis, and bad hem trowe to him as to Moises; for he knewe þe treuþe of Crist. And holi writt puttij comunli þis word, peraventure, wiþ oþer causis, whanne fredom of wille is medlid, and it sueþ² not opynli.

ON FRIDAI IN SECUNDE WEKE IN LENTE.

[SERMON CLVIII.]

Homo erat pater familias.—MATT. xxi. [33.]

Þis gospel tellij a parable how Crist shulde be slayn wiþ þe Jewis. Matheu seiþ how Crist tellij þis parable to his Chirche. *Þer was a man, good housebonde, þat plantide a vyn, and heggide it aboute, and dalf þer inne a pressour, and bildide a tour þerinne, and hyride it to tilieris, and wente himsilf in pilgrimage. And whanne tyme of frutis cam nyȝ, he sente hise seruauntis to þes tilieris, to take þe frutis þerof. And þes tilieris token þes seruauntis, and oon þei buffetiden, anoper þei killiden, and anoper þei stoneden to deef. Est he sente mo seruauntis, mo þan þe firste weren; and þei diden also to hem. And at þe laste he sente his sone to hem, and seide, þat þei shulden drede his sone. And þes tilieris, seyng þis sone, seiden wipinne hem, Þis is þe eir³; come 3e and kille we him, and we shal have his heritage. And þei token him, and casten him out of þe vnyzerde, and killiden him. Þerfore whanne þe Lord of þis vnyzerde shal come, what shal he do to þe tilieris? And þei seiden to Crist, Þes yuele tilieris shal he sharpli lese, and hire his vnyzerde to oþer tilieris, þat shal 3yue him fruyte in þer tymes. And Jesus seid to hem, Red 3e nevere in Daviþis writingis, Þe stoon þat bilderis reprovden, þis is maad in to þe heed of þe corner? Þis is don of þe Lord, and it is woun-*

¹ perauter, I.

² semeþ, E.

³ beyr, E.

dirful in oure eizen. Verfore Y seie to 3ou, þat Goddis rewme shal be taken fro 3ou, and it shal be 3oven to þat folk þat doiþ þe fruyt of it. And whoever falliþ upon his stoon, he shal be brokun, and upon whom his stoon falle, his stoon shal al to bryse¹ him. And whanne þe princis of preestis and Pharisees hadde herd þe parablis of Crist, þei wisten þat he spake of hem. And þei, sekinge to take Crist, dredden þe comun² peple. For þe puple hadde Crist in worship as a prophete.

Þis parable semeþ opin, and seid to þis entent. Þis good housebonde is God þe Fadir, þat ordeyneþ for al þis world, and speciali for his holi Chirche. God plantide a vyneserde, whanne he groundide holi Chirche; and algatis in Jerusalem, for þer was myche sijt of pees. God heggide þis 3erde aboute, whanne he 3af it good lawis, summe strong to 3yve men mede, and sum sharp to punishe men; and þus dide not God to ech kynrede, but speciali to kynrede of Jewis. Þis pressour ben þo prestis þat geten out juys of Goddis word, and þei gladen men wiþ wyn, and 3yven hem sause to Goddis mete. God delveþ þis pressour þere, for prestis lyven on Goddis part. God bieldiþ³ a tour þere, whanne he defendide his Chirche bi kyngis. Tilieris to whom þis Chirche was hired, weren shrewis þat shulden profite bi þe Chirche, and þei traveiliden in þe Chirche, and maden it brynge forþ myche fruyt; for wickide men þat pursuen þe Chirche, wiþ Goddis grace doon it good. Þis Fadir wente in pilgrimage, whanne he hadde ordeyned þus his Chirche, and 3oven men free power for to do good or yvel. Þis tyme of fruyt was þat age þat þis Chirche shulde profite here. And servauntis of God sente weren kingis, patriarkis, and prophetis; and of þes weren summe pursued, summe kild, and sum stoned. Þes moo prophetis þat camen after weren also pursued and killid. Þis goode Fadir sente his Sone, whanne he made Crist to take mannis kynde. Þei knewen liztli þat he was eir boþe of hevene and of erþe, and 3it, for blyndenesse þat þei hadden, þei jugiden hem to obeishe to God for pursuyng and killing of Crist; and þei token Crist, and kesten him out of Jerusalem;

Interpretation.

¹ *al to bruse*, G, I; *al to brisen*, E. ² So in E; A includes the word in the quotation. ³ So E; A has *bilde*.

for Crist diede and was biried wipouten þe wallis of þat cite. And God, Lord of þe Chirche, whanne he comeþ to juge þis werk, shal lese ful peynefulli þes wickide Jewis þat diden þus. Sum prestis seiden þus bi þer conscience, þat undirstoden not þis parable, bi what men it was seid¹, and sum² seiden, God forbede, as Matheu and Luk tellen wipouten contrariouste. God hiride þe Chirche to opere good tilieris, as to apostlis, and martiris, and oper seintis þat camen aftir hem. And þei ʒaven fruyt of þe Chirche, whanne þei wrouʒten medeful werkes, and weren boþe vines and tilieris, and edifieden oper vynes. Þat Jesus seide to hem aftir of þe stoon þat Daviþ telliþ, it is knowun to Cristene men þat þis stoon is Crist in figure, and heed and helpe of holi Chirche, as þe Psalm seiþ also. It is seid comunli, þat in makyng of þe temple þer was a stoon, ofte refusid, and discordide fro many placis; and at þe laste þei weren nedid to make it heed stoon in a corner^a. And þis stoon figuride Jesus Crist, þat was many tymes reprovede here, and at þe laste men weren nedid to put Crist heed of holi Chirche, and to knitte heþene men and Jewis, as corner stoon knittiþ two wallis. And for þis is a goostli stoon³, þerfore it is bi many placis, and haþ in him many resouns, as ground stone and corner stoon. Þis was doon of þe Lord, and is woundirful in oure ʒen. For noþing is more woundirful þan þat God was þus maad man. And þus applieþ Crist hise wordis, and seiþ þat Goddis rewme shal be taken fro hem, and ʒovun to folk þat doiþ his fruyt. For Jewis weren cast out of þe Chirche, and heþene folk taken for hem. And þis stoon mut ever laste, and reule þe Chirche in blisse and peyne; and who þat falliþ upon þis stoon, repungning Crist or his lawe, shal be broken in his conscience, and grutche aʒens himsilf. And for þis stoon is spiritual, boþe above and bineþe; þis stoon shal falle on siche men, and squatte hem al to poudir. For ech part of dampned⁴ shal fiʒte wip oper in discord.

¹ *y-seid*, H.² om. Q.³ So in E, G, I, Q; A om. *is a*.⁴ *dampned men*, Q.

^a This legend is here translated almost literally from De Lyra, who does not state whence he derived it.

Not improbably it might be found in the *Historia Scholastica*.

Dese hiȝe preestis wisten here what Crist mente in þes wordis, but þei myȝten not take him bifore þe tyme þat he wolde die. And so telle þou Goddis lawe to Anticrist and his felowis, and þei shal caste to kille þee. But þe puple assentip to skille, for Goddis lawe stondip in seculeris, as lordis and comunes, þat ben goode; and þei letten malis of preestis þat ellis wolden be to wickid, and pursue trewe preestis, for treuþe þat þei tellen þe puple.

PE SATURDAY GOSPEL IN ÞE SECUNDE WEKE IN LENTE.

[SERMON CLIX.]

Homo quidam habuit duos.—LUC. xv. [11.]

Þis gospel tellip a parable, as þe nexte gospel bifore. Luk seip þat Crist tolde how, *A man hadde two sones; and þe zonger of hem seide unto his fadir, Fadir, ȝyve me a porcioun of þe substance þat fallip me. And þe fadir departide him his goodis. And soone aftir þis zonge sone gederide al þat fel to him, and wents forþ in pilgrimage in to a fer contre; and þer he wastide his goodis, lyvyng in lecherie. And after þat he hadde endid alle his goodis, þer fel a gret hungre in þat lond, and he bigan to be nedy. And he wente oute, and clevede to oon of þe citizeins of þat contre, and þis citisein sente him into his toun, to kepe swyn. And þis sone coveitide to fille his beli wip pese holes¹ þat þe hogges eten, and no man ȝaf him. And he, turninge aȝen, seide, How many hynen in my fadirs hous ben ful of loves, and Y perishe here for hungre. Y shal rise, and go to my fadir, and seie to him, Fadir, I have synned in heven, and bifore þee; now Y am not worþi to be clepid þi sone, make me as oon of þin hynen. And he roos, and cam to his fadir. And ȝit whanne he was fer, his fadir sawe him, and was moved bi mercy, and rennyng aȝens his sone, fel on his nekke, and kiste him. And þe sone seide to him, Fadir, Y have synned in hevne, and bifore þee; now Y am not worþi to be clepid*

The parable
of the pro-
digal son.

¹ pes bolys, I.

þi sone. And þe fadir seide to his servauntis anoon, Bringe 3e forþ þe firste stooles¹, and cloþe 3e him, and 3yve 3e a ryng in his hond, and shoon upon his feet. And bringe 3e a fat calf, and sle him, and ete we, and fede us; for þis sone of myn was deed, and is quykened aȝen, and he was perishid, and is foundun. And þei bigunne to feede hem. And his eldere sone was in þe feeld; and whanne he cam, and was nyȝ þe hous, he herde a symphonie and oþer noise of mynstralcye². And þis eldere sone clepide oon of þe servauntis, and axide what weren þes þingis. And he seide to him, Þi broþir is comen, and þi fadir haȝ slayn a fat calf, for he haȝ resceyved him saaf. But þis eldere sone hadde dedeyn, and wolde not come in; þerfore his fadir wente out, and bigan to preie him. And he answeride, and seide to his fadir, Lo, so many ȝeeris Y serve to þee, Y passide nevere þi mandement; and þou ȝavest me nevere a kide, for to fede me wiȝ my frendis. But after þat he þis þi sone, þat murþeride³ his goodis wiȝ hooris, is come, þou hast killid to him a fat calf. And þe fadir seide to him, Sone, þou art ever more wiȝ me, and alle my goodis ben þine. But it was nede to ete and to make mery, for he þis þi broþir was deed, and lyvede aȝen; he was perishid, and is founden.

Interpretation.

It is comunli seid þat þis man is Jesus Crist, þat boþe is God and man, and bi his Godhede haȝ two sones. Þe eldere sone is þe folk of Jewis, and þe ȝongere, heþene folk. Þes two sones weren for a tyme wiȝ God bi grace and kyndeli witt. But þis ȝongere sone of þes two seide pryvyly to his fadir, þat he wolde have bi himsilf goodis þat shulde falle to him, whanne heþene men wolden have propre, boþe lawes and oþer ȝiftis of God, and so þei wolden be reulid bi þer owne witt, and not fulli bi God. And so richessis of þis sone ben goodis of grace; and God suffride þis sone to be reulid apart bi his owne witt; but God ȝaf him goodis of kynde and goodis of grace in al þis tyme. For ellis þes heþene men miȝten not be, but ȝif þei hadden goodis of kynde of God; and many partis of þis sone, as Jetro, and Job, and oþir, hadden goodis of grace of God; for ellis þis sone hadde al be lost. Soone after þis ȝonger sone wente aweie fro God bi synne; but ȝit þes heþene men for a tyme loveden God, and servede⁴ him wel. And so þis fer contre is þe liif of

¹ stole, H. ² mynstralsie, G, I. ³ murþere, I; devourid, Q. ⁴ servyden, E.

man in synne, and wasting of þes goodis is slouþe of Goddis service bi hem. And lecherous liif is yvel of þe world and fleish, bineþe mannis spouse; siþ God is spouse of mannis kynde; he þat loveþ too myche þe world and his fleish, lyveþ lecherouseli wiþ hooris undir his spouse. And so þes folk hadden endid alle þer goodis, whanne hem¹ wantide ȝiftis of grace, and alle her ȝiftis of kynde þei wastiden in yvel uss. Þis hungre þat fel in þis contre is wanting of knowing of treuþe, wiþ kyndeli desire to knowe þe treuþe. Oon of þe citeseins² is þe fend, as al þis world is Goddis cuntre, and diverse fendis of helle han wille to tempte to dyvers synnes. And he sendiþ man to his toun, whanne he lediþ man to his felowis, for þere þei han divers restingis. But al þis shewiþ grete nede of man. Þat man kep iþ hoggis, þat nurishiþ fleishli synnes, boþe in him and oþir men, as many contres don now. And so man coveitiþ to be fild wiþ þes hulis³, whanne he desiriþ for to conne mannis science, oþer þan Goddis science⁴. For science of God fed iþ men wel, and oþer science is mete for hoggis, and it mak iþ men fat here, but not after domesdai.

Sum men seien þat þes hulis ben vanites of kyndeli sciencis, for pesis⁵ ben divers from whete, as creatures diversen fro God. Draþ is science of goodis, as worldli iawe, and þe popis lawe; for alle þes lawes seken good, but noon as doiþ Goddis lawe; for Goddis lawe hold iþ þe beste good, and oþer lawe good of þe world; and so þei diversen fro Goddis lawe, as draþ diversiþ fro clene drynke. Many men traveilen to cunne þes lawes, and ȝit þei failen toolis⁶ þerto; for man mut have worldli spensis þat wole craftli lerne þes sciencis. But man is turned to himsilf, whanne his conscience bit iþ him, þat mannis soule fariþ moche betere þat sueþ God bi his lawes. So þat hous of þis fadir is holi Chirche, þat hold iþ trewe men. Looves ben divers articles of bileve, þat Cristen men han. And servantis of þis hous ben men þat ben now⁷ riȝtwise. But þe sone is þat man to whom God haþ ordeyned blis, and is now riȝtwise, and profit iþ to Goddis Chirche. And so þinkyng and rysyng of

The prodigal's
repentance.

¹ So G, I, E; A has *be*.
peyse boles, E.

² *citeseyns*, G, E.
⁴ E om. this clause.

³ *pes bolis*, G;
⁶ *bem faileþ*

tolis, I.

⁷ *not*, E.

men to come to þis fadir ; ben divers graces of God, bi whiche he moveþ men to love him.

His confession
of sin.

Whanne a synful man knowiþ þe soþe, þat God is his fadir in kynde, for boþe his soule and his bodi God made of nouȝt, as Moises seiþ^a, þanne man mak iþ þis confessioun, Fadir, Y have synned in hevene and bifore þee. Soþ it is, man mai not synne, but ȝif he synne aȝens God and aȝens al þe world, and so þis man synneþ in hevene. But, for he woot þat God seeþ alle synnes, and he hopiþ forȝyvnnesse of him, þerfore he seiþ þat he haþ synned bifore God, þat is his fadir, and for þe grete synne þat he haþ don to God, he is not worþi of himsilf to be clepid his sone. God mak iþ man as oon of his hynen, whanne he ȝyveþ him grace for a tyme, and mak iþ him to do wel his werkes. And ȝit, ȝif man be Goddis sone, he coveitiþ to have þis grace, for þe moste peyne þat man haþ is peyne þat he tak iþ of synne. And ȝif a man shal be dampned, and be Goddis hyne for a tyme, ȝit he haþ lasse peyne in helle for þat tyme þat he is Goddis hyne.

His reception.

God oure Fadir seeþ us afer, longe bifore þat we comen to him, for bi mercy þat he haþ he moveþ us to do þus. God renneþ aȝens us whanne he helpiþ¹ us to do good ; God falliþ upon oure nekke, whanne he stireþ us to be meke ; God kissiþ þanne his man, whanne he ȝyveþ him grace of sone, and mak iþ him oon wiþ Crist his Sone, and parsenere² of Cristis merit. And þanne þis Sone mak iþ este þis schrift. God seiþ þanne to his servauntis to bringe forþ soon þe first stoole, whanne þei shewen mannis innocence. And þat man is ordeyned of him to blis, for þis stoole is long and narrow, and mak iþ alle be preestis þat shal be saved. And þis lastiþ round wiþ man, for it shal ever be wiþ him in blis. Þis stoole is derkid for a tyme bi wickid liif þat man haþ, but it is clerid bi good aungels, and good men þat serven God. Man is clopid þus wiþ vertues, and þanne men seen afer þis stoole, for men gessen he shall be saaf, for good þat comeþ of his vertues. Þis ryng þat is upon þe

¹ So E, G, H, Q; *helpid*, A.

² *partener*, G; *parceynere*, I.

^a No passage corresponding to the reference in the text is to be found in the Pentateuch ; but see Wisd. ii. 2, and 2 Macc. vii. 28.

fyngir, is bileve in sutile werkes, to maken man to disserve hevene for short werkes þat he doip heere. And 3if þis hope turne to bileve þat þis man shal be saaf, þanne boþe þis stoole and þis ryng ben brouzt forþ to mannis siȝt, how man is weddid wiþ Crist, þe which is spouse to holi Chirche. And þis man synneþ not aftir, as Adam dide not, ne þe apostlis, but 3if it be liȝt veniel synne, þat lettij not þis stoole or wedding. Þat mannis feet be hilid wiþ shoon, þat haþ mynde of dede seintis, and is boþe hardi and redi to renne after Crist in his cause. Þis fat calf þat men shulden ete, is Cristis bodi þat men offren, and so it is þe sacrid oost, þat is in figure Cristis bodi. Crist was deed in his tyme, and ordeynede for to fede men goostli bi his bodi, for it is fat breed herto. And þus God wiþ his aungels is glad of þis 3onger sone.

But þis eldere sone, whanne þe fadir and þe 3onger sone eeten þus, was in þe feld of literal witt þat þei 3yven to Goddis lawe. And Jewis han 3it dedeyn of Cristene men, as Poul seip. Þes melodies þat weren maad ben sturyngis of þe Hooli Goost, as upon Witt-Sunday þe apostlis knewen alle langagis, and symphonye and croude weren herd whanne apostlis knewen alle wittis, and þer was maad a greet soun, whanne þe Holi Goost tauȝte hem. Þis eldere sone clepide oon þat servede to his 3onger broþir, whanne men of þe olde lawe herden Petre, þat was of boþe, telle how þis comyng of þe Goost was profesied bi olde profetis. But 3it þe fadirs of þe olde lawe hadden dedeyn of his comyng, and seiden þat þei hadden served God many 3eer ful stabli, and 3it he fouchide¹ nevere saaf to fede hem þus wiþ a kide, for manna and pask lomb weren but figuris to þis calf. But bifore þe daie of dome shal Jewis be reconcelid to Crist, whanne he shal telle hem of his witt, how he haþ ordeyned hem to blisse. And letting of Anticrist shal bi grace be putte away; for coveitise of þe pope lettij þe Jewis to turne to Crist. And so þis eldere sone is evere wiþ God bi sum part, siþ Crist took his manheed of kynde of þis eldere sone. And it helpij moche here for to knowe a greet persone, and now bi oo part and now bi anoþer verifie wordis of þis gospel, as þe kynde of Jewis is now clepid eldere and

The elder
brother.

1 Cor. I. 23 ?

¹ vouchide, G.

now 3ongere, for þer ben diverse resouns of bigynnyng and ending of hem. And so for Crist and hise apostlis was þis soþ, þat alle myne be þine. And for oþer parties of þis grete persone was þis soþ, þat he grutchide. And so þis 3onger broþir was deed bi synne, and quykened bi grace; and so ech word of þis gospel is soþ to witt of þis parable.

DE MONEDAY GOSPEL IN ÞE ÞRIDDE WEKE IN LENTE.

[SERMON CLX.]

Quanta audivimus.—LUC. iv. [23.]

Christ in the
synagogue at
Nazareth.

Þis gospel telliþ how Crist answeride to objectis of false Jewis. Luk telliþ how þei calengiden Crist to do myraclis in his contre, siþ he wrouzte miraclis in Capharnaum, þat was fer fro Bedleem^a. And þus telliþ Luk, þat Jewis seiden, *How many þingis we han herd maad of þee in Capharnaum, make þou and here in þi cuntre*, and shewe þou þus here þi power. *But Jesus seide unto hem, Sobli Y seie to 3ou, þat no man prophete is accepted in his contre. In treuþe Y seie to 3ou, mony widewis weren in Helyes daies in Israel, whanne hevene was closid fro reyn þree 3eer and sixe moneþis, whanne greet hungir was maad in al þe lond; but to noon of þes widewis was Hely sent, but in to Sarepta of Sidon to a womman widewe, as þe book of Kingis telliþ. And many mesilis weren in Israel undir Elisee þe profete, and noon of hem was clensid of Helisee but Naaman of Siri.* And bi þis wolde Crist seie þat God doiþ not wiþoute cause, ne bi personel accepcioun, but comunli for merit bifore, and so þis puple is unworþi to have miraclis maad of me. And þus we taken as bileve, þat þe Jewis ben 3it unworþi to be taken to Goddis grace, fer greet synne þat þei diden in Crist. And so þei ben worþi to have false popis, and yvel prelatis, þat letten hem to turne to Crist; and God woot whanne þis synne shal

^a The comment below, on v. 29, shows that the writer carelessly assumed that the city mentioned in

this gospel was Jerusalem, instead of Nazareth.

have ende. For, as God knowiþ grevouste of synne, so he knowiþ lengþe of his peyne.

And alle men in þe synagoge¹, þat herden þes wordis of Crist, weren fulfillid of ire; and þouzten þat he jugide hem unworþi to be helpid. And þei risen, and castiden him out wiþouten þer citee, þat was Jerusalem; and þei ledden him to þe top of þe hill above which þer citee was bildid for to caste him down hedding. But Crist passinge forþ out wente þourz þe myddil of hem. And lerne we here þat God doiþ not bi acceptyng of persones, but for þing doon bifore, whos qualite is oonli knowun to him. For who woot how many persones assentiden to þis synne, and how myche helpe men hadden of oþers þat reversiden it? And þus it is of synne and meritis, þat ben unknowun to us here.

ÞE TƆWISDAY GOSPEL IN ÞE ÞRIDDE WEKE IN LENTE.

[SERMON CLXI.]

Respiciens Jesus^a.—MATT. xviii. [15.]

Þis gospel of Mathew telliþ how men shal snybbe synne; but mennis lawis letten þis cours, þat þis gospel is not holden. *Jesus biholdinge his disciplis seide to Symount Peter, and in him to ech Cristene man, 3if þi broþir synne azens þee, go þou and snybbe him bitwixe þee and him aloone; 3if he heere þee, wel; þou hast wonnen þi broþer to God. And 3if he heere þee not now, take to þee oon or two, so þat in þe moup of two or þree witnessis stonde evry word, þat here is spoke. And if he heere not þes witnessis, seie to þe Chirche, þat is comunte of Cristene men; and 3if he heere not þe Chirche, be he to þee as an heþene man and publican. Sopli Y seie to þou, what kynne þingis 3e bynden above þe erþe, shal be bounden in hevene, and what kynne þingis 3e unbinden above þe erþe shal be loosid in hevene. Est Y seie to þou,*

¹ So E and Q; A has *synagogis*.

^a In the Sarum Missal (as also in the Roman,) this gospel is, as it were, prefaced by the following words, not found in the Vulgate, but evidently introduced in order to explain

the change of number in the fifteenth verse from 'vestrum' to 'tuus':—*'In illo tempore, Respiciens Jesus in discipulos suos, dixit Simoni Petro.'*

Christ teaches us to rebuke sin while forgiving it.

þat if two of ȝou consente above erþe of ech þing, whatever þei axen, it shal be done to heim¹ of my fadir þat is in heven. For wher ben two or þree gedrid in my name, þer Y am in þe myddil of hem. Þanne Petir comyng to Crist, seide, Sire, how ofte shal my broþer synnen in me, and Y shal forȝyve him? Wher þis shal be to sevene tymes? And Jesus seide to him, Y seie not to þee til sevene sipsis, but til seventi sipsis and sevene.

The Christian duty of re-proof interfered with by the prevalence of conventual rules.

In þis gospel ben þree þingis which Cristen men shulde marke to hem. Þe first part of þis gospel makip ende of Cristis ordre; so þat sum gospel tellip how we shulden love, and sum tellip how we shulden snybbe; and whatever be more in any ordre is superflue wiþout witt². Love þou þi frend, and þi enemye, and whanne evere þou woost þat man trespassip in þee, þou shalt snybbe him, as þis gospel tellip þee. Ech man þat þou woost þat synneþ, synneþ in God and in ech man. And so, what tyme þat þou knowist þat any man synneþ in þee, þou shuldest snybbe³ him bi ȝou silf, whanne tyme and oþer þingis wolen suffre. And so it semeþ to many men, þat þes newe lawes and newe ordres contrarien þis gospel, and so þei ben azens bileve. Many newe lawis ben maad to susteyne þes newe ordris, þat lettip sich snybbing⁴ as þe gospel tellip here. For it is ofte knowun to men, þat þer breþeren synnen azens hem; and ȝif men snybben⁵ hem of þeir synne, þei seien þei have a sovereyne, as a priour or an abbot, þat shulde knowe in þis trespas; and þis fallip not to þis broþir, but ȝif he wole reverse þis ordre. And myche more ȝif he snybbe⁶ þe þridde tyme and þe fourþe tyme, for þanne ofte sipsis his breþeren shulden leeven comunyng wiþ þer abbot, and fle him as an heþene man; but how shulden þes ordres stonde þus? And þis fallip in chapitre lawe, and ech punishing of monei. And so, ȝif þis gospel wente forþ, alle þes þingis shulden be fordone. And here ben many mannis lawis made of defamyng of men, and þei wiþ practisyng of hem shulden perishe bi þis gospel. Here men þenken þat þes newe lawes and þes newe ordris shulden ceese, and so þei don myche harm to alle oþer and to hem silf. And so ech man shulde snybbe þes ordris, and oþer

¹ hem, Q.
nyng, E.

² wiþouten ony wit, E.
⁵ undirnyng, E.

³ undirnyng, E.

⁶ for, Q.

⁴ undir-

men þat maynteynen hem; for þis reule þat þis gospel telliþ is betere þan ony privy snybbing. And ȝif men loveden al þe gospel, it were of more strengþe þan þes ordres.

Þe secounde part of þis gospel telliþ how preestis shul loose and bynde. Þei shulden do þus above þe erþ, accordingly to Goddis wille; and so whatever þei tellen þe peple þat þei loosen or bynden þus, þe Chirche and ech man shulde suppose þat it is down þus in heven. But ȝif þei doon for men or money, or unknowing¹ of þer dede, þei done not þus above erþe, but in þe erþe or bineþe þe erþe, and noon shulde strive for þis power. For God mut first do þis dede.

Þe þridde part of þis gospel telliþ how ofte men shulden forȝyve. And men shulden forȝyve þeir wrongis as ofte as men synne in hem²; but God wole nevere forȝyve his wrong, but ȝif men maken aseþ to God. And to seie opynli þat þou forȝyvest þis synne in God, is an open blasfemye, but ȝif God telle þee þat he doiþ so, and bidde publishe Goddis wille, þat God himsilf forȝyve þis synne. And þus love daies³ of many damages³ ben comunli aȝens þis gospel, for man shulde forȝyve freeli þe harm þat is doon aȝens him, and entirmete not of Goddis injurie^b; for God oonli mai forȝyve þis. And so, as Austyn notiþ, ech þat synneþ in maundement of God synneþ boþe aȝens God and aȝens ech of his breþeren. And so eleven siþis sevene, þat is þe first noumbre after ten, maken seventi and sevene. And so wolde Crist seie bi þes wordis, þat how ofte ony man synneþ in ony comandement, and so he synneþ aȝens us, we shulden forȝyve oure injurie, and be aboute to amende him.

Priestly absolution.

Free forgiveness.

¹ for unknowynge, E. damage, E.

² trespassen aȝens hem, E.

³ mannis

^a 'Love-day' is explained in Halliwell's Dictionary as a 'day appointed for the settlement of differences by arbitration.' A quotation from Gower follows,—

'But helle is fulle of suche discorde
That ther may be no love-day.'

The word occurs also in Chaucer. The meaning here seems to be, that

to appoint any prescribed number of days of penance within which an offence against God may be expiated, is to 'entirmete of Goddis injurie,' and not allowable.

^b One might suppose Wyclif to have read the famous apophthegm in Tacitus, 'Deorum injurie diis curae.'

ON WEDNESDAY IN ÞRIDDE WEKE IN LENTE.

[SERMON CLXII.]

Accesserunt ad Jesum.—MATT. XV. [1.]

Christ reproves
the formalism
and super-
stition of the
Pharisees.

Þis gospel tellip how Crist reprovede veyn religioun of Phariseis. Matheu tellip how¹, *þer camen fro Jerusalem Scribis and Phariseis*, and accusiden Crist in hise apostlis of breking of þer religioun. *þei seiden to Crist, Whi þi discipulis breken þe mandementis of oure eldris, for þei waishen not þer hondis whanne þei eten breed?* And Crist seide azen to hem, *But whi breken 3e Goddis maundement, for 3oure veyn tradicioun?* For God bad worshiþe þi fadir and þi modir, and who ever cursiþ his fadir or his modir, die he yvel deþ. And 3e seien in 3oure lore, *Whoevère seiþ to his fadir or his modir, What kyne 3ifte is of me it schal profite to þee*, and noon oþer; and so, *3if he worshiþe not his fadir and his modir, bi keypyng of þis tradicioun, he answeret wel, for his keypyng þat he doip to þis mannis lawe.* And so, siþ 3e Phariseis han goodis fallinge to 3oure ordre, and not propre to 3ou silf, 3e helpen not 3oure fadir and modir. *And þus 3e avoiden Goddis heeste bi 3oure veyn tradicioun.* O 3e ypocritis, *wel propheciede of 3ou Ysay, and seide, Þis puple worshiþ me wiþ þer lippes, for þei bidden many bedis, but þeir herte is fer fro me.* And wiþouten cause þei worshipen me, for siþ God is Spirit and treuþe, wiþoute feyning wole he be worshiped; and þus þes Phariseis techen loris and mandementis of men. And þis þes Phariseis don to dai. For 3if þes ordres geten nevere so myche good, þei seien þat al is þer ordris, and it were a deedli synne to scatire þes goodis in þe world. But in þer ordre shal þei be dispendid, as if þei weren sunken into helle, but summe be stoolen, and summe be murperid, and summe ben rotun for defaute of uss. And 3if þei 3yven ouzt to þer pore kyn, oþere seien þat þei ben cursid; or þei moten

¹ So in E; A includes these three words in the quotation.

have of þer prelat more leewe to do þis riȝt, þan¹ þei axen of þer priour to breke þe mandement of God.

But Jesus clepide to him þe puple, and seide, Heere ze, and undirstonde. Not mete þat entriþ into þe mouþ fuyliþ a man in his soule, but þat þat comeþ out of þe mouþ, þat þing fuyliþ a man. Þanne Cristis disciplis camen, and seiden to him, Þou woost wel þat Fariseis, bi herynge of þis word, ben sclaundrid. And Crist answeringe seide, Ech planting þat my fadir of hevene haþ not planted, shal be drawun up bi þe rote; as who seiþ, siþ þei camen in bi þe fend, and ben not groundid in Goddis lawe, he shoulde not spare for tendernesse of hem to seie þe soþe, for þei moten faile. Suffre ze hem, for þei ben blynde, and ledris of blynde men. And þus riche men of þe world moten have freris to þer confessouris, and þei leden hem after þer wynnyng al biside Goddis lawe; and so þis puple² and þer leders ben blynde to go þe weie of Crist. For ȝif a blynde lede þe blynde, þei fallen boþe in to þe lake. But Petir answeride, and seide to Crist, Declare to us þis parable. And Crist seide, ȝit ze ben wiþout witt, as Fariseis? Ne undirstonden ze not, þat al mete þat goiþ into þe mouþ goiþ astirward in to wombe, and is sent out as departid filþe; but þo þat comen of þe mouþ comen out of þe herte, and þo ben þat foulen man. For of þe herte comen yvel þouȝtis³, in yvel wordis; mansleyingis, avoutrieris⁴, leecheries, þestes, fals witnessis, blasfemes. And þes sevene ben þo þat foulen man in his soule, but to ete wiþ unwashen hondis fouliþ not þus a man. We shal wite þat Crist and hise disciplis wolden waishen þer hondis whanne þei eten, and algatis whanne þei weren foule, siþ Crist was moost honest man. But Crist tolde not so myche bi þis as bi wasshinge of þe soule; for Crist dide al þing in mesure, and chargide more þingis more nedeful. But veyn ritis þes ordris chargen to myche, and þer foul costumes; as Jewis waishen ofte þer hondis, for siȝt of Goddis creature, but þei leften þer soulis foule, bi foule þouȝtis and shrewid consciencis. And þus don þes ordres to dai; þei tellen more bi þer owne bekenyng⁵ and bi þer newe founden signes, þan þei don bi Goddis heestis. And þus, wiþouten resoun or

Defilement is from within not from without.

¹ þanne, E.
the quotation.

² peple, Q.
⁴ avoutrres, E.

³ So E; A excludes the sentence from
⁵ bikenyng, E.

cause, þes idel men don many of þeir dedis; for brekyng of þer owne custumes þei chargen as a greet synne, but brekyng of Goddis lawe þei chargen nouȝt, or to litil. And siþ love of mannis workis is signe of love of her autor, þes ordris loven more hem self¹ þan þei loven God þat ȝaf þe lawe; siþ love and kepyng of þe lawe, and love of þe maker, ben answering. And þus in chesing of þeir breþeren, and of þeir prelatiſ, þei taken more heede þan in chesing of Goddis werkes. For þes false men chargen mannis lawe; and so in chesing and lyvyng aftir, and algatis in ende of þer lyvyng, þei tellen whos knyztis þei ben, and how þei ben ful turned fro God. And lernyng of þer rotun lawis lettijþ to lerne Goddis heestis. For take þe bisynesse þat þei han, to lerne and kepe þer owne lawes; and ȝif it were turnid into Goddis lawis, þei myȝten cunne betere Goddis lawis. Asaye hem in ten comandementis, or in nedeful þing to þe soule; and þou maist wite where þis be soijþ, þat mannis ritis passen Goddis lawe in love and keping of þes ordris; and þanne þei ben veyn religioun.

ÞE ÞURSDAI GOSPEL IN ÞE ÞRIDDE WEKE IN LENTE.

[SERMON CLXIII.]

Operamini non cibum.—JOHN vi. [27.]

Christ admonishing the Jews; the true bread from heaven.

Þis gospel tellijþ of Crist, how he tauȝte þe soule fode. For it is knowun bi þis gospel, þat þer ben two metis; oon bodili mete, bi which þe bodi is fed, anoþer goostli mete, þe which fedijþ mannis soule. And as mannis soule is betere þan þe bodi, so þis secounde mete is betere þan þe firste; and so men shulden take more hede to þis þan to þe first. Joon seiþ how, *Crist bad þat we shulden worche, not mete þat perishiþ, but þat mete þat lastijþ unto þe liif wipouten eende; þe which mete mannis sone shal ȝyve unto Cristene men.* Here shulden we undirstonden þat Crist forbode not bodili metis, siþ he fedde ofte þe puple bi miracle, and bi bodili mete, but Crist forbode

¹ So in E; A has *ben*.

bisynesse aboute sich bodili mete, and more love þerof þan love of goostli mete. Crist telliþ here two skiles, to prove þat goostli mete is betere. Oon, for bodili mete mut perishe, and goostli mete lastiþ evere. Anoper, for goostli mete bringiþ man to þe liif þat evere shal laste, but no bodili mete fediþ a man but for a tyme. Goostly mete lastiþ wiþ man, boþe here and in heven, siþ vertues bigynnen here, and ben betere in hevене wiþ man. But Crist techiþ his Godhede, whanne he seiþ þat mannis sone shal 3yve þis mete of vertues, for þei ben of Goddis grace. *Þis Crist markide God þe fadir, for to 3yve þe mete of vertues.*

Þes Jewis seiden herfore to Crist, What shulen we do, for to worche Goddis werkes? And Crist tauzte hem þe ordre of vertues, how þei shulden bigynne to worche. Þis is þe werk of God, seiþ Crist, þat 3e trowen in him þat God sente. And so men shulden bigynne at bileve, þe which þei taken at manhede of Crist; for bileve is ground to man, to stable oper vertues in him. And siþ bodili wittis of man ben lihter þan goostli wittis, ordre axiþ to bigynne at þe manheed of Crist, and stye fro þis manheede to þe Godhede of Crist. For noon bileveþ in a man, but 3if he leeve þat he is God. And herfore þei seiden to Crist, What signe doist þou, þat we see and trowe to þee? what þing worchist þou? Oure fadirs eeten aungels mete in desert, as it is writun, God 3af hem breed of hevене to ete. Þerfore Jesus seide to hem, Forsoþe, forsoþe, I seie to 3ou, Moises 3af 3ou not breed fro hevене, but my fadir 3yveþ 3ou verri breed fro hevене. As Crist haþ spoken of goostli mete, so he shulde speke of goostli breed. And as breed is ground of mannis mete, so bileve is ground of mete of soule. And siþ Crist is þis first bileve, verrili Crist is breed. For Goddis breed is þat ilke þat comeþ doun fro hevене, and 3yveþ liif to þe world.

Crist spekiþ not 3it of þe sacred oost, siþ on Shire Þursdaie he ordeynede it. And so it is nedeful to men to knowe, how ofte breed is taken. It is seid comunli þat breed is taken on foure maneres. First, for breed þat men usen and maken for to fede þer bodi. Also, for al manere of virtue, but speciali for bileve. Also, for cause of þis virtue, as teeris¹ ben clepid of

¹ teris, E.

Bread; its various significations in Scripture.

God breed^a. Also, þe sacrid oost is clepid breed in Goddis lawe; and þus þe myddil persone of God is breed, for he foundiþ bileve. And þus þe oost of þe auter is verri breed, to many wittis; it is breed maad of whete, and eke it is Goddis bodi; and so it groundiþ bileve, and it is an object of virtues. But flee to clepe þis breed, accident wiþouten suget. And þus men worchen vertues whanne þei travelen in þeir soule, and heeren wordis of God, or worchen to vertues þat in hem is. *And þe Jewis seiden to Crist, For evere ȝyve us þis breed. And Jesus seide to hem, I am breed of liif; he þat cometh to me shal not hungre, and he þat trowiþ in me shal nevere be apirst.* And here men treten comunli how þis breed shal be eeten. It shal be chewid^b in mouþ of soule, for tretid godeli bi skilis; and siþ it shal be hid in mynde, as mete is hid in mannis stomake, and þere move men to worche werkes of love as God biddiþ; and aftir it passiþ to alle lymes of men, and turneþ man into God. For, as Austyn telliþ here^c, þis breed varieþ from oþer breed. Oþir breed is pikke, partid, and turned into oþer kynde; and after it is turned into his bodi þat etip it. But þis breed, þat is Crist, etun goostli of man, mai not wende þes pree weies. For he mai not be þus partid, ne turned in anoþer kynde, ne þus drawun into mannis bodi; but he turniþ man into him, as man turneþ mete into his bodi. But over, siþ þis beste breed is ground of alle vertues of man, how faste shulde a man holde clere bileve of þis breed! And ȝif we seien þat so we doon, for Crist biddiþ us worche þis mete, neþeles oure liif and dedis beren witnes aȝens us here. For to fewe men ben now, þat ne þei hadden levere heere and lerne veyn lore biside þis, þan for to lerne þe lore of Crist; as þes men shewen, þat studien mannis lawe, and leven Goddis lawe, and doen more worship to mannis lawe, þan þei don to Goddis lawe; and however men excuse hem, þes ben heretikes out of bileve. And herfor many Cristen men dispisen þes lawes for Goddis lawe, and worshipen

^a Can the reference be to Gen. i. 29?

^b He means to say; chewing in the mouth of the soul must be interpreted, discreetly treating and reasoning upon.

^c S. Aug. *In Johannis Ev.* Tract. xxv. 'Non ergo Moyses dedit panem de coelo; Deus dat panem. Sed quem panem? forte manna? Non, sed panem quem significavit manna, ipsum scilicet Dominum Jesum.'

it wiþ al þer myzt, boþe in drede and in love. But how¹ many enemyes haþ God, to turne men fro þis lawe²!

ON FRIDAY IN ÞE ÞRIDDE WEKE IN LENTE.

[SERMON CLXIV.],

Oportebat Jesum transire.—JOHN iv. [4.]

ÞIS gospel of Joon telliþ a story þat conteyneþ myche witt. Joon seiþ how, *Jesus moste passe þourz Samarie.* And so he cam into a citee, þat was clepid *Sicar*, biside þe place þat Jacob 3af Joseph his sone. And þer was þe welle of Jacob. And Jesus was wery of þe weie, and sat þus upon þe welle. And þe hour of þe daie was as þe sixte. Þer cam a womman of Samarye to drawe water at þe welle. And Jesus seide to þis womman, *3yve me to drynke.* And disciplis of Crist wenten into þe citee to bie hem mete; for þei snokiden not fro hous to hous and beggiden mete, as freris doon. He, Jesus, sittinge on þe welle and spekinge aloone wiþ þe womman, beggide water of þis womman, as heretikes here feynen, for þat Crist was drunken over nyzt, þat wolde þus, fastinge, drynke coold water. For Crist hadde ben drunken and wood, 3if he hadde beggid wiþouten cause, siþ his Fadir forbeed sich begging. And Crist was Lord of al þis world, and 3if þe Lord axe drynke of his servaunt, who wolde seie þat he beggide of him? But þis womman of Samarie seide to Crist, as she were tauzte of heretikes, *How þou, siþ þou art a Jew, axist to drynke of me þat am a womman of Samarie? for Jewis usen not to dele wiþ Samaritanes.* Jesus answeride, and seide to her, *3if þou knewe þe 3ifte of God, how God haþ take fleish for love of man, and who is he þat seiþ to þee, 3yve me to drynke, peraventure þou shuldist axe of him, and he shulde 3yve þee water of liif.* And þe womman seide to him, *Sire, þou hast not whereinne to*

Christ with the woman of Samaria.

¹ now, E, Q. ² Q adds the following words, not found in A or E: *Certis non erþelicbe man knowiþ fullicbe, but þou, Lord, wost þe soþe. Þerfore, good God, helpe þi cþirche, siþ it was nevere more nede.*

drawe water, and þe welle is ful deep; and wherof hast þou quyke water? Quik water is clepid of Crist, springinge water, as water of wellis. And þus seide þis womman to Crist, *Wher þou be more þan our fadir Jacob, which gaf to us þis welle? and he drank þerof, and his children, and hise beestis. Crist answeride, and seide to hir, Ech þat drynkiþ of þis water shal be þirsti azen; but he þat drynkiþ of þe water þat Y shal ȝyve him wipouten eende shal not þriste; but þe water þat Y shal ȝyve him shal be maad in him a welle of water, springing into liif ay lasting. And þe womman seide to him, Sire, ȝyve me þis water, þat Y þrist not, and come not hidir to drawe. And Jesus seide to þis womman, Go, and clepe þi housebonde, and come hidir. Þe womman answeride, and seide, Y have noon housebonde. And Jesus seide to hir, Þou seidest wel, þat Y have noon housebonde. For þou hast hadde fyve housebondis, and now he þat þou hast is not þi housebonde; þis þou seidist sobli. And þe womman seide to him, Sire, Y see þat þou art a prophete. Oure fadirs preieden in þis hill, and ȝe seien, þat at Jerusalem is place, where men moten preie. And Jesus seide to hir, Womman, trowe þou to me, þat tyme shal come, whanne ȝe shulen neiþer in þis hill, ne in Jerusalem, preie þe fadir. ȝe preien þat ȝe knowen not; we preien þat we knowun; for helpe is of þe Jewis. But tyme is comen, and now it is, whanne trewe preiyng men shulen preie þe fadir in spirit and treupe. Þat man preieþ God in spirit, þat preieþ him wipinne in herte; and he preieþ God in treupe, þat axiþ þing nedeful for his soule. For þe Fadir sechiþ¹ siche, þat preien him on þis manere. God is a spirit, and þes men þat preien him, moten preie him in spirit and treupe. Þe womman seide þanne to Crist, Y woot þat Messias is comen, þe which is clepid Crist; and whanne he shal come, he shal telle us alle þingis. Jesus seide to þis womman, Y am he þat speke wip þee.*

And anoon cam his disciplis, and wondriden þat he spak wip þe womman; neþeles no man seide to him, What sekist þou, or, What spekist þou wip hir? And þe womman lefte her pott, and wente into þe citee, and seide to þo men, Come ȝee, and se þat man þat hap told me al þat Y have doon; wher he be Crist?

¹ sekiþ, E.

Pei wenten out of þe citee, and camen to him. And in þe mene tyme his disciplis preieden him, Maistir, ete þou. And Jesus seide to hem, Y have mete to ete þat 3e knowen not. And his¹ disciplis seiden togidere, Wher ony man have brouzt him mete to ete? Jesus seide to his disciplis, My mete is to do þe wille of þe fadir þat hap sent me, þat Y do at þe fulle his werk. Wher 3e seien not, þat þer ben foure moneþis to hervest, and ripe corn is comen? Lo, I seie to 3ou, lifte up 3our eizen, and se þe contreis, for þei ben now white to reþe. And he þat repiþ takip mede, and gederip fruyt into liif wiþouten eende, þat boþe he þat sowiþ, and he þat repiþ, joie togidere. In þis is þe word soh, þat he is oþer þat sowiþ, and oþir is he þat repiþ. Y have sent 3ou to reþe þing þat 3e han not traveilid; oþer men han traveilid, and 3e han entrid into þer traveilis.

And of þat citee trowiden many in Crist of þe Samaritanes, for þe word of þe womman þat bar witnesse, þat Crist hadde told hir al þat she hadde doon. And whanne Samaritanes hadden come to Crist, þei preieden him to dwelle þere; and Crist dwelte þere two daies. And many moo trowiden in him, for his word þat he spake to hem; and þei seiden to þe womman, þat, Now not for þi speche we trowen in þis profete; for we han herd, and we witen þat he is very saviour of þe world.

Ech word of þis storie is ful of witt, whoso takip hede. And so it were betere to freris to wite what þis storie menede, þan þus to blasfeme on Crist, þat he beggede þis water of þis womman. Crist is a curteis frend, þat whoso etiþ and drinkeþ wiþ him, Crist wole ete and drynke azen, and conforte him for to ete. And so þis speche wiþ þis womman was not maad of wantonnes, but for to figure to þe apostlis how þei shulden preche to heþene folk. And so men þat speken wel to prechours, to profit of þe Chirche, 3yven to drinke to Crist and to hise, al3if þei 3yven hem noo coold water. And þus þis womman 3af drynke to Crist, for of oþer drynke reden we not here. And so freris shulden drynken to þe puple þe gospel, and treuþe of Goddis lawe, and leve siche blasfemes and dremes, bi which þe puple is empoisoned. For oþer seintis bifore us

The friars fail to draw the right lessons from this gospel.

¹ So E: om. A.

weren scribis of God, and moveden þe puple to take of us þe lore of God; and we shulden repe þis ripe corn. And sich travel in þis hervest were worþ to gete to blisse of hevene; and not begging of oper corn, and levyng to teche Goddis lawe. But many comen to repe redy corn, whanne þei preche not to profit of þe folk, but to spuyle hem of þer goodis, and to foile¹ hem wiþ many synnes.

ÞE SATIRDAI GOSPEL IN ÞE ÞRIDDE WEKE IN LENTE.

[SERMON CLXV.]

Perrexit Jesus.—JOHN viii. [I.]

Þis gospel telliþ how þat Crist savede a womman, and tauzte his Chirche. Joon seiþ how, *Jesus wente into þe hil of Olyvete, and eft in þe grey morewning² he cam azen into þe temple.* And here we ben tauzte to preie and þenke on God bifore we prechen. *And al þe puple cam to Crist, and he sitting tauzte hem. And Phariseis and scribis brouzten a womman, taken in avoutrie, and þei puttiden her in þe myddil, and þei seiden to Crist, Maistir, þis womman is now taken in avoutrie. But in þe lawe Moises bad us stone siche a womman, but what seist þou here? And þes þingis þei seiden, tempting him, þat þei myzten accuse him.* For þei hadden graunt^{3a} of Crist þat he wolde algatis have mercy, and þat he wolde kepe Moises lawes; but þei þouzten þat þe toon of þes he muste forsake, and so he shulde algatis be taken in his owne wordis, or in his dedis. *But Jesus bowyng down, wiþ his syngir wroot in þe erþe. And whanne þei dwelten axing him, he reride him, and seide to hem, He þat is wiþoute synne of þou cast he first a stoon on hir. And eft Crist, bowyng him, wroot in þe erþe, as he dide first⁴. And þei heeryng wenten awei oon after*

¹ foulen, Q. E. ² mornyng, E. ³ grauntid, Q. E. ⁴ So in E; A includes the four words in the quotation.

^a Means,—‘they had made sure.’

Christ delivers
the woman
taken in
adultery.

anoþer, bigynnyngē at þe elderst; and Jesus lefte aloon, and þe womman standing in þe myddil. And Jesus reryngē him up, seide þus to þe womman, Womman, wher ben þei þat accusiden þee? no man haþ dampned þee. And she seide, No man, Sire. And Jesus seide to her, And Y shal not dampne þee; go þou, and now nyle þou synne more aftir.

And here men douten comunli, how Moises lawe and mennis lawe kepen riȝtwisnesse of God, in dampnyng of wickide men; siþ it were betere to þe Chirche þat men þat wolden profite þerto, and kepe hem after fro sich synne, weren saved on lyve and not þus deed; how þanne is þis lawe riȝtful? Here men seien þat Goddis lawe is just, boþe þe olde lawe and þe newe, but of mannis lawe þei seien not so, but supposen þat it be often unjust. And ȝit þes þat shulden holde Goddis lawe, synnen ofte in uss of it. But þis we taken as bileve, þat Goddis lawe is ever good, and men synnen not in uss of it, but ȝif þer synne bifore be cause. And herfore justisis of ech lawe¹ shulden be riȝtwis and clene of liif; for God mut reule men of þe lawe, how þei shulen juge in ech caas. And jugement of mannis lawes ben comunli fals now. For Crist wolde, for þe tyme of grace, þat men shulden turne men bi preching, and good liif and clene of preestis, wiþouten sich feyned lawes. And so jugementis ben alle yvel, or many of hem; and þus preestis shulden fle þis, and take þe certeyn weie of Crist.

But on þis men douten ofte how þat þes shriftes camen in. For Goddis lawe spekiþ not but of schrift maad to God, and of general shrifte to men, and to stire hem to leve þer synne; and þes shriftes ben ofte betere for þis þan þes newe rownyngis. Here men seien, ȝif þei dursten, þat noo shrifte þat now is usid is good to man, but in as myche as it lettith man to synne. And so ȝif prestis prechiden faste as Crist haþ ordeyned hem to preche, it semeþ þat þis were ynow³, wiþ general confessioun. And so, al if it do good, neþeles it doip myche harm, for confessores han her menes to spuyle þe peple bi symonye, and to foyle² hem many weies bi coveitise and lecherie. And so no drede ordenaunce of Crist were betere þan þes newe lawes. For, as Crist seiþ to þis womman, ende of þis confessioun is sorewe

The practice
of private
confession.

¹ So E; A has *lawes*.

² *foule*, Q, E.

for synne þat is don, and fle for to synne after. And þis mut God do algatis bi ȝyvyng of his grace; and he ȝyveþ gladlyer his grace to men þat kepen his ordenaunce, þan he doiþ to oþer men þat leeven it, and kepen mannis.

Muse we not what Crist wroot here, as sum men dremen þat he wroot first þe lawe, and after he wroot þe foule synnes þat þes accusatours hadden don, and movede hem to shame of hem, and so flee out of þe place^a. But howevere God ordeynede of þis, it is lickeli of bileve þat Crist wroot here as myche as was nedeful us to cunne, and kepe we þat as ynow³. And muse we not aboute uncerteyn þyngis¹, for sich veyn curiouste were a tempting of God.

DE MONEDAY GOSPEL IN ÞE FOURÞE WEKE IN LENTE.

[SERMON CLXVI.]

Prope erat Pascha.—JOHN ii. [13.]

Þis gospel telliþ what Crist dide to reprove synne of þe Chirche. Joon telliþ þat, *Pask was ny³, a feeste dai of þe Jewis, and Jesus wente up to Jerusalem. And fond men biyng and sellyng in þe temple, sheep, and neet, and dowves, and monyours sittinge. And whanne he hadde maad as a scourge of smale cordis, he caste al out of þe temple.*

And here Crist shewide his regaly², and tauȝte how lordis shulde chastise symonye, and oþer synnes þat ben usid in þe Chirche. For siþ clerkis ben lege men to kingis in whos londis þei ben inne, kyngis han power of God to punishe hem in

¹ So E; om. A.

² *regalie*, E, Q.

^a S. Austin gives several possible explanations of the 'writing on the ground,' all beautiful, spiritual, and inspired by a devout and refined imagination. The mediæval commentators were coarser and more positive. De Lyra suggests, following other writers, that Christ wrote

on the ground, either the decision which he had arrived at, or the sins of the accusers; this last opinion he prefers. 'Alii dicunt, et melius ut videtur, quod scribebat eorum peccata, ut eos ostenderet ineptos ad accusationem hujus foeminae.'

Christ purifying the temple.

The Church & equal need of purification.

Goddis cause, bope in bodi and in catel; and þis figurip Cristis dede. Þes preestis sillen sheep, þat in þe Chirche feynen symple liif, þat þe puple shulde offre to hem, more þan for þe love of God. And þes preestis sillen oxen, þat doon grete werkes and stronge, to be holden pilleris of þe Chirche, and champiouns in Goddis cause. And ȝif þei doon siche worldli dedes for to gete name of þe world, and not for love of Cristis Chirche, þanne þei ben enemyes to God. As, ȝif bishopis fizten now, and ben arayed in hors and meyne, or ben greet in houshold, and oþer þingis to fede þe world, þei ben enemyes to Crist, and not in þis sutours of him. Þes men sillen dowves, þat sillen werkes of preestis, as sacraments, and oþer werkes þat longip hem for to do. For dowve bitokenep þe Holi Goost, and tellip how prestis shulden worche freely. And þis chaffaryng wip dowves is not oonly bi selling of chirchis, but in preching and shryvyng, and wel nyȝ in alle werkes of preestis, as halowyng of chirches, and auteris, and visiting, wip oþer japis. So þat holi chirche were betere þat sich japis weren not uside, for þes preestis bi siche japis fuylen hem and harmen þe puple. And as *Crist cast out of þe temple sheep and neet*, bi bodili strengþe, and *shedde out metale of monyours*, bi which þei chaffariden in þe temple, so lordis shulden wipdrawe mater of þis synne of preestis. For ellis þei maynteyneden þis synne, and disusiden azens God goodis þat þei shulden be lordis of, and þus þei harmeden hem and þe chirche. And þanne þei, *turnen down þes bordis*, whanne þei distrien þer menes bi whiche þis synne shulde be nurishid, to harm of þe rewme and of þe Chirche. And þus seculer men shulde seie to preestis þat sillen þus dowves, *Take ȝe þes þingis hennes*. For þus bad Crist to teche us; for siþ þe hous of þe Fadir of hevene shulde be figure of Goddis dede, and God mut nedis do freeli, and chafere not wip sich þingis, þes men þat chaffaren þus blasfemen fouli¹ in God. And so þe *hous of holi chirche shulde not be hous of chaffaring*.

And disciplis of Crist þouȝten over how it was writtun, in þe Salme, Þe zele of ipocritis in Goddis hous haþ eten Crist in þeir

¹ foule, E.

lyvyng. For þei feynen of alle þer dedis þat þei ben Cristis werkes, and þus þei lyven bi title of Crist, and geten al þer chaffare here. And so þer feestis and oþer dedis ben fals fruyte of Cristis liif, and þus þei eten falseli Crist bi þer feyned ypocrisie. And þes wordis mai þe Sone seie to his Fadir of false preestis; for þei feynen þat it is love þat þei han to Goddis hous, but it is foul envie and coveitise of ypocritis. And so þei bacbiten Crist, and eten false goodis feyned of him.

And herfore þe Jewis answeriden, and seiden to Crist, What signe shewist þou to us, þat þou doist þes maistris? Jesus answeride, and seide to hem, Undo ȝe þis temple, and in þree daies Y shal reise it. Herfore seiden þe Jewis, In fourti and sixe ȝeer was þis temple bildid, and shall þou reise it in þree daies? But Crist seide of þe temple of his bodi, and þei meneden of þat material temple. And whanne Crist hadde arisen fro deed, þanne his disciplis pouȝten on þat Crist seide þes wittes, and þei trowiden to þe writing, and to þe word þat Jesus seide. And whanne Crist was in Jerusalem in Pask, many trowiden in his name, seyinge þe signes þat he dide. But Jesus trowide not himsilf to hem, for he knew alle men, and for it was no nede to him þat ony shulde bere witnessse of man, for he wiste what was in man;—siþ he wiste of ech man what he shal do, boþe good and yvel, and so he hadde no nede of spies, to wite what men spaken of him. And herfore Crist trowide not in¹ himsilf to hem, þat þei weren trewe in his love. And of þis tixt mai men take, what signe Crist shewide of his dedis. For Crist bi his manhede telde of his suffryng and his dep, and bi autorite of hem Crist spak and dide his dedis. And þus preestis feynen falseli þat þis lordship and glorie of þis world longiþ to patrimony of Crist, þat was don upon cross². And as þes blasfemes mai speke, þei sclaudren Crist in þeir speche.

¹ om. Q, E.

² þe crosse, E.



ON TEWISDAI IN FOURÞE WEKE IN LENTE.

[SERMON CLXVII.]

Jam die festo mediante.—JOHN vii. [14.]

Þis gospel telliþ how Crist spake to þe Jewis upon resoun, and reproveþ þer synne which þei baren in þer herte. Joon seiþ þat, *Jesus wente into þe temple after þe feste, and tauzþe*, what men shulden do, and what þing men shulden flee. Þis feste was a mene, and made redi to Cristis word; for summe herden Cristis word bi þer comyng to þis feste. *And þe Jewis hadden woundir, and seiden, How can he þis lettris siþ he haþ lerned noon?* *Jesus answeride to hem, and seide, My lore is not myn, but his þat sente me.* It is seid þat Auctour of alle seiþ þat his lore is not his, for it is not principali his, but it is Goddis þat sente him. And sum tyme Crist spekiþ bi his manhede, and sum tyme he spekiþ in fourme of his Godhede. And wolde God þes heretikes in matir of þe sacrid oost conseyyeden þis speche, and understonden wel Ambrose, þat seiþ þis oost is not breed after þat it is sacrid, for it is not aftir principali breed^a, but þe bodi of Crist, bi vertue of his wordis, and þanne shulden þei shame aftir þeir feyned accidentis¹.

3if ony man wole do þe wille of God, he shal wite of þis lore, wher it be of God, or I speke of mysilf, for to hye my manheed. *He þat spekiþ of himsilf, he sekþ his owne glorie; but he þat sekþ þe glorie of God þat sente him, þis is a trewe man, and unrizt is not in him.* *3af not Moises to zou a lawe, and noon of zou doiþ þe lawe?* *Whi seke 3e to sle me?* and God bad 3e shulde not sle. *Þe puple answeride, and seide, Þou hast a devele; who sekþ to slee þee?* Sum puple lovede Crist, as folk whos hertis God movede, and sum weren hired of þe hi3e preestis for to hate and slee Jesus. *Jesus answeride, and seide to hem, Y dide a werk, on þe*

¹ The words *and*—*accidentis* have been neatly erased in Q.

^a See vol. i. p. 379.

Christ in Jerusalem during the feast of tabernacles.

haliday, and 3e alle han wondir. Perfore Moises 3af 3ou circumcisioun; not for it is of Moises, but of fadris bifore, as Abraham and oper fadris; and in þe Sabot 3e circumciden a man, and holden þat Goddis lawe. And so, 3if a man take circumcisioun in þe Sabot, and brekiþ not Moises lawe, how have 3e dedeyn to me, for Y made al þe man hool in þe Sabot? Nyle 3e juge after þe face, but juge 3e just jugement. And herfore seid sum men of Jerusalem, Is not þis he þat þei seken to slee? Lo, he spekiþ apertli, and þei seien nouzt to him. Lord, wher þe princis of preestis han knowen þat þis is Crist? But it semeþ þat þis is not Crist, for knowing þat we han of him; for, *Him we knowen of, whennes he is; but whanne Crist shal come, no man woot of whennes he is.* And herfore Jesus criede, and tauzte in þe temple, *Boþe 3e knowen me, and of whenne¹ Y am; and Y cam not of mysilf, but he is trewe þat sente me, þe which 3e knowen not, as ye knowen not my Godhede. I knowe him, and 3if Y seie, Y knowe him not, I shal be liik 3ou, a lyere, but Y knowe him, for I am of him, and he sente me. And herfore þei souzten to take him, and no man leide hond on hym, for his tyme was not 3it comen. But many of þe peple trowiden in him.* And þus, 3if we leden Cristis liif, and trowen in him, and in his wordis, we witen wel þat he bad not bie us swerdis, to fihte wiþ hem to slee oure breþeren bodili, and venge us on oure enemyes. Wel we witen þat al pursuyng þat Crist hadde muste nedis be, but herfore þei ben not excusid, þat ne þei synneden myche in Crist.

ON WEDNESDAY IN FOURÞE WEKE IN LENTE.

[SERMON CLXVIII.]

Praeteriens Jesus.—JOHN ix. [I.]

Þis gospel telliþ how þe false Jewis pursueden Crist for a miracle. Joon seiþ þat *Jesus passinge saw a man blynde from his birþe. And his disciplis axiden him, Maistir, what synnede?*

¹ *wbennes, E.*

Christ restores a blind man to sight, and is persecuted by the Pharisees.

he þis, or his eldris? þat he schulde be born blynd. Jesus answeride, þat neiþer he þis ne his friendis synneden þus, but þat Goddis werkes be shewid in him. And so it semeþ þat alle men ben punished moost for þis cause, sum men for to turn to good, and sum men to make opir drede, and sum men to shewe Goddis rizt, and his power upon men. *Y mut worche my fadirs werkes þat haþ sente me to þis ende, þe while þat it is dai; þe nyzt comeþ, whanne noon mai worche.* And þis is soþ; for grace of Crist, þat is lizt to just man; and noon mai worche medefull longer þan he haþ þis lizt. And þus seiþ Crist afterward, *As long as Y am in þis world, I am lizt of þe world. Whanne Crist hadde seid þes wordis, he spiltte in þe erþe, and made clay of þe spillyng, and clammyde¹ cley on his eyen, and seide to him, Go and waishe þee in þe water of Siloe, þat is to sei, sent: þidir weren men sent to baþe hem and to swymme in þeir pleie. Perfore he wente forþ, and waishide, and cam azen seyng. And so his neiþoris, and men þat sawen bifore, for he beggide in comune place, seiden, Is not þis he þat sat and beggide? Sum men seiden þat þis is he; sum men seiden, Nay, but þis is liik him; but he seide, þat Y am he. And herfore þei seiden to him, How weren þin izen opened? He answeride, þat man þat is clepid Jesus made cley, and anoyntide myn eien, and seide to me, Go to þe water of Siloe, and waishe þou þee; and Y wente, and waischide, and saw. And þerfore þei seiden to him, Where is he? And he seide, Y woot nere. Þei ledden him þat was blynd to þe Phariseis. And it was Sabot, whanne Jesus made cley, and openede his eien. And eftsones axiden þe Fariseis how he hadde seen. And he seide to hem, He put to me cley on þe eyen, and Y waishide, and Y see. And summe of þe Phariseis seiden, Þis man is not of God, þat kepith not þe Sabot. And oper seide, How mai a synful man do þes signes? And þer was stryf among hem. And eft þei seien to þis blynde man, What seist þou of him, þat þus openede þin izen? And he seide þat he was a prophete. Þe Jewis trowiden not of him, þat he was þus blynd and saw, til þat þei clepiden his fadir and modir, þat sawen his stat fro his birþe. And þei axiden hem and seiden; Þis is þour sone, which 3e seyn*

¹ clemed, Q.

was blynd bore ; and how seep he now ? Þe elderis of þis blynde answeriden to hem, and seiden, We witen wel þat þis is oure sone, and þat he was born blynd, but how he seep now we witen nere, or who openede his eyen we witen not ; axe ze him ; he haþ elde ; speke he of himsilf. Þes þingis seiden his eldris, for þei dredde þe Jewis ; for þanne conspiriden þe Jewis, þat zif ony graunte¹ him to be Crist, he shulde be put out of þe chirche. Herfore his eldris seiden, þat he haþ elde ; axe ze him. Þei clepiden azen þis man þat was blynde, and seiden to him, Ȝyve þou glorie to God ; we witen þat þis man is sinful. And þis blynde man seide, zif he be sinful, Y woot not ; o þing Y woot wel ; for² Y was blynd, Y see now. And þei seiden to him, What dide he to þee ? how openede he þin eyen ? He answeride to hem, Y have seid zou now, and ze herden ; wherto wolen ze heeren azen ? Where ze wolen be his disciplis ? And þei cursiden him, and seiden, Be þou his disciple, for we ben disciplis of Moises. For we witen þat God spake to Moises, but we witen not him þis, of whenne he is. Þat man answeride, and seide to hem, In þis þing is merveile, þat ze witen not of whenne he is, and he openede my yzen. For we witen þat God heriþ not sinful men, but if ony be heriere of God, and do his wille, hem he heerip. Fro þe bigynnynge of þe world it is not herd, þat ony openede þe eizen of a blynd bore man. But zif he þis were of God, he myzte not do ony þing. And þei answeriden, and seiden to him, Þou art al borne³ in synne, and þou techiste⁴ us ? And þei castiden him out. Jesus herde þat þei hadden cast him out, and whanne he hadde founde him, he seide to him, Bilevest þou in Goddis sone ? He answeride, and seide, Sire, who is he þat Y trowe in him ? And Jesus seide to him, Þou hast seen him, and it is he þat spekiþ wiþ þee. And he seide, Y trowe, sire ; and falling down he loutide Crist.

Þis storie semep open, but it techiþ trewe men how þe Fari-seis to daie bileven not in Cristis werkes, but denyen Goddis lawe for þer bi-lawis, as þer Sabot. For mankynde was born blynd, and sawe not þe grace of God ; but Crist bi his manhede listenede it and made it to see.

¹ grauntide, E.

² So E ; A has fro.

³ So E ; aboren, A.

⁴ So E ; techiþ, A.

ÞE ÞURSDAI IN FOURÞE WEKE IN LENTE.

[SERMON CLXIX.]

Pater meus usque modo.—JOHN v. [17.]

ÞIS gospel telliþ how þe false Jewis accusiden Crist of blasfemye, and so þei puttiden on him heresie, for þes two ben knyttid togidere. Joon seiþ *how, Crist tolde hem þat his fadir worchiþ til now, and Crist worchiþ also.* It is seid bifore þat werkes of þe Trinite moten be altogider, þat it doiþ wiþouten forþ. And so, for þer is no chaunging in þis holi Trinite, þefore spekiþ þis gospel wiþ wordis of present tyme. Þe Fadir worchiþ evermore, and þe Holy Goost, wiþ Crist. But fro þat Crist was man, Crist worchiþ bi his double kynde, bi his Godhede and bi his manhede. Þe secounde worching is sensible; and herfore Crist seiþ, þat his Fadir worchiþ til now, and Crist worchiþ; but þis gospel leviþ, til now. Bi þis he wole not meene þat þe Fadir leeevþ now to worche, but þat Crist haþ newe kynde, bi which he reuliþ þis world; and þis viker kynde¹ cam whanne Crist was maad man.

And herfore þe Jewis souzten more Jesus to slee him, as blasfeme; for not oonli he brac þe Sabot, but seide his fadir was God, and made him evene to God. But Jesus answeride, and seide to hem, Sopli, sopli, Y seie to þou, þe sone mai do nouzt of himself, but þat he seep þe fadir doinge; for what kynne þingis þe fadir doiþ, þe same þe sone doiþ also. And Crist seide here opynli, þat he is þe same God wiþ þe Fadir, and makiþ al þis world of nouzt, as þe Fadir makiþ it. And ȝit þe Fadir bringiþ forþ þe Sone, and þe Sone mai not bringe forþ himsilf, but þis bringing forþ wiþinne is neiþer making ne worching, for it is wiþouten ende, as Godhede is wiþouten eende. For if þe sunne were wiþouten ende, his shyning were wiþouten eende, and so it is in þe Trinite of-bringing forþ of þe two persones. And þus myzten þe Jewis witen þat Crist hadde boþe Godhede and manhede, *for þe fadir loveþ þe sone, and shewiþ him alle þingis þat he*

Christ accused
of blasphemy
by the Jews.

¹ þis vikeris power, E.

doip, and shal shewe him more werkes þan þes, þat 3e han wonder of hem. And þis was don in Cristis deþ and his resurreccioun; for þes weren more þan þes miraclis, alȝif þei shewen þe same myzt; for ech werk of creature tellip þe myzt of God. *For as þe fadir reisip up deed and quykenep hem, so þe sone quykenep whom he wole. For þe fadir jugip no man; but he 3af al jugement to þe sone, þat alle men worshiþe þe sone, as þei worshipen þe fadir.* And here Crist spekip of jugement al of anoþer kynde þan is jugement of God wiþinne; siþ jugement of þis manhede is sensible, and shal be seyn¹ and endid at þe dai of dome; and bi þis jugement, as Crist seiþ here, þe Fadir jugip no man. *He þat worshipip not þe sone, worshipip not þe fadir þat sente him;* and so he worshipip not God, but brekip al þes ten heestis. And siþ worshiping of Crist stondip in holding of þe newe lawe, and suyng of Crist in manere of liif, how many worshipip² not now God! And þis worship of þe Sone is more þan to worshiþe a messanger, for þis Sone is þe same God, two kyndis and oo persone.

Sopli, sopli, Y seie to 3ou, þat he þat herip my word, and trowip to him þat sente me, hap liif wiþouten ende, and comeþ in to no jugement, but passip fro deþ into lyf. And here heeryng is taken for obeishing of þe soule, and jugement is taken here for reprovyng of þe world. *Sopli, sopli, Y seie to 3ou, þat tyme comeþ and now it is, whanne dede shulen heere þe vois of Goddis sone, and whoso heeren it, þei shulen lyve. For as þe fadir hap liif in himsilf, so he 3af þe sone to have liif in him silf; and 3af him power to do jugement, for he is þus mannis sone. And nyte 3e woundir þis; for þe tyme comeþ, in which alle þat ben in graves shulen heere þe vois of Goddis sone. And þes men þat han do good, shulen go into risyng of liif, and þes men þat have done yvele shulen rise to be jugid in helle.* Þes wordis tellen more witt þan we cannen blabere, or mai telle. But it is knowun þat þer ben two manere of dede men, bodili and goostli. And at þe dai of dome shal ryse alle dede men bodili; and bi vertue of Cristis word risen summe dede men goostli; for þei turnen to good liif, and holden þe wordis of Crist.

¹ seen, E.² worschipen, E.

PE FRIDAY GOSPEL IN FOURÞE WEKE IN LENTE.

[SERMON CLXX.]

Erat quidam languens Lazarus.—JOHN xi. [1.]

Þis gospel telliþ how Crist quikenede Lazar fro deef to liif. And þis is þe þridde deed bodi þat Crist quykenede in erþe. Þe first was a ʒong wenche, þat was quykened wiþinne þe hous. Þe toþer was a ʒong man, þat was quykened at þe zate. Þe þridde was þis Lazar, þat was quykened in þe sepulcre. Joon telliþ how, *Lazarus lay siik in Bethanye, þat was broþer to Martha and Marie. And þis Marie was she þat anyontide þe Lord wiþ oynement¹, and wipte his feet wiþ her heer, whos broþer Lazar was siik. And herfore þis Lazarus sistris senten to Jesus, and seiden, Sire, lo, he þat þou lovedist is siike. And Jesus, heerynge, seide to hem, Þis sikennesse is not to þe deþ, but for glorie of God, þat Goddis sone be glorified bi it. And certis Jesus lovede Martha, and Marie her sistir, and Lazar. And whanne Jesus herde þat Lazar was siik, þanne certis he dwelle þere too daies, and removede not ferþer þenns, for he wolde þus quykene Lazar. And þanne, after þes², Crist seide to his disciplis, Go we aʒen to Jude. His disciplis seyn to him, Maistir, now þe Jewes souzten to stoone þee, and þou goist aʒen þidir? Jesus answeride, Ben þer not twelve houris of þe day? ʒif ony man walke in þe day, he hurtiþ not, for he seþ þe liʒt of þis world; but ʒif ony walke in þe nyzt, he hurtiþ, for liʒt is not in him. Crist wolde mene bi þes wordis, þat lengþe of his liif is certeyn, for it haþ twelve parties, as þe dai haþ twelve houris. And as man mut dwelle from hour to hour, so Crist mut dwelle bi alle þes parties, for noon of þes mai asterten Crist, bi worching or bi fleynge. And Crist is evermore in liʒt, for his manheed is ful of grace; and þerfore he doiþ evere good, and hurtiþ neiþer³ him ne oþer. Þes þingis seiþ Crist, and after þes⁴ he seiþ to his disciplis,*

The raising
of Lazarus.

¹ oynement, E.

² þis, E.

³ never, E.

⁴ om. E.

Lazar oure frend slepiþ, but Y go to wake him from sleep. And þe disciplis seyn to Crist, Sire, ȝif he slepe he shal be saaf. But Jesus seide of deþ of him, and þei wenden þat he hadde spoken of his sleep. But þanne seide Jesus to hem opynly, Lazar is deed. But I joie for ȝou, þat ȝe bileve, for I was not here; but go we to him. It is seid comunli þat absence of Crist here dide þree goodis wiþouten moo. First, þis myracle is more open, and shewiþ how Crist is al cunningg; and declariþ wel þis figure what it bitokeneþ spirituali. And Thomas, þat is clepid Didimus, seide to disciplis, þat weren his felowis, Go we eke, and die we wiþ him. Thomas spake þus, to shewe þe love þat þei hadden to þis Lazar, and how þei tristiden in Cristis helpe, and tolden litil bi þis lyf.

And þus Jesus cam, and fond him havyng had foure daies in þe grave. And Bethanye was bi Jerusalem, as it were fiftene ferlongis. And many of þe Jewis camen to Martha and Marie, to comforte hem of þer broþir. And Martha, as she herde þat Jesus cam, she cam aȝen him, and Marie sat at hoom. And Martha seide to Jesus, Sire, ȝif þou haddest ben here, my broþir hadde not be deed. But ȝit now Y woot, þat whatevere þou axist of God, God shal ȝyve þee. Jesus seiþ to hir, Þi broþir shal rise aȝen. Martha seiþ to him aȝen, I woot þat he shal rise aȝen, in risyng aȝen in þe laste day. Jesus seiþ to her, I am risyng aȝen and liif; he þat bileveþ in me, ȝhe, if he shal be deed, shal lyve; and ech þat lyveþ, and trowiþ in me, shal not die wiþouten ende. Martha, bilevest þou þis. She seiþ to him, ȝhe, Sire, Y have bileved þat þou art Crist, some of quyk God, and not of mawmetis, þat camest into þis world.

And whanne Martha hadde seid þes wordis, she wente out, and clepide Marie hir sistir stilleli, and seide to her, Þe maistir is come, and clepiþ þee. And Marie, whanne she herde þis, roos soone, and cam to him. For Jesus cam not ȝit in to þe castel, but he was ȝit in þat place, þat Martha cam to him. Herfore þe Jewis þat weren in þe hous wiþ Marie, and confortiden hir, whanne þei sawen þat Marie roos in haste and wente out, folowiden her, and seiden, þat she goiþ to þe sepulchre for to wepe þere. And Marie, whanne she hadde seen where Jesus was, seyng him fel at his feet; and she seid to him, Sire, ȝif þou haddest ben here, my

broþer were not deed. And herfore Jesus, whanne he sawe hir wepyng, and þe Jewis wepyng þat camen wiþ hir, he mornede in spirit, and sturblide him silf, and seide, Where han ze put him? Þei seyen to him, Sire, come and see. And Jesus wepte. And herfore seiden þe Jewis, Lo, how he lovede him! And summe of hem seiden, Ne myzte not he þis make, þat openede þe izen of þe man born blynd, þat he þis shulde not die?

And aftir Jesus, making dool in himsilf, cam to þe sepulcre; and þere was a denne, and a stoon put upon it. Jesus seide, Take away þe stoon. And Martha seid to him, Lazarus sistir þat was deed, Sire, he stynkiþ now, for he hap leyn foure daies in þe tumber. And Jesus seide to hir, Ne seide Y not to þee, þat zif þou trowe, þou shalt see þe glorie of God? And herfore þei token awei þe stoon. And Jesus caste up his izen, and seide, Fadir, Y make þankingis to þee, for þou hast herd me; and Y wiste þat þou everemore heerist me, but Y seide for þe puple þat stondiþ aboute, þat þei trowen þat þou sendist me. Whanne Crist hadde seid þes wordis, he criede wiþ grete vois, and seide, Lazar, come out. And anoon he cam out þat was deed, and his hondis and his feet weren bounden wiþ swaping¹ bondis, and his face was bounden wiþ a sudarie. Jesus seide to hem, Unbinde him, and suffre ze him to go away. And herfore many of þe Jewis þat camen to Martha and Marie, and sawen þo þingis þat Crist dide, bileveden in him.

Þis þridde deed bodi þat Crist quykenede bitokeneþ his quykenyng to grace. For it is but litil þing for Crist to reise a deed bodi to liif, but it is moche more to reise a soule fro synne to grace. And herfore þis grete Lord bigan at þis mooste werk, for comunli, whanne he quykenede bodies, he heelide þeir soulis bi grace. And herfore, as Matheu telliþ, whanne Crist heelide þe paralitik, he seide, Sone, affye² þou þi synnes ben forzovun þee. Þe first of þes þree deed bodies, þat was quykened in þe hous, ben þei þat assenten ful to synne, but þei do not³ wiþouten forþ. Þe secounde bodi, in þe zate, ben þei þat synnen wiþinne forþ, and synnen wiþouten forþ, but þei comen not to custume. Þe þridde deed bodie, þat is dolven, ben þei þat ben custumed to synne wiþouten, but þei ben not

Commentary.

¹ swaþelyng, E.

² byleve, E.

³ done not þe synne, E.

hardid, þat ne þei mai be loosid bi¹ grace; and þes ben þis bridde man, þat stynkiþ foure daies in þe sepulcre. And Crist dide not þus for noun² power, reisinge þis man from deep to liif, but to teche us þat þes synneris bi hard ben turned to God. And no word of þis story here³ wantiþ sutil goostli witt. Crist criede wiþ greet vois, to teche þat soulis in purgatorie, be þei nevere so fer from him, comen anoon to his crye. Þes bondis in whiche þis man cam forþ, shewen þe miracle of Crist, how he movede þis bodi þat was deed to come forþ þus al bounden. And it bitokeneþ also þat men þat ben unbounden of preestis, ben bifore quykened of God. And þus Crist bad his apostlis loousen hem. For it is an open blasfeme þat preestis forzyven þis synne in God, but 3if God forzeve it first, and seie to preestis þat þei shewen it. For alle þe men heere in erþe, ben þei nevere so grete lordis, may not forzyve synne doon⁴ in man, but 3if þis man forzyve it first; myche more men shulden not presume to forzyve synne don a3ens God, but 3if God forzyve it first, and þei be trewe bedelis to telle it. And þis blasfemye þat is usid now shulde be knowe of þe scribis, þat popis assoilen men of synne and peyne, whanne it turneþ men to avantage. Sopli, but 3if God assoile first, þer assoilinge is feyned falseheed, and þei blasfeme in God, as þei don ofte whanne þei shryven. Dis fruyt among opere comeþ of scrite⁵ þat men have ordeyned.

Priestly absolution only conditionally valid.

ÞE SATURDAI GOSPEL IN ÞE FOURÞE WEKE IN LENTE.

[SERMON CLXXI.]

Ego sum lux mundi.—JOHN viii. [12.]

Þis gospel telliþ how Phariseis wolden prove þat Crist bostide of himsilf, but þer witt was turned to folie, for þei faileden in bileve. Joon telliþ how, *Jesus seide to þe folk of þe Jewis, I am li3t of þe world; who þat sueþ me, wandriþ not in derknesse, but he shal have þe li3t of liif.* And here men taken treuly þat ech

Christ teaching in the treasury of the temple.

¹ So E; A has to.

² noun, E.

³ om. E.

⁴ done, E.

⁵ scrite, Q, E.

man shulde sue Crist, for ech man shulde walk in lijȝt, and every sich sueȝ Crist, for noon haȝ leewe of God to walke in derknesse of synne. For ech man mut nedis go ouȝer to hevenward or to helle. And here men seen ȝe fendis cautel, ȝat he haȝ tauȝte many men. ȝif men seyn, ȝei shulden not do ȝus, for Crist dide and bad ȝe contrarie, lo, ȝei seyn, where he is now; for he liikeneȝ him to Crist. And ȝus ȝe fend wolde stoppe ech weie bi which men shulden sue Crist. Ech man mut be liik to Crist, ȝif ȝat he wole come to hevене, and so ech man shulde sue him, or ferȝere or nerȝere¹; for who is not wiȝ Crist, he is nedis aȝens him, and whoso sueȝ not Crist, he sueȝ ȝe fend to helle. And ȝus seien clerkes, ȝat ȝes men ȝat shulen be saved, whanne ȝei synnen, ȝei suen not ȝe fend to helle, but stonden stille, or suen Crist to softe; siȝ ech man ȝat shal be saved mut do some good ȝat Crist haȝ ordeyned. And ȝus many men taken signe of ȝer werkes, ȝat Crist wole save hem.

And herfore seien ȝe Fariseis to Crist, You berist witnessse of ȝisilf; ȝi witnessse is not sob. Jesus answeride, and seide to hem, And ȝif Y bere witnessse of mysilf, my witnessse is trewe; for Y woot from whennes Y cam, and whidir Y go. Crist mut bere witnessse of himsilf, siȝ he mut witnessse al treuȝe. And so ech man bi his werkes berijȝ witnessse of himsilf; but boosting stondijȝ in fals witnessse, for pride ȝat man haȝ of himsilf; and so take hede to cause of witnessse, whi and what manere it is don. But, for ȝes Jewis knowen not Cristis godhede, ȝerfore he seiȝ ȝus to hem, Certis ȝe wilen not fro whenne Y cam, or whidir Y go. ȝe jugen after ȝe fleish, but Y juge no man. And here we moten undirstonden, how Crist takijȝ jugement. For he seiȝ bifore in Joon, ȝat God ȝaf al jugement to ȝe Sone; and ȝus men seien comunly ȝat Crist takijȝ here jugement for presumptuous jugyng, as man jugijȝ wiȝouten cause; and ȝus Crist jugijȝ no man, neiȝer himsilf ne oȝer man. But Crist seiȝ, ȝif he jugijȝ, his jugement is trewe, for he is not aloone, but he and ȝe fadir ȝat sent him. And in ȝe lawe of Jewis is writun, ȝat witnessse of two men is trewe, and more ȝe witnessse of ȝes two persones; and herfore seiȝ Crist astir, I am ȝat bere witnessse of mysilf, and

¹ ferrer or neere, Q; oȝer fer or neer, E.

þe fadir þat sente me, he berip witnesse of me. Herfore þei seiden to him, Where is þi fadir? Jesus answeride, Neiber ze knowen me, ne my fadir; 3if ze knewen me, peraventure ze knewen also my fadir. For it fallip bi grace of¹ God þat knowing of Cristis manheede bringip in þe knowinge of þe Godhede. Þes wordis spake Jesus in þe tresorie, techinge in þe temple, but not to have of hem tresour; and, no man toke him, for 3it was not his tyme comen.

ON MONEDAI IN ÞE FIFÞE WEKE IN LENTE.

[SERMON CLXXII.]

Miserunt principes sacerdotum.—JOHN vii. [32.]

Christ at Jerusalem during the feast of tabernacles.

Þis gospel tellip² of malis of þe Jewis, and how Crist prophesiede of hem. Joon seip, *Þe princis of preestis and Fariseis senten servauntis to take Jesus. Herfore Jesus seide to hem, 3it a litil tyme Y am wip 3ou, and Y go to him þat sente me. Ze shulen seke me, and ze shulen not fynde; and where Y am³, ze mai not come.* Crist spekip in many tymes how al þat shal be mutnedis be, and how nouzt may come but þat shal be. And þanne it is lizt to maynteyne þes wordis; and so it is lizt to defende, þat Crist is bi litil tyme, for he is bi ech part of þat tyme as he is bi ech tyme⁴. *And þe Jewis seiden to hemsilf, Whidir is he þis to go and we shulen not fynde him? wher he be to wende⁵ into þe scateriing of heþene folk, and to techen hem? What word is þis þat he seide? ze shulen seke me, and ze shulen not fynde me, and where Y am ze may not come.* Þes blynde Jewis knewen not how Crist is evere in blis wip his Fadir, and how þei mai not come to blis, for Crist haþ ordeyned hem to peyne. And þus þe fredom of þer soule is bounden for to do amys, but not in þat þat it is free, but in þat þat God ordeyneþ it, for to profite to his Chirche. And so men knowen siche oþer speches. *And in þe laste dai, þat is greet, of þe feeste among Jewis, for þe*

¹ So E, Q; A has *bi*.
⁴ E om. this clause.

² So E; om. A.
⁵ So E; A has *wending*.

³ *wbidir I go*, E.

firste daie and þe eiȝtipe day ben solempne among hem, *stood Jesus, and criede, and seide, ȝif any þirste, come to me and drynke. He þat trowiþ in me, as þe writt seiþ, floodis of quyk water shulen renne of his wombe. Þis seide Crist of þe spirit, þat þei shulden take þat trowiden in him.* And so þes floodis ben þe loris þat þe apostlis shedden to men; and þe wombe is þe power þat mannis soule haþ to take witt. Trowe þou in Crist, and studie his lawe, and þou shalt birle bi suche floodis.

ÞE TEWISDAI GOSPEL IN FYFÞE WEKE IN LFNTE.

[SERMON CLXXIII.]

Ambulavit Jesus.—JOHN vii. [1.]

ÞIS gospel telliþ how Crist avoidide þe pursuyng of þe Jewes. Joon seiþ þat, *Jesus walkide into Galile, fer fro þe temple, for he wolde not walke into Judee, for Jewes castiden to sle him. And it was nyȝ a feste of Jewes, þat þei clepen Senofegia*^{1a}; þat was sich a feeste as we han in oure Chirche hoolyday, and it was clepid among þe Jewis a feeste of tabernaclis. For bifore þat temple was maad, þei preieden in tabernaclis, as þei diden in Moises tyme, and longe after in Judee. And, for þe kynrede of Judas and þes² preestis dwelten togidere, for þei hadden no propre soort, and leuefully weren weddid togidere, þerfore þes two kynredis weren clepid Jewis, and of hem cam Crist. And so men seyn in Engeland, þat whanne preestis ben lordis, and goon to bataile as princis or kyngis, þanne shal chivalrie faile þere. Þis feeste lastide sevene daies, and þei maden in þe temple litil housis of woode, to figure þat wode shadewide hem bifore þe temple was maad; and þe tabernacle was as a tente. Þes preestis castiden sich hiȝe feestes moost for to take Crist; for þei helden a worship to God, to slee Crist, and fordo his name; and þat þei shulden moost do in sich a gederyng of þe puple.

¹ *synofegia*, E.

² om. E.

^a *Scenopegia* in the Vulgate;—the feast of tabernacles.

The visit of
Christ to Jeru-
salem at the
feast of
tabernacles.

And ȝit Cristis breperen seiden to him, þat he schulde wende þennes out of Galile into Jude. For Cristis kyn lovede him litil, siþ he made hem not riche, ne greet among þeir neizboris. But more þe preestis of þe temple hatide Crist and his breperen. Cristis breperen ben clepid here men þat weren of his kyn, as weren summe of Galile, where þat Crist was maad man; for Luk telliþ how Crist was conceyved in Nazareth, a toun of Galile. Þes breperen weren not Cristis apostlis, but oþer men of his kyn. And þerfore þei seiden to Crist, *þat he schulde go into Jude, þat his disciplis seen þe werkes þat he doiþ; for certis no man doiþ ouȝt in hiddis, and ȝit he castiþ to be in apert,* for þis were falshede of mannis liif, in doing and in entent. *ȝif þou doist þes þingis, make þee open to þe world.* For his breperen trowiden not in him. Þerfore Jesus seide to hem, *My tyme is not ȝit comen, but ȝoure tyme is evere redy.* It is seid of holy men, þat God haþ lymtyed a litil tyme for to do a good dede, but yvel is don in many tymes; as men may err fro þe mark in many weies beside it, but o wey lediþ to þe pricke, as it is knowun comunli. And, for Crist wiste þat þei weren yvel, and felowes to þe wickide Jewis, þerfore seiþ Crist, þer tyme is redy, but his tyme is not ȝit comen. *Þe world may not have hatid ȝou, but þe world hatiþ me, for Y bere witnessse of it, þat þe werkes of it ben yvele.* And here mai we wel witen þat þes breperen weren not apostlis; for Crist seiþ in anoper place þat þe world hatiþ þes apostlis, as þe world hatiþ Crist. And here we mai take of Crist, þat men þat reproven synne of þe world geten hem envie of it, whanne þer wordis ben ouȝt trowed. *Go ȝe up to þis feeste dai, but I shal not go to þis feste dai.* Here men seien comunly þat þer ben diverse wittis of word of þis feeste dai. Sum tyme it is taken for þe firste dai of þis feste; sum tyme for ech on of þe sevene daies of þis feste; and sum tyme for al þe hool tyme of þes sevene daies togidere. Crist cam not on þe first day, but on sum oþer aftir pryvyly. And þus undirstondiþ Crist þat he shal not go to þis feeste day, *for his tyme is not ȝit fillid;* as ȝif he wolde seie,—ȝif he cam þidir in þe firste dai of þis feste, þe Jewis wolden kille him þanne; but algatis he muste lyve longer, and profite more to þe Chirche, bifore þat þei slowen him.

Whanne Crist hadde seid þes wordis, he dwelte stille in Galile,

and whanne his breþeren weren went, þanne he steiede to þe feste day, not aperly, but as in hid. And þis was þe¹ same wyke². And þe Jewis souzten him in þe feeste day, and seiden, Where is he? And myche grutching was of him in þe folk. For summe seiden þat he is good; and summe seiden, Nay, but he disseyved þe puple. Neþeles no man spak aperly of him, for drede of þe Jewis. And þis persecucioun of Crist failþ not zit in his membris, or in treuþe of Cristis cause. For we han alle þes þree parties; þe hyze preestis ben bishopis þat wolden not here of Goddis lawe; þes Fariseis ben religiouse, þat holden þer ordre betere þan Cristis; þes men of þe puple, þat holden here aʒens Crist, ben sum seculeris hirid of hem, or disseyved wiþ feyned gabbingis.

ON WEDNESDAI IN FIFÞE WEKE IN LENTE.

[SERMON CLXXIV.]

Facta sunt encaenia.—JOHN X. [22.]

ÞIS gospel telliþ furþere how þes Jewis pursueden Crist. Þere were maad feestis in Jerusalem, þat Joon clepide *Encennia*, for þanne þe temple was renulid³ in cloþis and oþer ornamentis, and encennia is as myche as newinge in oure speche. Joon seiþ þat it was wynter whanne þis feeste bifel þere; for þe temple was þries halowid, as men seyn þat taken hede. First þe temple of Solomon, as þe þridde book of Kyngis telliþ, was hallowid in Septembre. But þe secounde was in Marche, whanne þe temple was rerid aʒen undir Zorobabel, as þe book of Esdre telliþ. Þe þridde clensing of þe temple was in Machabees tyme, and þis clensyng was comunli in December, and in wynter; and so of þis spekiþ Joon here, as men witen bi his wordis. *And Jesus walkide in þe temple, in þe porche of Salomon*, þat men seien was a place where Salomon was wont to preie. Jesus cam, not for devocioun þat he hadde in þes feestis, but for to teche men þat camen, and how men⁴ myzten do þis medefully. *Þes Jewis wenten aboute him, and seiden to him, How longe takist þou away*

Christ at Jerusalem at the feast of the dedication.

1 Kings viii. 2.

Ezra vi. 29.

¹ in þe, E. ² woke, E. ³ renewid, Q; renulid, E. ⁴ summe, E.

oure lyf? 3if þou be Crist, telle us opynli. It semeþ þat þes Jewis wolden mene, þat þei bileveden þat Crist shulde come, and wip þis bileve and oþer was þer soule fed goostli. And so Crist tariede þer lyf here, for he wolde not seie opynli þat he was Crist. *Jesus answeride to hem, I spak to 3ou, and 3e trowen not; þe werkes þat Y do in name of my fadir, þes beren witnessse of me. But eke 3e trowen not, for 3e ben not of my sheep.* And þus Crist wolde seie to hem, but covertli, as we shulde speke, 3e ben out of bileve, and shulen be dampned for 3our synne. For ech man þat shal be saaf mote nedis bileve in Crist, for ech man þat shal be saaf mut nedis be of Cristis sheep. Crist disceyveþ not *his sheep*, and seiþ þat, *þei heeren his vois, and he knowiþ hem, and þei suen him; and he 3yveþ hem liif wipouten ende; and þei shal nevere perishe, and no man shal ravishe hem out of his hond. Þat þat my fadir haþ 3oven me, is more þanne alle oþer þingis, and þerfore no man may ravishe out of my fadir¹ hond.* Siþ it is more þan al þis world to be Goddis kyndely sone, for whoevere is þus Goddis sone, he mut nedis be þe same God, it is a knowun cause þat noon mai ravishe fro Crist sheep, but what he haþ shappid² to blis mut nedely be blessid. And þus seiþ Crist suyngli, *Y and my fadir ben al oon;* for þei ben oo God, oo substance, and oo kynde.

Þe Jewis token up stoones for to stoon Crist. Jesus answeride to hem, Many goode werkes have Y shewid to 3ou of my fadir; for which werk of hem³ 3e stoonen me in wille? For oo werk Crist dide on his Fadir's behalfe, þat he reproveð synne of þe Jewis, and telde how þei diden aʒens God. And, for þis speche was aʒen pryde and þer coveitise, þerfore þei pursueden Crist, and wolden algatis have him deed. *Þe Jewis answeriden to Crist, of þi good werk we stoonen þee not, but of þi blasfemye, and for þou, siþ þou art a man, makist þisilf God.* Þes wordis wolde Crist graunten, siþ he is of two kyndis, boþe Godhede and manhede. But 3it he spak soiþ covertli. *Jesus answeride to hem, Is it not writun in 3our lawe, þat Y seid, 3e ben goddis? 3if God seide þat þei weren goddis, to whom Goddis word was maad, and þe Scripture mai not be undo, þat þe fadir haþ halowid and sent into*

¹ fadris, E.² schapen, E.³ So Q and the Wycliffite versions; A and E read *bim*; perperam.

*þe world, and 3e seien þat Y blasfeme, for Y seide þat Y was Goddis sone? It semep þat Crist wolde seie here, þat he is þat word of God, and þat same Scripture, þat in manheed is sent hidir; and bi vertue of þis word taken men part of Goddis name. And so, bi þis Scripture, Crist is Goddis kyndely sone; for þis word mut be beter þan ben men maad goddis bi it. 3if Y do not my fadirs werkes, nyle 3e trowe to me; but 3if Y do þes werkes, al3if 3e wolen not trowe to me, trowe 3e to þe werkes, þat 3e knewen and trowen þat þe fadir is in me, and Y in þe fadir. Þe dedis þat Crist dide, * ben unsuspect evydence þat Crist is boþe God and man. For Crist dide¹ * evermore good, and spake treuþe on good maner, and was nevere coupable of synne. And no drede, standing his wordis, he muste nedis þanne be God.*

ÞE PURSDAI GOSPEL IN ÞE FIFÞE WERE IN LENTE.

[SERMON CLXXV.]

Cum audissent quidam de turba.—JOHN vii. [40.]

Þis gospel tellip of opynyons þat weren of Jesus, þe while he was here. Joon tellip þat, *Summe of þe puple trowiden in Crist as verri prophete*, and summe reversen þis. *And so summe of hem seiden þat he is verri prophete.* Summe seiden he was a greet prophete þat Moises bihiȝte þe Jewes, whom summe clepen Crist, and summe Messias. *Summe seiden he was no prophete, for he was of Galile; and so of þe lond of Galile shulde not Crist come. Seip not holi writt, þat of Daviþs seed, and of þe castel of Bethlem, where Daviþ dwelte, comeþ Crist? And so discencioun was maad in þe puple of him.* Þei knewen not þe trewe storye, how Crist was conseyyed in Galile, and aftir born in Beedleem, as prophecies and goppellis tellen, so þat alle prophecies of Crist weren fillid in oure Jesus.

And summe of hem wolen take him, but noon leide hondis on him. And so ministris camen aȝen to bishopis and Phariseis, and

¹ A line is here left out in Q.

Divisions among the Jews respecting Christ.

þei seiden to þe servauntis, Whi brouȝte ȝe him not wiþ ȝou? Þe ministris answeriden aȝen, Nevere man spake so as he þis spekijþ. And þanne þe Phariseis answeriden to hem, Wher þat ȝe ben disseyved? wher ony of þe princis trowiden in him, or ony of þe Phariseis? But þis puple þat knewe not þe lawe ben cursid, for þer errour in feiþ. But Nicodeme seide to hem, þat cam to Jesus upon þe nyȝt, and he was oon of þe Phariseis, Wher oure lawe jugijþ a man, but ȝif it heere first of him, and have knowe what he doiþ? for word and dede accusen men, bi Goddis lawe and mannis lawe. Þei answeriden, and seiden to him, Wher þou art of Galile? Seke þou wise scriptures, and se, þat prophete risijþ not of Galile. And þei weren turned aȝen, ech on to his owne hous. Þes Jewis worshipen þer lawe more þan Anticrist doiþ now, but þei erriden in þe lettre, as Ury dide, þat bare his deþ in berynge of Daviþis lettre to Joab, duk of his bateile. It semeþ þat þes Jewis wolden meene, þat no prophete cam of Galile, for holi writt, þat shulde make mynde of þe comyng of Crist, seiþ þat he shulde come of Jude, of þe kinrede of Daviþ. And so, as þes foolis argueden, he was not born in Galile. For þei knewen not þe myddil birþe þat Crist was boren wiþinne his modir.

ON ÞE FRIDAY IN ÞE FYFÞE WEKE IN LENTE.

[SERMON CLXXVI.]

Collegerunt Pontifices.—JOHN xi. [47.]

Þis gospel tellijþ how þe Jewis conseiliden to Cristis deþ. Joon seiþ þat, *Bishopis and Phariseis gederiden conseil aȝen Jesus.* And bi þis we see þat þe moste ground, and¹ pursueris of Jesus and his lawe, weren princes and Phariseis. For þe princes of prestis, þat weren þe bishopis, and þe Phariseis, þat weren religious in Cristis tyme, pursueden Crist to þe deeþ, as autours of his mansleyng. Myche erride Pilat, and oþer gentile folk; but not so myche as diden þe bishopis and Phariseis. For

¹ of, Q; E agrees with A.

wordis and parablis of Crist weren aȝens synful men, but not so myche aȝens oȝer, as aȝens þes two folk. And þerfore, for coveitise, þei conspiriden more aȝens Crist.

Þes men seiden among hemsilf, *What shulen we do? for þis man doiþ many signes? Ȝif we leeven hem þus, alle men shulen trowe in him, and Romains shulen come, and take awey oure place and oure folk.* Whanne þat preestis weren princis, and kyngis weren put adoun, þe Romayns þouȝten þat knyȝthode was disparagid¹, and þus þei senten Heroude and Pilate into Jude, for preestis and Phariseis shenten leding² of þe lond. And herfore weren Heroude and Pilat suffrid to comen³ in. And þei dredden hem of Crist, ȝif his wordis wenten forþ, þat Romayns shulden come, and fordo preestis and Phariseis, for in hem two stood myche þe lordship of Jewis. As ȝif bishopis and abbotis spaken to day togidere, Hide we Goddis lawe, lest þes seculer lordis come, and take oure lordshipes, and fordo oure statis.

But oon of hem, þat hiȝte Caifas, and was bishop þat ȝeer, seide to hem, Ȝe cunnen noo good, ne casten ouȝt, þat it spedþ to ȝou þat o man die for þe puple, and al þe folk perishe not. And þis he seide not of himsilf, but siþ he was bishop of þat ȝeer, he propheciede, and tolde þat Jesus was to die for mankynde; and not oonly for heþene men, but to gadere Goddis sones in oone. It semep here þat Caiphas hadde þis undirstonding, þat it spedde to slee Crist, lest þeir lordship were lost; þat Romayns, þat weren heþene men, token not fro preestis and Phariseis al þe lordship þat þei hadden, and so þes two manere of folk shulden perishe for faute of riches. But it semep þat þis Joon, and men þat taken þis as prophecie, undirstonden þes wordis to oȝir undirstonding, þat it spedþ þat Crist die for mankynde, lest al þe peple perishe in peyne of helle. And þis is a good witt, prophesied of Caiphas; and so it fallþ þat an yvel man, to oȝir witt þan he meeneþ, blabere a good word and a soþ, for þe profit of Cristis Chirche. And here men taken þat a man is a prophete, alȝif he undirstonde not his wordis.

And so fro þat daie þe Jewis þouȝten to sle Crist. But Jesus wente not aȝerili now among þe Jewis, as he dide bifore; but wente

¹ So E; *dispargid*, A.
comyng, A.

² *schenten þe leedyng*, E.

³ So E;

out into a contre biside desert, into a citee þat is clepid Effrem, and þere he dwelle wiþ his disciplis, to 3yve hem ensaumple aftir, for to flee wiseli whanne o persone is pursued. And here men han nede to witen¹ of God whanne þei shulden do þus. For bi þis gospel mai men take, þat it is leveful to do þus, 3if þat circumstancis fallen bi which God moveþ men to do þus.

ÞE SATURDAI GOSPEL IN FYFÞE WEKE IN LENTE.

[SERMON CLXXVII.]

Amen, amen, dico vobis.—JOHN vi. [54.]

Christ commands us to feed on his flesh and blood,

Þis gospel telliþ how þat Crist spekþ of two maner of etingis; goostli and fleishli; and boþe þes two ben nedeful, but speciall þe goostli, for it shal laste evere in hevene. Firste seiþ Crist to his disciplis, and to þe puple of Jewis, *Sopli, Sopli, Y seie to 3ou; but 3if 3e eeten þe fleish of mannis sone, and drynke his blood, 3e shulen not have liif dwelling in 3ou. He þat etiþ my fleish, and drynkiþ my blood, he haþ liif wiþouten ende, for he mut algatis be blessid. And perfore seiþ Crist here, þat him þat etiþ and drynkiþ þus, he shal reise up in þe laste dai, to come to blis among his sheep. My fleish is verili mete, and my blood is verrili drynke. He þat etiþ my fleishe, and drynkiþ my blood, he dwelliþ in me, and Y in him. As my fadir lyvyng sent me, and Y lyve for my fadir, so he þat etiþ me, he shal lyve for me. Þis is þe breed þat cam down from hevene, not as 3oure fadirs eeten aungels mete; and weren deed; he þat etiþ þis breed shal lyve wiþouten ende. Þes þingis² seid Crist in þe synagoge, teching in þe toun of Capharnaum. But many of his disciplis heeryng seide, Þis word is hard; who may heere it and fille it? But Jesus, knowinge bi himsilf þat his disciplis wolden grutche herfore, he seide to hem, Þis þing sclaudriþ 3ou? Herfore 3if 3ee seen mannis sone stiþyng up where he was bifore? It is spirit þat 3yveþ lyf; fleish helpiþ noþing here; þe wordis þat Y have spoken to 3ou ben spirit and liif.*

¹ So E; witt, A.

² So E; om. A.

Here it is nedeful to men to wite, þat þer ben two maner of metis, goostli and bodili. But bodili is wel knowun, but nede we here to knowe how we shulden goostli ete Crist. For no man þat haþ witt dredip, þat Crist spekiþ not here of bodily etyng and drynking of his fleish and his blood; for ellis no man shulde be saved, for no man is an etene¹ to fede him þus bodili of Crist. And herefore it were to wite, how men shulen goostli feede hem þus. For Crist tellip in his wordis how men shulen ete him goostli, and to þis witt seiþ Crist here, þat þe wordis þat he spekiþ to hem ben spirit and liif. For sich is witt of his wordis. Þes wordis, in þer owne kynde, ben siche as weren hise oþere wordis, but wit of þes wordis here is spiritual, and mannys liif. And Crist seiþ here soþli, þat ech man þat shal be saaf shal be fed of Crist þus. But þis mai not be undirstonden of fleishli fode of Cristis bodi, and so it mut be undirstonden algatis of goostli foode. For of bodili fode of Crist mai not two be fed togidere; and so Crist spekiþ of goostly foode, bi which many ben fed, fer and nere. Also aftir Cristis ascencioun many ben boren, and saved after. Also², as Crist seiþ here, þei moten ete his fleish and drynke his blood; but þei shulen not þus do bodili, after þat Crist is steied to hevene; and so Crist mut nedely speke here of goostli fode. And so no man dredip here þat supposip al witt of Crist, þat ne oure God spekiþ here of goostli mete and drynke. For þus patriarkis eeten Crist, bifore þat he was boren in fleish. Þis goostli eetyng and drynkyng is nouȝt but to fede þe soule wiþ bileve þat man moot have of þe fleish and blood of Crist. And, for it is not ynowȝ to trowe þat Crist took fleish and blood, but ȝif men trowe over þis þat Crist lyvede here medefulli, þerfore men þat wolen be saaf moten ete his fleish and drynke his blood. And herfore tellip þe secounde part of oure crede, how men shulen trowe in Jesus Crist, and how he suffride in his bodi. And as, bi speche of Goddis lawe, þat man etip not bodili, þat takip mete in his mouþ, and aftir sendip it to his stomak, and spueþ it out este aȝen, but ȝif it turne to nurishe his bodi, so a man etip not goostli Cristis bodi, as men

but spiritually.

¹ eten, E; ¹etene, Q.² And so, E.

speken here, but ȝif þis mete be defied. And Crist lickeneþ men to him; and so no man etip þus Crist, but ȝif he be saved in tyme. And þus þes wordis of Crist ben soip, to men þat undirstonden hem wel.

The words of the gospel can be referred only in a limited sense to the sacrament of the altar.

And here ben many men marred of þe sacrament of þe auter, and referren alle þes wordis to þis holi sacrament. But neþeles men witen wel, þat þes wordis weren spoken of Crist longe bifore þat þis sacrament was maad of Crist or ony man; for þe sacrament was maad first upon Shire Þursday, and longe bifore þat tyme weren þos wordis spoken of Crist. Neþeles many of þes wordis mai be wel undirstonden of þis sacrid oost, who þat knowip hem soundely. And so we shulen undirstonde, first, þat sum þing is Goddis bodi, and nouȝt ellis in his kynde, as þe fleish þat Crist bare here and is now in hevene glorified, as seintis shulen be. And of þis fleish and þis blood, in his kynde, spekiþ þe gospel, and of þe goostli eetyng þat men moten eten þis. Þe breed of þe sacrid oost is verry breed in his kynde, and is eten bodili; but it is Goddis bodi in figure. And it is þe same bodi þat is Goddis bodi in his kynde. And not but ȝif þis be eten goostli, in eetyng of þe sacrid oost, ellis men taken not worþili þe sacrament more þan a beest. And, for þis goostli eetyng, many of þe wordis here ben ferrid goostli to etyng of þe sacrid oost; but þis oost is eten bodili and goostli of sum men, but Cristis bodi in his kynde is not eten bodili. And so moten men wel be knowun¹, and speke wisely in þis sentence. And sum men trowen, þat Joon spak no more of þis sacrid oost, for he spak here þes wordis, þat myȝten wel be seid of it. But ever wite we, þat þis oost is verri breed in his kynde, and in figure Goddis bodi, bi vertue of Cristis wordis; but þus it is not of Cristis fleish and his blood in his kynde. And it is nede² to wite, how breed and wyn ben Cristis membris. And, for Crist wiste wel here þat þis witt is unknowun to many, þefore þis gospel telliþ how Crist seiþ aftirward, *But þer ben sum of ȝou þat trowen not, to þes wordis. For Jesus wiste fro þe bigynnyng whiche men weren not trowinge, and who was to traye him.* But þes wordis he spake mystili for many causis. As Austeyn seiþ,

¹ knowe Q; moten men knowe, E.

² And so it nediþ, E.

ʒif men trevelen treuly in love of God, and studie þes wordis, þei shulen knowen þis witt of hem. And þis is mater of greet merit, and trewe men han no doute þat ne Crist spak þus for þe beste.

And Crist seide to his disciplis, Herfore Y seide to ʒou, þat no man mai come to me, but ʒif it be ʒouun to him of my fadir. And ʒif þou seie þat no man mai undirstonden Cristis wordis, but ʒif God ʒyve him witt, as no man mai ellis be saaf¹, þou seist soiþ for boþe parties, as ech man mut nedely bileve. And ʒif þou seist, over þis, þat it is in² no mannis power to undirstonde wel holi writt, ne to be saved for his dedis here, þou failist opynli; for do a man þat in him is, and God is redi to his dedis. But soiþ it is, þat alle sich dedis tellen in maner Goddis grace, þat is above³ mannis power, and þei tellen eke mannis werk. And not, for a man haþ power to make þus Goddis grace, but for he hath power to worche þerbi, þefore he haþ power to disserve blis. And for hardnesse of þes wordis, *Many of disciplis⁴ wenten abak, and wenten no longer wiþ him,* for þes wordis astonyeden hem. *But Jesus seid to his twelve, Where ʒe wolen also go awey? And Symount Petre answeride to him, Sire, to whom shulen we go? þou hast wordis of liif wiþouten eende; and we han bileved and knowun, þat þou art Crist, þe some of God lyyng.* *Jesus answeride to him, Where Y have not chosen ʒou twelve, and oon of ʒou is a devel? And þis he seide of Judas Scarioth, for he þis was to tray Crist, þe while he was oon of þe twelve.* And siþ he was ordeyned to helle, he wente never wiþ Crist as his membre, alʒif he were for a tyme in maner of grace, and dide myche good. And þus ech man þat shal be dampned is a devel, as was Judas; but noon shulen clepe his broþer devel, but he wiste þat he shulde be dampned, and God bad him clepe him so, for þe profit of holy Chirche.

¹ So E; saf, A.

² So E; om. A.

³ So E; aboute, A.

⁴ þe disciplis, E.

ÞE MONEDAI GOSPEL IN ÞE LASTE WEKE IN LENTE.

[SERMON CLXXVIII.]

Ante sex dies Pasche.—JOHN xii. [4.]

The supper
at Bethany.

Þis gospel telliþ what Crist dide þe sixte daie before he diede. Joon seiþ þat, *Bifore sixe daies of þe Pask*, þat Crist was deed, *Jesus cam to Bethanye, where Lazar was deed, whom Jesus reiseide. And þere þei maden him a soper, and Martha seruede hem, and Lazar was oon of hem þat eelen wiþ Crist. Marie Mawdeleyn took a pound of trewe oynement and preshous, and anoyntide Jesus feet, and she wipte wiþ her heer his feet; and þe hous was fillid of smel of þe oynement. And so oon of Cristis disciplis seide, Judas, Scariothis sone, þat was for to traye Crist, Whi is þis oynement not sold for þre hundrid pens, and 3ouun to pore men? But he seide þis, not for he rouzte of nedy men, but for he was a þeef, and, havyng pursis, bar þo þingis þat weren sent. And so ech man þat yvil dispendiþ Goddis good is a þef. And Judas was smytun wiþ coveitise, siþ he hadde no nede bi his maistir, for Crist found him evere ynow3, and tauzte him to forsake þe world; and 3it coveitise of money movede him to sille Crist. And wiþ þis synne ben preestis smytun, boþe more and lesse, more þan was Judas. Herfore seide Jesus, to excuse Marie, *Suffre 3e hir þat she kepe it to þe day of my biriyng.* And sum seyen þat Marie dide. She kepte o preshous box to anoynte Crist whanne he was deed, whanne oþer wymmen bouzten hem newe. And þis savore in þe hous bitokeneþ fame of Cristis deep, þat ech man shulde smelle, and þenke devoutli on Crist. And Crist seiþ þat, *þei shulen evere have pore men wiþ hem, but þei shulen not evere have him.* And so þis oyle is wel dispensid, for betir, and in beter tyme, þan 3if beggeris hadden hadde it. And þes apostlis wantiden nevere beggeris for to take þer almes, for þis is hard to do wel, and goostli almes is beter, and Crist tauzte his apostlis to chese þis beter, and leve þe wers. And þis ypocrisie is in preestis, þat colouren þer coveitise bi almes. *And so myche puple of þe Jewis knewen**

pat Crist was here, and þei camen, not oonli for Jesus, but for to see Lazar, whom Crist reiseid from deef. And herfore þe princis of preestis þouzten for to slee Lazar, for many of Jewis for him wente away, and trowiden in Jesus.

And on þe morewe myche puple þat cam to þe feste day, whanne þei hadden herd þat Jesus cam to Jerusalem, token branchis of palmes, and wenten azens him, and þei crieden, Make us safe; blessid be he þat is comen in þe Lordis name, kyng of Israel. And Jesus fond a zong asse, and sat on him, as it is writun, Douzter of Sioun, drede þee not; lo, þi king comeþ, sittyng on an asse fole. Þis regaly uside Crist, and reride not up þe croyseree azens his enemyes, as preestis doon now azens men þat þei wenen holden azens hem. First knewen not apostlis þes þingis; but whanne he was glorified, þanne þei þouzten on þat þes þingis weren writun of him, and þes þingis þei diden to him. And herfore þe puple þat was wip Crist bare witness, how he clepide Lazar from his grave, and reiseid him from dede men. And herfore cam þe puple azen him, for þei herden him have done þis signe. And herfore Phariseis seiden to hemsilf, 3e seen þat we profiten not; lo, al þe world haþ go after him.

And so þer weren summe heþene men, of hem þat camen to preie in þe feste day; and herfore þes camen to Philip, þat was of Bethsaida of Galile, and so nyze þes heþene folk, and preyeden Philip, and seiden, Sire, we wolen see Jesus. Philip cam, and seide to Andrew; eft Andrew and Philip seiden to Jesus. And Jesus answeride hem, and seide, Sonly, sonly, Y seie to 3ou, but 3if þe corn of whete þat fallip in to erþe be deed, it dwellip aloone, but 3if it be deed, it bryngip forþ myche fruyt. He þat loveþ his liif shal lese it, and he þat hatip his lyf in þis world, kepip it to þe liif of blisse. 3if ony man serve me, sue he me; and where þat Y am, þere eke shal my servant be; 3if ony man serve me, my fadir shal honour him. Now my soule is troublid, and what þing shal I seie? Fadir, make me saaf fro þis hour? Crist wiste wel what he shulde seie, for he tauzte þus þes heþene folk, and figuride in his owne persone how þei shulden suffre for his sake. And þus seip Crist þat, but herfore he was comen in to þis hour; as who seip, to alarge þe Chirche bi heþene men, glorious martiris, Crist dide and seide þus in þis tyme.

The entry into Jerusalem.

Gentiles desire to see Jesus.

And þus Crist preieþ after for Goddis worship, and profit of þe Chirche. *Fadir, he seiþ, clarifie þi name. And a vois cam fro heven, and seide, Boþe Y have clarified, and Y shal clarifie este. And þe puple þat stood and herde, seide þere was a þundir maad; oþer seiden þat an angel spak to him. Jesus answeride, and seide, Not for me cam þis vois, but for 3ou. Now is jugement of þe world; now þe prince of þe world shal be cast out. And Y, 3if Y be hyed fro þe erþe, shal drawe alle þingis to mysilf.* Here Crist spekij greet prophecie, how þis world shal be jugid, and how þe fend shal go to helle, for merit þat Crist doij. And so mater of þre jugementis þat Crist tellij after was 3oven þanne. And dilatinge of his Chirche bi folk of þe citee, and uplondishe men, and heþene men also, figuriden cloþis, palmes, and song, bi which Crist was worshipid in comyng to Jerusalem. And so ech word of þis storie figurij myche witt; and, whoso wiste þe habitude, o word þat comeþ bifore bringij in anoþer word, to God þat knowij good resoun. So þat o dede þat Crist dide nedij þat anoþer mut sue, and ellis were not þis word, ergo, so ofte sett in þis storye. *And þis word, as Joon seiþ, seide Crist to signefie what deþ he was to die, and how þis deþ shulde be taken. Þe puple answeride to Crist, We han herd of þe lawe þat Crist dwellij wipouten ende, and how seist þou, þat mannis sone mut be hyed bi sich deep? And who is he þis mannis sone? And þanne Jesus seide to hem, 3it a litil lizt is in 3ou. Walke 3e, þe while 3e han lizt, þat derknesse atake 3ou not; and he þat wandrij in derknesse woot not whidir he goij. Þe while 3e han lizt, bileve 3e in lizt, þat 3e be children of lizt. Þes þingis spake Jesus, and wente away, and hidde him from hem.* Studie þou þe dede of Crist, and knitt oo witt wip anoþer.

FOURME OF ÞE PASSIOUN ON TEWISDAI IN SAME WEKE.

As þer ben foure gospelleris, so þe Chirche redij foure passiouns, Matheu, Mark, Luk, and Joon, bi ordre þat þes seintis writun. But it is ynow3 to tell of Joon, for he wroot last, and ynow3 us to cunne.

ALSO OF WEDNESDAI.

LUK telliþ on þis day how Crist diede for mankynde. And ech of þes foure evangelistes seiþ sum þing þat anoþer leeeþ, but noon mai be contrarie to oþer, and God mai not denye himsilf. But mystakyng of Cristis witt marriþ sum men in þis mater. And so mai men take a word of þis passioun, what þat hem likiþ, and touche a point of Cristis passioun answeyng to þes þree daies^a.

FE GOSPEL ON SHERE ÞURSDAY IN ÞE LASTE WEKE IN LENTE.

[SERMON CLXXIX.]

*Ante diem festum*¹.—JOHN xviii. [I.]

Þis gospel telliþ how Crist tauþte his disciplis to be meke, and how þe more of hem shulde serve his breþeren, siþ Crist dide þus, oure alþer maistir. For it was knowun bi Cristis liif, how he was þe moste pore man þat myþte be. For poverte in þe staat of Crist is token of perfeccioun; but Crist toke no perfeccioun, but ʒif he toke it sovereynli, and after þe stat of innocence. Crist hadde noo þing worldli; and so take þou good hede to Crist, and þou shalt fynde in open resoun, þat no man myþte be porer þan was Crist for his Chirche; for he myþte have no more wanting, ne more wille, to take þis staat. And so Crist passide al oþer in takynge of his poverte, and so he was mekerst man, and moost servisable of oþer. Joon telliþ how Crist ordeynede. *Bifore þe Satirday þat was Pask Day*, and so upon þe Þursday þat was before Good Friday, *Jesus, witinge þat his tyme was comen, to passe oute of þis world*

Christ washes
the disciples'
feet.

¹ So E; A adds *Jude* after *festum*, probably for *Judaeorum*; the word in the Vulgate is *Paschae*.

^a These short notices for the Tuesday and Wednesday before Easter are omitted in E, but occur in the two MSS. at the British Museum, G and I; also in Q.

to þe fadir, whanne he hadde loved his disciplis þat weren in þe world, he lovede hem to þe eende. And whanne þe soper was doon, whanne þe fend hadde sent in to Judas herte, þat is, in Judas¹ Scariothis sone, shulde bitray Crist, for money, Crist, witing þe fadir ȝaf alle þing in to his hondis, and þat he cam fro God, and goiþ to God, risiþ fro þe soper, and puttijf away his clopis, and whanne he hadde take a shete, he girdide him. Aftir he putte water in to a basyn, and bigan to waishe þe feet of his disciplis, and to wipe hem wiþ þe linnen cloiþ wiþ the which he was gird. And so he cam to Symount Petir, and Petre seide to him, Sire, waishist þou to me feet? Jesus answeride, and seide to him, What þingis Y do þou knowist not now, but aftirward þou shalt wite. Petre seide to Crist, Þou shalt nevere waishe my feet. Jesus answeride to him, ȝif Y shal not waishe þee, þou shalt not have part wiþ me. Symount Petir seide to him, Sire, not oonli my feet, but boþe my hondis and my heed. Jesus seide to Petre þanne, He þat is waishid, haþ noo nede but to waishe his feet, but is al clene; and ȝe ben clene, but not alle. For Crist wiste who was he þat shulde tray him, and þerfore he seide, ȝe ben not alle clene. And þus whanne he hadde waishid þer feet, he took his clopis, and whanne he was sett aȝen, he seid to hem, ȝe witen what Y have do to ȝou. ȝe clepen me maistir and lord, and ȝe seien wel, for certis Y am. Þerfore yf Y have waishid ȝour feet, þat am lord and maistir, and ȝe shulen waishe oon anoperis feet. For Y have ȝouun ȝou ensauple, þat as Y have do to ȝou, so and ȝe shulen do aftir.

Application.

Here mai we lerne what a prelat shulde do to his sugettis, for he shulde be moost meke and moost² servisable to hem. For most meke servise and love were to waishe a mannis feet, and after to drye hem, as Crist dide to his apostlis, and þat in form of a servaunt doinge wiþ wille, as Crist shewide. And siþ Crist chargide not ceremonyes, wiþ bodili waishinge of feet, but for ensauple of goostli waishing of mennis wille, þat ofte is fuylid, we shulden þenke how gretter men shulden ȝyve ensauple to clense³ þe wille of lower men þat ben bineþe hem. And þis lore failiþ to myche þis day, for men mai now take

¹ þat þus Judas, E.
Q; A has clenese.

² So E; A om. and moost.

³ So E and

ensaumple of lordship and of coveitise of men þat ben more þan þei, and not of waishing of þer wille. And so þe service of þe Chirche is foule turned up so doun.

ÞE PASSIOUN ON GOOD FRIDAY.

[SERMON CLXXX.]

*Egressus Jesus trans torrentem*¹.—JOHN XVIII. and XIX.

Now men shulen speke of Cristis passioun, and se in what fourme he suffride, for ech dede þat Crist dide shulde be lore to men. Aftir Joon telliþ how Jesus spak a greet speche on Shere Þursday, and tolde his disciplis a lore of myche witt and of long, and conteyneþ many capitilis in Joones book, as clerkis knowen. *Crist wente out*, of þat place þat he hadde eten inne in þe citee, to a 3erd wipouten þe citee, to be taken wipouten noise. And so *þis streem of Cedron* figurip Cristis passioun, þat Crist drank for þis tyme, and herfore he reride his heed in hevene. For, as Poul seiþ, Crist for his passioun was hyed, and named of God þe Fadir. And þe Salm seiþ also, þat Crist drank of þe stronde in þe weie, þerfore he hiede his heed in hevene, þat is ende of þis weie. *And so he wente wip his disciplis*, to make hem knowe and telle forþ. In þis subarbe *was a gardyn, in to which he entride and his disciplis. And Judas, þat trayede Crist, knewe þe place; for Jesus cam ofte þidir wip his disciplis.* And þis was in þe even-tid², whanne Jesus was wont to preie. Judas cam not aloone, but, *he toke a cumpanye of Romayns and mynystris of bishopis and Phariseis, and cam þidir wip lanternes, and broondis, and armes. And so Jesus, knowing alle þingis þat weren to come on him, wente azens hem, and seide, Whom seke 3e?* Þei answeriden to him, *We seken Jesus of Nazareth. Jesus seiþ to hem, Y am. And Judas þat trayede him stood wip hem. And whanne he seide to hem, Y am, þei wenten abak and felden into þe erþe. And eft Crist axide*

The passion of Christ.

Phil. ii. 9.

Ps. cx. 7.

¹ So E; A has *torrentem*.

² *evenynge*, E.

hem, Whom seke ze? And þei seiden, Jesus of Nazareth. Jesus answeride to hem, Y have seid to zou þat Y am; þerfore, zif ze seken me, lete þes apostilis go awey: to fulfille þe word þat Crist seide, þat whom þou hast zovun me, Y loste not ony of hem, neiþer togidere, ne atwynne. And þanne Symount Petir hadde a swerd, and drew it, and smoot a servaunt of þe bishop, and kilt awey his rizt eere. And þis servaunt hiȝt Malcus. Herfore Jesus seide to Petir, Putte þi swerd in þe scabard; shal Y not drynk þat passioun þat my fadir haȝ zovun me?

Christ, as man,
rejected tem-
poral weapons.

And here mai Cristene men knowe, þat Crist lovede not for to fiȝte, but zif he dide so bi his Godhede. He myȝte wel, as Lord of alle, for he made boþe bodi and soule, and knytyng of hem two togidere, and zit he ne myȝte not fiȝte ne slee, but whanne he wiste þat it was just. And siȝ alle þes failen to men, how shulden þei fiȝte unbeden of God? And zif Crist bi his manheed wolde fiȝte, þere was noon sich a conquerour, ne fiȝter in so good a maner; for he myȝte þanne sle alle bateilis, wiȝouten hurting or harmyng¹ of him; and alle manere of assailing wepene he myȝte have turned in to men hemsilf. And so in spensis, and victorie, and sle yng of men þat weren worpi, Crist myȝte have passid alle conquerours, zif he wolde have used þis crafte; but Crist wolde not ensauple it, but movede ay to charite. And þes men þat fiȝten þus, and moven men for to fiȝte, þei doon as þei silf weren goddis, and speken as blasfemes, and so þei ben opene heretikes, and taken amys Goddis wordis, as bidding of Crist to bie swerdis, and blamyng of Petre for he fauȝt. And beter cause of mannis fiȝting can no man feyne to day; for as Crist mote nedis bi skile be sleyn, so alle þingis muten nedis be, and turne to good of Cristis Chirche, bi ordenance of þe Trinite. And so þes blynde heretikes, þat seien þat Petir shulde not fiȝte here, but preestis shulden fiȝte where þei wolen juge, wanten witt in þis speche. For bi þis² resoun ech man þat turmentide Crist shulde do so for he moste nedis do þus, and Crist muste þus bie mankynde. But excusyng of þes heretykes saveȝ not þes Jewis bifore God, siȝ nede of comyng of þing stondiȝ boþe wiȝ good and yvel,

¹ So E; A has *of harm*.

² So E; om. A.

and þus þes foolis moten loke ferþere, to knowe a just dede, and so unjust¹.

Þe oost of Romaynes, and þe tribune, and mynystris of þe Jewis, taken Jesus and bounden him; and ledden him first to bishop Anna, for he was cosyn of Caiphaz, þat was bishop of þat ȝeer. Þe bishopriches weren bouzt and soold, for coveitise of preestis and Romaynes; and þer termes weren shortere, to make þer wynnyng pickere. And Caiphaz was he þat gaf a counseil to Jewis, þat it sped þat oo man die for þe puple. And Symount Petre suede Jesus, and anoþer disciple, þat was Joon; and þat disciple was knowun to þe bishop, and entride wif Jesus in to þe out halle of þe bishop. And Petre stood wifouten at þe dore, and herfore Joon wente oute, and seide to þe womman þat kepte þe dore, and brouzt in Petre. And þis hand-maide seide to Petre, Wher þou be of disciplis² of þis man? Petre seide, Y am noon. Men seien þat she axide not Joon þus, for Joon was knowun in þat hous. And howevare men speken here, God wolde þat it were þus; and God mai liztli move a man, to take oon and leve anoþer. And servantis and mynistris stoden at þe coolis, and warmyden hem, for it was coold; and Petre stood wif hem, and warmyde him.

Peter's first denial.

And þanne þe bishop axide Jesus of his disciplis, and of his lore. Jesus answeride to him, Y have spoken opynli to þe world, and tauzt evere in þe synagoge and temple, whidir alle Jewis camen togidir, and in hid Y spak nouzt. What axist þou me? Axe hem þat herden, what Y have spoken to hem; lo, þei witen what þingis Y seide. And here mai we lerne myche. First, how preestis shulden preche opynli,—for þus dide Crist our alþer maistir, and spak noþing in hidlis³, bi shrift of rownyng to men. We mai lerne, over þis, to fede not uncovenable axingis, for it was not tyme now to axe þus Crist of his lore, for þe folk was unable to heere his wordis to þer profit, and þe bishop wolde not trowe Crist, as he wolde not⁴ trowe oþer þat herden. And þus Crist tauzte þis bishop, by sharpnesse of Cristis swerd, þat he shulde not axe uncovenably questiouns out of þe tyme. And whanne Crist hadde seid þes wordis, oon of þe ministris þat

Christ before the high priest.

¹ and an unjust, E. ² a disciple, E. ³ *biddlis*, E. ⁴ So E; om. A.

was myȝ, ȝaf a buffet to Jesus, and seide, Answerist þou þus to þe bishop? Alȝif þis stroke moste nedis be, ȝit it was not ful¹ medeful, for he was in þe same synne wiþ þe bishop in þes wordis. For wherto shulde he axe Crist a ping þat men wisten wel aboute? And so he synnede in veyn wordis, wiþ þe strook þat he ȝaf Jesus. *Jesus answeride to þis ministre, ȝif Y have spoken yvel, bere ȝou witnesse of þe yvel, and ȝif Y have spoken wel, whi smytist þou me?* Siþ þat Crist knewe bifore, þat he shulde be smyten for þes wordis, and ȝit he spak hem þus upon resoun, lerne we þis hardynesse of Crist.

And Annas sente Crist bounden to þe bishop Caiphas. Boþe þes two weren bishopis in þis ȝeer þat Crist diede inne. But muse we not wheþir was first bishop, or hadde þe office for þis tyme; but it semþ þat Annas; and Caiphas was þe elder man.

And Symount Petir stood stille, and warmede him in al þis tyme. And þe servauntis seiden to Petir, Wher þou be of his disciplis? *Petir denyede, and seide, Y am not.* Oon of þe bishopis servauntis seide to Petre, his cosyn, whos eere Petre smoot of, *Saw Y þee not in þe ȝerd wiþ him?* *And Petre denyede aȝen, and anoon þe cok crewe.* Wite we wel þat Petre synnede ful grevouseli in þis tyme, siþ he falseli denyede his maistir and cowardli to þes servauntis; and ȝit he muste nedis do so, or ellis Crist hadde gabbid bifore. But God forbede þat we trowen þat Crist myȝte gabbe, or þat Petre synnede² not; but formere synne þat Petre dide, as was his presumptuous pryde, nedide Petre synne³; but Crist mekide him bi þis synne. But here it semþ þat þe apostlis varien in þes þree denyngis of Petre. For Mathew seiþ, þat bifore þe cok crowe, Petre shal denye him þries. Mark seiþ, bifore þe cok crowe twies, Petre is to denye Crist þries. Luk seiþ, þe cok shal not crowe to day, til Petre þries denye for to knowe Crist. Here men seien comunli þat cokkis crowyng is taken on two maneris; first, for alle þe voices togidere þat þe cok makip first, and aftirward for ech vois bi him silf, þat þe cok sowneþ at oonys. And so þe cok syngip comunly first fyve songis or sixe togidere, and alle þes maken oo cokkis crowyng, as alle þes ben o vois; and sum

Peter's second and third denials.

¹ om. E.

² So E; *synne*, A.

³ to *synne þus*, E.

gospel spekiþ o maner, and sum on anoþer. And sum seien þat Petre denyede onys Crist, bifore ony vois of þe cok, and eft he denyede Crist twies, bifore þe cok hadde crowe twies. And so þes wordis of þe gospel answeren wel to þis witt.

And þanne þei leddeþ Jesus to Caiphaz^a in to þe mut-halle¹; and it was eerti; and þei entriden not into þe mut-halle, for to be not fuylid, but for to ete þer Paske lomb, as þe custome of þe Jewis is. Here men seien comunli, þat Jewis hadden a maner, þat noon alien shulde come to hem, neiþer Heroude ne Pilat, in to siche privy place, for þanne þei shulden be defoulid. And so þes men entriden not in to þis hous, to fle to comune wiþ heþene men, but to ete þer Pask lomb, as þe lawe lymytiþ² hem. And herfore Pilat wente oute to hem, and seide, What acusyng bryngen ȝee aȝen þis man? Þei answeriden, and seiden to him, ȝif þis man were not an yvel doere, we hadde not take him to þee. Þerfore Pilat seide to hem, Take ȝe him ȝou self, and aftir ȝour lawe juge ȝe him. And þanne þe Jewis seiden to him, It is not leveful to us to sle ony man. It is seid comunli þat þe Emperour of Rome ordeynede þat Jewis shulden be no jugis, for to sle men bi þer lawe, for þei mysundirstonden³ þer lawe, and slegen men ofte falsely. And to þis entent spaken þe Jewis, to shewe þat þei wolden obeishe here. Þat þe word of Jesus shulde be fillid, telling what deþ he was to die. Crist tolde bifore how he shulde die, and how he shulde be bitrayed to heþene men. And herfore it was nedeful þat þe Jewis ȝaven him to Pilat, for he was an heþene man, and alien fro þe Jewis.

Christ brought by the Jews to Pilate.

And herfore Pilat wente aȝen in to þis hall, and clepide Jesus, and seide to him, Art þou kyng of Jewis? Jesus answeride, Seist þou þis of þi silf, or oper han seid to þee of me? Pilat answeride, Wher Y am a Jewe? Þi folk and bishopis token þee to me; what hast þou done, to be dampned? as ȝif Pilat wolde seie to Crist, Siþ Y am an alien, and þou art acusid of þi folk, Y take not but of hem whatever Y seie to þee; and þerfore Y wolde wite of þee, what þou hast don, to be dampned. Jesus

Pilate questions Christ.

¹ mote balle, E, Q.

² lymytide, E.

³ mys-undirstoden, E.

^a This mistranslation—'to' instead of 'from' Caiphaz,—occurs also in the two Wycliffite versions;

yet the reading of the Vulgate—'a Caipha,'—gives no countenance to it.

answeride þan to Pilat, *My rewme is not of þis world; 3if my rewme were of þis world, certis my mynistris wolden strive for me, þat Y shulde not be taken to Jewis; but now my rewme is not here.* Bi þis word we shulden wite, þat Crist grauntide þat he was a king, for ellis he hadde spoken in veyn þes wordis to Pilat; but he mente þat he was king of aungels and alle good men; and alle þes weren ful fer fro þe men þat weren here. And Crist bi chaumbring of þes wordis tauzte men to flee boost. And so Crist denyede here þat he was secular kyng of Jewis; and so Cristis clerkes shulden shame to be sich lordis bi title of Crist; and þis shulden þe pope knowe, and fle blasfemy of his maistir. *And so Pilat seide to Crist, Herfore þou art a kyng?* *Jesus answeride, Þou seiest þat Y am a kyng;* as who seiþ, of my wordis it sueþ þat Y am a kyng, for Y am kyng of hevene and erþe, by many titlis of my riht. And here Crist chaumbride his wordis and tauzte men to flee boost; but þe heþene juge seide soiþ, and telde how heþene men¹ shulden graunte þis astir. And þus seiþ Crist, pryvyli, *Y am born in þis entent, and Y cam for þis into þis world, for to bere witnessse to treuþe.* And so Crist grauntide in general wordis þat he was kyng over al þis world. *Ech man þat is of treuþe, heerip my vois for sum tyme.* And þis seide Crist to teche Pilat to knowe þe treuþe in þis mater. *Pilat seide to Crist, What is treuþe?* And al3if Pilat abood not answeere, 3it Crist, shewinge himsilf, tolde to Pilat what is treuþe, siþ Crist in his persone is treuþe, as he witnessip bifore.

Christ delivered over to be crucified.

And whan Pilat hadde seide þis þing, he wente out aȝen to þe Jewis, and seide to hem, I fynde no cause in Jesus, to dampne him to deep. But it is a custume to 3ou, þat Y leeve oon² in Pask; wole 3e herfore þat Y leeve to 3ou þe kyng of Jewis, and dampne him not? Þe Jewis calengiden a fredom to have a man 3ovun to hem, for solempnite of þe feeste, þat shulde ellis be doon to þe deþ. Este þei crieden alle, and seiden, 3yve not him þis, but Barabas. Barabas was an hardi þeef, þat for manslauȝter was put in prisoun. And þanne toke Pilat Jesus and scourgide him, bifore þe Jewis, so þat þer yvel wille were fillid in

¹ So E; om. A.

² leve 3ou one, E.

þe betyng of Jesus. *And knyztis^a, foldinge a crowne of þorn, puttiden upon Cristis heed, and clobiden him in a cloib of purpur, þat his blood shulde þe lesse be seen. And þei camen to him, and seiden, Heyl¹ þou Kyng of Jewis; and þei zavun him buffatis, after al, for to plese þe Jewis; for þei weren wel hirid of hem, and þei wisten to plese hem þus. And þus þe Jewis weren more to blame þan was Pilat, or þes knyztis. Pilat wente out azen, and seib to hem, Lo, Y bringe him forþ to zou, þat ze wite þat Y fynde no cause in him. And so Jesus wente out, and baar a crowne of þornes, and cloib of purpur. And Pilat seib to hem, Lo þe man. But whanne bishopis and mynystris hadden seen Crist, þei crieden, and seiden, Picche² him on þe crosse, picche² him on þe crosse. Þis was þe mercy þe Jewis hadden on þis meke man for his treuþe. Pilat seide to hem, Tak ze him zou self, and do ze him on þe cross; for Y fynde no cause in him, to dampne him to sich deþ. Þe Jewis answeriden to Pilat, We han a lawe, and after þat lawe he is worþi to die, for he made him Goddis sone.*

And whanne Pilat hadde herd þis word, he dredde more, and wente azen into þat halle, and seide to Jesus, Of whenns art þou? But Jesus zaf him noon answe. Þerfore Pilat seide to him, Spekist þou not to me? woost þou not þat Y have power to picche² on þe crosse, and to leeve þee? Jesus answeride, Þou shuldist have noo power azen me, but zif it were zovun þee from above. But neiþer God ne emperour zaf him power to dampne þus Crist, and so he hadde not from above power to do þus Crist to deþ. And here men taken wiseli, zif þei han power of erþeli lordis; neþeles al þis power mut be reulid bi Goddis lawe. Þerfore he þat trayede me to þee haþ more synne, þan þou hast. And here many men traveilen in veyn to excuse Pilat, algatis þat he synnede not in þis dede. But Crist witnessiþ þat he synnede, alzif þe Jewis synneden more, of more malis, and lesse pite. Soiþ it is þat Pilat hadde many þouztis to save

Pilate again
questions
Christ.

¹ Heil, E.

² Putte, E.

* 'Knight' is a natural mis-translation of 'miles' in this place, that being the familiar Latin term in the middle ages, not for a com-

mon soldier, but for a knight or man-at-arms, one holding a knight's fee.

Crist, but he lastide not in þes¹ þouȝtis, and herfore he synnede myche. And he schulde teche þes worldly men to laste sadde in good purpos, and to drede to folde fro treuþe, as Pilat dide, for an yvel cause. Wheþer þat he assentide here to dampne Jesus, for drede of þe emperour, or to plese² þe Jewis, to make him dwelle longe in his office, to dampne a man aȝens conscience excusih him neiþer to God ne man. And of þe wordis of Pilat may men gedere þat he was gilty, for he seiþ he fyndih no cause in Crist to do him þus to deþ: siþ þis is soiþ, and ȝit Pilat dampnede Crist wiþouten cause, it semeþ he dide an opyn wrong bi Goddis lawe and mannis lawe. And so, alȝif Crist was dampned bi colour of lawe cyvyle, ȝit Pilat failide in þis lawe, for he abood not proof þerof. Crist was many weies accusid, but þe moste was heresie; and Pilat cowde not juge þis, siþ þe contrarie was soiþ, and it was nedeful in sich cause to knowe þe soþe and wite his proof. For many putten heresy on oþer bi malis and fals maner. Soþli ech heresie smatchih blasfemye, and aȝen^a. And blasfemye mai be done upon þre maners. First, whanne a man ȝyveþ to God þing þat mai not acorde to him, as ȝif men seiden of God þat he were not merciful, but mercy of men passiþ mercy of God. An oþer, whanne a man takih fro God þing þat mut nede be aproprid to him, as ȝif men seien þat God is not merciful upon synful men. Þe þridde maner, in ȝyving to man þing þat oonly longih to God, as ȝif men forȝyve synne þat is doon aȝens Goddis riȝt. And al manere of heresie smatchih summe of þes þree. And so, ȝif men maken lawis not groundid on Goddis lawe, and dampne men as heretikes, for þei done aȝens þes lawes, þes dampneris ben heretikes, for þei wolen be an oþer God. And þus þe pope and his cardinalis smatchen ofte heresie, for þei brennen men as heretikes, for þei maynteynen Goddis lawe.

and reluctantly delivers him to be crucified.

Joon seiþ þat, *Fro þennes forþ souȝte Pilat to delyvere Jesus, but þe Jewis crieden, and seiden, ȝif þou leevest him þis, þou art not þe emperours frend, for ech man þat makih him kyng, aȝen-seiþ þe emperour. And Pilat, whanne he hadde herd þes wordis,*

¹ So E; A has þis.

² So E; A has *or plese to*.

^a 'and aȝen' seems to mean 'and vice versâ.'

ledde Jesus forþ, and sat for domesman in place þat is seid Licostratos¹, and in Ebrew Golgatha. And it was þe Friday of Pask, as it were þe sixte hour. And Pilat seip to þe Jewis, Lo, your kyng. And þei crieden, Take away, take away, picche him on þe crosse. Pilat seide to hem, Shal Y picche 3our kyng on þe crosse? Þe bishopis answeriden, We han no kyng but þe emperour. Herfore Pilat toke þanne Crist to hem, to putte him on þe cros. And so þis juge, for mannis lordship, dampnede treuþe upon þe tree. And þus bishopis crien to day, leevyng mandementis of God, and 3yvyng hem to mannis lawe, We han no kyng but þe emperour. For bishopis weren þei þat seiden þes wordis, and so þei seien to day in dede, and seculer jugis assenten wiþ hem, and jugen ofte for þer part.

Þe Jewis taken Jesus and ledden him out. And Crist, beerynge to him a cros, went in to þat place þat is clepid Calvarie, and in Ebrew Golgatha; wher þei putten him on þe crosse, and wiþ him two ober, þeves, on eiper side, but in þe myddis Jesus. And Pilat wroot a tittle, and put it on þe cros; and it was writun on þis maner, Jesus of Nazareth, kyng of Jewis. And þis tittle redder many of þe Jewis, for þe place where Jesus was don on þe crosse was nyȝ þe citee; and it was writun in Ebrew, Greek, and Latyn; for þes þree men, þat camen to þe feste, myȝten alle rede it and understonde it. But þe bishopis of Jewis seiden to Pilat, Nyle þou wryte, king of Jewis, but þat he seide, Y am king of Jewis. Pilat answeride, þat Y have writun, I have writun; as who seip, þis writing shal stonde, and it is not aȝen þe emperour. And þe knyȝtis, whanne þei hadden pitchid him on þe crosse, token his cloþis, and maden foure partis, to ech knyȝt a part. And þei token Cristis cote, and þis cote was unsewid, woven above altogidere. And þes knyȝtis seiden togidere, Kerwe we it not, but make we lottis þerof, to whom it shal falle; þat þe scripture shulde be fulfillid þat seip, Þei partiden to hem my cloþis, and on my cloiþ þei castiden lott. And certis þe knyȝtis² didnen þes þingis. And herbi it semer þat freris gabben falsely upon Crist, þat his cloþis weren so pore, and so cloutid on ech side; for

The Crucifixion.

¹ E and the Wycliffite versions agree with A; Q has *Litostrotos*; the Vulgate, at least in the modern editions, has *Litbostrotos*; Gr. λιθόστρωτον.

² *knyȝtis*, E.

panne knyztis wolden not have parted þes cloþis, ne have lettid to kerve his cote ; but it semeþ þat þei weren preshos, al dyvers from abitis now.

Mary and St. John at the foot of the cross.

And þer stooden about þe crosse of Jesus, his modir, and his modir¹ sistir, Marie Cleophe², and Marie Mawdeleyn. And herfore, whanne Jesus hadde seen his modir, and his disciple stondinge þat he lovede, he seide to his modir, Womman, lo here þi sone. And after he seiþ to Joon his disciple, Lo here þi modir. And fro þat hour took þis disciple Marie into his modir^a. Afterward Jesus, witinge þat now weren alle þingis ended, þat þe Scripture were endid, he seiþ, Y þirste. And a vessil was putt þere ful of eisil ; and þei token a spongeful of eisil ; putting it aboute wiþ isope³ and profride it to his mouþ. Men seien þat þei token a vessel, and fastned it on a pole, and filliden it wiþ eisil, and helden it to Cristis mouþ. And whanne Jesus hadde tastid his eysil, he seide, It is endid ; and bowide down þe heed, and sente out þe spirit. Þes wordis þat Crist haþ spoken here, holden more witt þan we cunnen telle. But, as Austin seiþ and notiþ here, þis maistir made his cross a chaier^b, and tauzte, hanging on þe cros, for he hatip ydelnesse. Joon tellip bifore, how Crist answeride to his modir, What is þat to me and þee, womman ? for ȝit is not myn oure comen. As who seiþ,— Y have of þee fleish, wherebi Y shal suffre ; but ȝit dwellip my godhede, bi which Y sende my soule to helle. And þus Crist clepiþ twyes his modir, womman, for gretter cause þan we kunne seie. And Cristen men han noo doute þat ne Joon was verry Maries sone, and þis Marie was his modir ; for he seiþ so þat mai not lye.

The death of Christ.

And so men þat marken þe gospel seien, þat Crist spake sevene wordis, þe while he hyng on þe cros, to greet witt and mannis profit. First, he priiede for his enemyes, to ensauple us charite, and priiede his Fadir to forȝyve hem, for þei witen

The seven last words of Christ.

¹ modris, E.

² Cleope, E.

³ ysope, Q.

^a Thus the writer, and also the newer Wycliffite version, translate the 'acceptit in sua' of the Vulgate. The older Wycliffite version is better ; 'took hire in to his thingis.'

^b S. Aug. In Johan. Evang. Tract.

cxix. 'Exemplo suo suos instruxit praeceptor bonus, ut a filiis piis impendatur cura parentibus ; tanquam lignum illud ubi erant fixa membra morientis, etiam cathedra fuerit magistri docentis.'

not what þei doon. And no man shal fynde but here þat Crist tauzte men ever to fyte. And þus Crist quenchiþ ire, siþ he forʒaf þus hise enemyes. Anoper word þat Crist spak here was þat he seide to þat o þeef¹, To day þou shalt be wiþ me in Paradise. And here Crist quenchiþ envie, þat fleep þat a manniss neizbore take part wiþ him in good, but Crist tauzte here þe contrarie. Þe þridde word telliþ here, how Crist ʒaf his modir to Joon as virgyn, for to kepe a virgyn; and þus he dampnede lecherie; for lecchours doen no such keping as a good sone doiþ to his modir. Þe fourþe word þat Crist spak here, was when he criede Eloy; and bi þis word he puttide out slouþe, whanne he preiede his God now, and confesside in a manere þat God dide þus for his good. For love of Cristis Chirche God lefte him þus to suffre peyne, but God myzte not leeve Crist, to helpe him and comfort him. And siþ God lefte Crist in his enemyes hondis, to good of him and his Chirche, what art þou þat grutchist aʒens God, to suffre peyne and flee slouþe? Þe fyveþ² word is writun here whanne þat Jesus seide, Y þirste. For he þirstide to save mankynde, and herfore he tastide peyne. On þis þirst shulden glotons þenke, and nevere drynke but in mesure, to worshipe þer God and helpe þer soule; and þenke how Crist tastide eisil. And herfore Crist, wiþ his apostlis, tauzte to suffre peyne for treuþe and for profit of Cristis Chirche, as Poul telliþ in his book. Þe sixte word þat Crist spak was a litil bifore he diede, whanne he seide, Fadir, in to þi hondis I bitake my spirit to kepe. And þus men shulden flee pride, and put al þer trust in God. For oþer stanes þat beren lame men failen, be þei never so proud. Þe sevenþe word þat Crist seiþ here, It is endid,—as it shulde be,—castiþ out averice, and oþer synnes, whanne men holden hem paied of ynow³, and seien wiþ Poul, whanne we han fode and hilyng holde we us paied. And þis lore failiþ to averous men, and to many clerkes of þe world. And siþ we chargen menniss testamentis, and Crist mad þis testament solemply³ to oure profit, charge we þis for more mede, for oure bileve techiþ us, þat who chargiþ not þes wordis is cursid of God, as a fend to be dampned evere in helle.

¹ to þe þeef. E.² fyveþe, E.³ solempnely, E.

The piercing
of the side of
Christ.

And Jewis, for it was vigile of þe Sabot, þat we clepen Good Friday, þat þe bodies shulden not dwelle upon þe Sabot in þe cros, for þat day of Sabot was a greet day, preieden Pilat þat her hipis shulden be broken, and þer bodies taken away. And so þe knyztis camen, and braken þe hipis of þe firste, and so of þe topir þat was picchid on þe crosse wiþ him. But whanne þei camen to Jesus, and sawen him þanne deed, þei braken not his hipis. But oon of þe knyztis openede his sidis¹ wiþ a spere, and anoon wente out blood and water. And he þat sawe it bare witnessse, and his witnessse is trewe; and he woot þat he seiþ soþ, for þat ȝe shulen bileve. Þes þingis weren doon to fulfille holy writt, ȝe shulen not breke a boon of him. And este anoþer writt seiþ, Þei shulen se him in whom þei picchiden².

The pain of
Christ's
passion.

Here shulen we knowe þat ofte God wole oo cause, and man anoþir. For it semeþ þat þes Jewis wolden be sikir of þes þree, þat þei shulden not flee away, and herfore þei diden þus. God caste for anoþer eende, for to telle þat his lawe, made of þe Paske lombe, þat þei shulden not breke his boones, figuride þis Lomb of God. And here men noten over þis, þat Cristis passioun was þe moste þat myzte be in ony man, for many causis þat weren in Crist. Cristis wittis weren moost quik, siþ in þe myddil age Crist suffride, and God ordeynede þe joie of Crist not lette þe wittis of his fleish, þat ne þei feeliden fulli þe peynes þat his bodi hadde^a. And so þis innocent feelide wel what sorowe þei diden his bodi. Þe cros, þe place, and þe tyme, aggregiden þe peyne of Crist; and unkyndenesse of his kynde, and moost synne of hem þat slown him. And so þis lomb ȝaf his blood, þat is in þree places of man. And first he ȝaf his blood bi scourging, þat was in þe fleish of Crist; siþ he ȝaf his blood of veynes, in his feet and in his hondis; but last he ȝaf blood of his herte, þat holdiþ moost preshious blood. And þis blood was kept by miracle, and movede whanne Crist was deed, for herte blood springiþ of man as in his moste propre place. And þis blood, wiþ the water, bitokeneþ ful

¹ syde, E.

² picchiden, E.

^a God ordained that the joy of Christ, as God, in accomplishing the work of redemption, should not

prevent his bodily senses from feeling to the full the pain and torment of the cross.

bigging of man, and ful waishing of his synne; but what shulde Crist do more to man?

After þes þingis a knyzt, *Joseph*, þat dwellide in *Armathie*, þat was disciple of *Jesus*, but hid for drede of þe *Jewis*, preyede¹ *Pilat* to take away þe body of *Jesus*, to do it worschip. And *Nichodeme* cam also, þat cam first to *Jesus* bi nyzt, and brouzte mirre and aloen² medlid, as it were an hundrid pound. Þes two princis token *Jesus* bodi, and bounden it wiþ lynnyn cloþis wiþ oynementis, to kepe his bodi fro rotyng and oþer harmes, as maner is to *Jewis* for to birie men. And þes two princis, 3if God wole, shulen figure helpe of *Cristis* Chirche, for to defende his lawe aȝens preestis þat ben his enemyes. For now, whanne *Crist* is deed bi preestis, shulde lordis helpen to quykene his lawe.

The descent
from the cross.

Þer was in þe place where *Crist* was don on þe crosse, a gardyn, and in þat gardyne a newe sepulcre, in þe which no man was put in ȝit. And here þei puttiden *Jesus*, for³ þe vigile of *Jewis* feeste, for þe sepulcre was nyȝt. Þis passioun of *Joon* telliþ, studied wiþ oþer þre, how þat oure Lord suffride; and noon aȝen seiþ an oþer. And ech part of þis passioun telliþ, bi oþer witt þan þe lettere, how men shulden lyve, and what shal falle boþe in þis world and þe toþir.

The entomb-
ment.

ÞE GOSPEL ON EESTIR EVYN.

[SERMON CLXXXI.]

Vespere autem Sabbati.—MATT. xxviii. [1.]

Þis gospel telliþ what service þes wymmen dide⁴ to *Cristis* bodi. *Matheu* telliþ how two *Maries*,—þe toon was *Marie Mawdeleyn*, and þe toþir oure *Ladies* sistir,—þei camen late on þe *Sabot*, þat was þe *Saturday* after þat *Crist* was deed, and þis day shyneþ first of alle þe daies in þe wyke. Þes wymmen after

The visit of the
women to the
sepulchre.

¹ So E; A has *preiden*.

² *alloen*, E; *alloes*, Q. and Wycl. versions.

³ So E; A has *fro*.

⁴ *diden*, E.

evensong tyme, whanne it was leeve¹ to worche on Sabot, ordeyneden þeir oynementis to anoynte Cristis bodi. And ful eerli on þe Sunday, þat was þe first day of þe weke, þei camen to þe sepulcre, aboute risyng of þe sunne. Þei weren comyng on þe even, and ordeyneden hem oynementis and token þer inne² nyze þe sepulcre, to be eerly þere at morewen. And we supposen þei rysen ful eerly, aboute mydnyzt, whanne day bigynneþ.

The angel announces to them the Resurrection

And lo, þer was maad a greet erpe dene, for þe angel of þe Lord cam down from hevene and neizide³ þe sepulcre of Crist, and turnede away þe stoon, and sat þeron. And his lokyng was as leizt, and his cloiþ was white as snowe. And þe angelis face like to Crist, telliþ how þe Lord is dredeful to shrewes, and þe whitenesse of his cloiþis telliþ how Crist comfortiþ goode men. And so, for drede of þis aungel, weren þes kepers aferd, and þei weren maad as dede. But þe angel answeride, and seide to þes wymmen, Nyle ze drede, for Y woot þat ze seken Jesus, þat was picched up on þe crosse. He is not here, for he is risen, as he seide. Come ze, and se þe place where þe Lord was puttid. And go ze soone, and seie to his disciplis and Petre þat he is risun, and lo, he shal go bifore 3ou in to Galile; þere shal ze se him; lo, Y have seid bifore to 3ou.

Muse we not whanne Crist roos, but holde we stable þat he roos upon þe þridde day, þat was Sunday, to bigynne þe dai at mydnyzt. And so men seien, þat Crist roos a⁴ Sunday in þe morewenyng, and feeride þe knyztis þat kepten his grave, þat his apostlis shulde not stele him. But þes knyztis tolden to þe citee, how Crist roos out of þe grave, and how þei weren aferd for þe rysyng of Crist, þus quyk, and þe Jewis bihiȝten hem greet money, to feyne þis leesyng of Cristis disciplis, þat þei camen upon þe nyzt, and stolen his bodi þe while þei slepten. And þes weren princes of preestis, þat feyneden þis leesyng þus on Crist; and þes knyztis weren coveitous, and token a greet noumbre of money. But þis rysyng of Crist was knowun in þe citee, and al þe loond. And, if God wole, þes hye preestis shulen not stoppe oþer trewe men, by 3yvyng of þer money,

Application to the present time.

¹ leueful, E.

² ber yn, E.

³ neyzbed, E.

⁴ on, E.

and of greet benefices, for to telle not Cristis lyf ne his lawe, þat ben aʒens hem. For treuþe mut algatis be known, however false men hiden it.

DE GOSPEL ON EESTIR MONEDAI.

[SERMON CLXXXII.]

*Ex discipulis*¹ *Jesu.*—LUC. xxiv. [13.]

Þis gospel telliþ how Crist apperide on Paske dai to two disciplis. For he apperide ten tymes bifore he styede into hevene, and þis, wiþ² wittnesse of knyztis, sufficide to prove þat he was risun. Crist apperide fyve tymes upon þat Sunday þat he roos, and oones to þes two disciplis, in the form þat Luk telliþ. *Two of Cristis disciplis wenten on þis Sunday to a castil þat was clepid Emaus, aboute six myle fro Jerusalem. And þes two spaken togidere of alle þes þingis þat weren fallen. And it was don, while þei fabliden, and souʒten bitwixe hem two, þe same Jesus cam nyʒ, and wente*³ *wiþ hem.* And here foolis arguen comunly, þat it is leueful to telle fablis, for þus diden þes two disciplis, after þat Crist was risun to liif^a. But graunte we first to þes foolis, þat whanne men speken fablis þei fablen in þer speche, and whanne þei fablen þei speken fablis; and þus þes two disciplis of Crist fabliden as þei shulden not, as apostlis synneden ofte, after þat Crist was risun to liif; but God forbede þat herfore Cristene men have leve to synne. But sum men seien þat fablyng is taken on two maneris; first, for speche of mannis dede þat is unknowun to oþer men, þat sum men graunten and sum men denyen, for uncerteynte of þe dede; or fable is to speke fablis ydely, as many doon, and þis is algatis yuel; siþ Crist seiþ in þe gospel, þat of ech ydil word þat men

¹ So E; A has *discipulis*.
and *wente*.

² om. E.

³ So in E; A om.

^a From misunderstanding the 'fabularentur' of the Vulgate, (Gr. ἐν τῷ ὀμιλεῖν), Wyclif has raised a

difficulty which has no real existence. The Wycl. Versions, instead of 'fabliden,' rightly render, 'talkiden.'

Christ's appearing to the two disciples that went to Emmaus.

speken, shulen þei rekene at þe day of dome. Þes disciplis spoken of bileve, but God woot wher þei synneden.

But þer izen weren holden, þat þei knewen not Jesus. And Crist seide to hem, Which ben þes wordis þat ze speken togidere wandring, and ben sorowful? And oon answeride, þat hiȝt Cleophas, and seide to him, Art þou aloon a pilgrym in Jerusalem, and hast þou not knowun what þingis han ben done in þat citee þes daies? As who seiþ, no pilgrym in Jerusalem shulde unknowe¹ þis; ȝhe, ȝif a pilgrym were him aloone, for comune speche þat was of Crist. And Crist seide to þes disciplis, What þingis? And þei seiden, Of Jesus of Nazareth, þat was a man prophete, myȝti in werk and word bifore God and al þe puple; and how þe hierste² preestis and oure princis bitraieden him, and dampned him to þe deþ, and picchiden him on þe cros. But we hopiden þat he was for to bie Israel; and now, upon alle þes þingis, to day is þe þridde day þat þes þingis weren done. But and summe wymmen of ouris maden us aferd, þe which bifore þe liȝt weren at þe sepulcre; and þei founden not his bodi, and camen, and seiden us þat þei seen a sizt of aungels, þat seyn þat Crist liveþ. And summe of ouris wenten to þe sepulcre, and founden so as þe wymmen seiden, but þei founden not him. And Crist seide to hem, O foolis, and slow of herte to bileve in alle þingis þat þe prophetis han spoken. Wher it bihovede not Crist suffre þus, and so entren into his glorie?

And bi þis gospel taken many, þat þes disciplis failiden in bileve, not al oonli for þei fabliden of þingis þat þei shulden wel bileve, but for þei hopiden sich þing þe which þei shulde bileve; and speciali for Crist clepide hem foolis and slowe for to trowe, and Crist mai not reprove men, but whanne þei don amys. And þus, as Petir synnede aftir sendyng of þe Hooli Goost, so þes disciplis synneden in riȝt trowyng of bileve. And þus shulden þes foolis shame to ȝyve hem to siche fablis, for þes disciplis fabliden³ in þing þat þei shulden bileve.

And Jesus bigan at Moises, and alle prophetis þat toolden of him, and expounede unto hem in alle scripturis þat weren of him. And þei camen nyȝ to þe castil whidir þei wenten, þat was a wallid toun, and Crist feynede him to go ferþere, and þis was soȝ þat Crist wente ferþere. And þei constreyneden him, and seiden, Sire,

¹ So E; A has *unknowun*.

² *byest*, E.

³ So E; A has *febliden*.

dwelle wiþ us, for it is even, and now þe dai is turned to nyȝt. And Jesus entride in wiþ hem, and it was doon, þe while he eet wiþ hem, he tok breed, and blesside it, and brac¹ it, and dresside it to hem. It semep þat Austyn seiþ þat þis breed was Cristis bodi, as he sacride bifore^a. And anoon weren þer ȝzen opened, and þei knewen him, and he vanishide fro þer ȝzen. And þei seiden þanne togidere, Was not oure herte brennyng in us þe while Crist spak to us in þe wey, and openede to us hooli wrytingis ?

And þei rysyng in þe same oure wenten aȝen into Jerusalem, and þei founden enlevene apostlis gederid togidere, and hem þat weren wiþ hem. And þei seiden, Þe Lord is risen verely, and he apperide to Symount Petre. And þes two disciplis telden of þo þingis þat felden in þe wey, and how þei knewen him in brekyng of breed. Men seien how þe gospel tellip, how Crist apperide speciali to Petre; not oonli for Petre was capteyn, and was beden to conferme his breþeren, but algatis for þis cause, for Petre synnede many weies in denyng of Crist, and þus he was nyȝt dispeir, and þefore Petre hadde moost nede to be confortid bi talis of Crist. And so men seien, bi greet evydence, þat Petre among alle oper apostlis was moost meke and moost servisable, and moost pore in wille and liif. And herfore Petre was ordeyned of God to be capteyn of hem alle, but not for to be heed of hem evene wiþ Crist þat was his maistir, for certis þei weren alle felowis, and licly Petre mekerst² of alle.

¹ *brake*, E.

² *mekest*, E.

^a The reference may perhaps be to the following passage from the treatise of St. Augustine, *De Consensu Evangelistarum*; where he says, commenting on the story of

Emmaus: 'A Christo est facta permissio usque ad sacramentum panis, ut, unitate corporis ejus participatâ, removeri intelligatur impedimentum inimici, ut Christus possit agnosci.'

Testimonies
to the resur-
rection.



DE TEWISDAI GOSPEL IN þE EESTIR WEKE.

[SERMON CLXXXIII.]

Stetit Jesus in medio.—LUC. xxiv. [36.]Christ appears
to the apostles
after his re-
surrection.

LUC telliþ how Jesus apperide to his disciplis, to conferme þer bileve þat he was risen to liif. Dis gospel seiþ, and Joon boþe, how *Jesus stood in þe myddil of his disciplis, and seide to hem, Pees be to 3ou.* And þis maner he hadde ofte; for myddil persone in Godhede, and þis pesible king, heeld ofte þis myddil place, and seide ofte þis word of confort. For pees is eende of alle mannis werkes, þat ech man mut nedis desire; and 3if man have þe laste pees, he is fulli blessid of God. *Y am, seiþ Crist; nyle 3e drede.* And þes two ben wordis of confort, for þe firste telliþ his Godhede, and þe toþer how þis¹ manheed is quykened. But what man shulde drede ouzt, þe while he haþ sich a maistir?

Sensible proof.

But *apostlis, disturblið and aferd, gessiden þat þei seen² a spirit.* And Crist seide to hem, *What ben 3e trublið, and þouztis comen up in 3oure hertis? See 3e myn hondis and my feet, for Y am þe same man; grope 3e and see; for a spirit haþ nouzt fleish and boones, as 3e seen me have.* And whanne he hadde seide þis þing, he shewide hem his hoondis and his side. And 3it while þei trowiden not fulli, and woundriden for joie, Crist seide, *Han 3e here ouzt þat shulde be etun?* And þei offriden to him a part of roostid fishe, and an hony comb. And whanne he hadde eten bifore hem, he toke þe remenaunt and 3af to hem. And he seide to hem, *Þes ben þe wordis þat Y spak to 3ou, 3it whanne Y was wiþ 3ou.* For he toke his twelve apostlis, and wente up to Jerusalem, and tolde hem how he shulde die þere, and rise upon þe þridde day. *And for it is nedeful alle þingis be fulfillid, þat ben writun in Moises lawe, and in prophetis, and psalmys, of me,—myche more it is nedeful be fulfillid þat Y have seide. Þanne he openede hem will, þat þei shulden undirstonde hooli writt. And he seide to hem, For it is writun þus, and þus muste Crist nedis suffre, and rise fro deep on*

¹ bis, E.² syzen, E.

þe þridde dai, and be prechid in his name penaunce and¹ forzyvyng of synnes among alle maner of folk.

And here mai we pleynty see, how Crist seiþ þat alle þingis þat ben writun of him moten nedis be. And so, siþ al þing þat shal be is writun in þe book of liif, it mut nedelingis be for þe tyme þat God haþ ordeyned it. And here men douten comunli, what fel of þe meet þat Crist eet, and how a bodi þat is blessid myzte ete on þe manere þat we doon. Here men trowen as bileve, þat Crist eet verrily, for no jogelyng ne falseheed was ony tyme in Crist. And so we supposen þis mete wente fro his moup to his stomak; and how þis mete was avoidid, we bisien us not to wite; but we trowen þat it was not turned into Cristis bodi, but avoidid on honest maner, as it is lykyng to God þat it passe. And 3if þis was oþer maner of etyng þan men eten here comunly, nepeles it shewide þat Crist was þe same man þat he was bifore.

Doubts as to the reality of Christ's eating after his resurrection.

ÞE WEDNESDAI GOSPEL IN EESTIR WEKE.

[S E R M O N C L X X X I V .]

Manifestavit² se Jesus.—JOHN XXI. [I.]

Joon telliþ in þis gospel how Jesus shewide him to his disciplis, after þe tyme þat he was risen. *Jesus shewide him þus at þe watir of Tiberiadis. And þer weren togidere at þis shewing seven disciplis of Crist;—Symount Petre, and Thomas, þat is clepid Didimus, and Nathanael, þat was of a toun of Galile, and James and Joon, Zebedees sones, and two oþir of Cristis disciplis. Symount Petre seiþ to hem, Y go for to fishe. Þei seyn to him, And we comen wiþ þee. And þei wenten out, and stieden into a ship, and þat nyzt þei token nouzt. And whanne þe morewenyng was maad, Jesus stood in þe brynke; nepeles þe disciplis knewen not þanne þat it was Jesus. Þerfore Jesus seiþ to hem, Children, han 3e ony sowvel³ þat is, mete to make potage, and to medle among potage. Þei answeriden to Crist, Nay. Crist seide to*

Christ appearing to his disciples at the lake of Tiberias.

¹ So E; om. A.

² So E: A has *Manistavit*.

³ sowel, E.

hem, Sende ze þe net on þe riȝt side of ȝour rowyng, and ze shulen fynde. And þanne þei castiden þer nett, and þei myȝten not drawe it for multitude of fishis. And þanne seid þat disciple þat Jesus lovede unto Petre, It is þe Lord; as ȝif Joon wolde seie to Petre, Þis man is Jesus þat stondiȝ ȝendre¹ on þe banke. Symount Petre, whanne he hadde herd þat þis man was þe Lord Jesus, he girde him in a cole,—for he was bifore nakid,—and puttide him into þe water for to come þus to Crist. But oper disciplis comen bi þe boot, for þei weren not fer fro þe lond, but as it were two hundrid cubitis, drawyng þe nett of fishe.

And as þei camen down to þe lond, þei sawen hoot coolis put, and fishe put on hem, and eke þei sawen a loof. And Jesus seide to hem, Bryng of þe fishes þat ze han take now. Symount Petre wente up to þe lond, and drowȝ þe nett in to þe lond, ful of grete fishes, an hundrid and fifty and þree; and ȝit, while þei weren so many, þe nett was not broken wiȝ hem. Jesus seip to hem, Come ze and ete. And noon of the men þat eeten dursten axe him, What art þou, for þei wisten þat he was þe Lord. And Jesus cam, and ȝaf hem breed, and fishe also. And þis bridde tyme was Jesus shewid to his disciplis, fro þat he was risen fro deed.

Here men noten many wordis; for þis gospel is ful of witt. First, how Petre wente aȝen to fishing, but Mathew not to his tolrrie²; for þe firste craft is lewful, and þe toper nedij to synne. And men supposen þat Petre hadde of borowyng boȝe boot and nett, and þes disciplis camen togidere, and hadde werk and fish in commune. But þes two fishingis of Petre figuren two manere of men þat ben convertid unto Crist. Summe breken þe nett, and turnen to þe water, and aftirward ben dampned in helle; and þes ben figurid bi Petris fishing, þat was bifore þat Crist suffride. And þus tellij þe gospel, þat Petre fishide til þe nett brak, bifore þat Crist was deed; but þis fishing figurij men þat shulen laste to blis, and þes men mai not breke þe nett, alȝif þei ben many and grete. For þei comen to þe lond of liif, and breken not þus Goddis heestis. And þus, for Crist was in blis, and was passid his weye in erpe, þerfore he stood on þe lond, and neiȝer rowide, ne wente on þe water. And ȝit he myȝte, ȝif he had wold, gon³ on þe water, as he dide before; but he

Some fish
break through
the net and
some are
brought to
land.

¹ ȝende, E.

² tollerie, E.

³ have gone, E.

figuride þat he was comen to stableness of þe lond of liif. Þis noumbre of fishis þat here weren taken, bitokeneþ þe noumbre of seintis þat ben blessid in þe Trinite, for þree partis of þer werkes. And so þes þre fifti fishis ben alle þes seintis in hevene, resting in þer jubile for þe werkis þat þei hadden doon; and þes þree odde fishis bitokenen þe Trinite, þat is oon in oo¹ kynde, and stabliþ alle seintis in hevene. Þes hoothe coolis wiþ þis fishe, is þe noumbre of hooly aungels, þat brennen in love of God, and feden oþer, and ben fed. And herfore axide Crist bifore, wher þei hadden ony þing to ete, to figure þis feste in hevene, where seintis feden and ben fed.

ON PURSDAI IN EESTIR WEKE.

[S E R M O N C L X X V .]

Maria stabat ad sepulcrum.—JOHN XX. [11.]

Þis gospel telliþ how Crist apperide to Marie Mawdeleyn. For Crist wolde þat womman kynde hadde þis privilegie to fore man, þat he shewide him aftir his deþ raþer to womman þan to man. For wymmen ben freel as water, and taken souner printe of bileve. Joon telliþ how þis *Marie at þe sepulcre stood wiþouten, wepyng*. And licly she wente bifore wipinne, and wantide Cristis bodi; but her brennyng in love nedide hir to abide more. *And while þis Marie wepte þus, she bowide and lokide into þe tombe; for hoot love makij many lokingis to þat þing þat it loveþ. And she saw two aungels sittinge in white, one at þe heed, anoper at þe feet, wher þe bodi of Jesus was put. Þe aungels seyn to her, Womman, what wepist þou? She seiþ to hem, For þei han taken away my Lord, and Y not where þei han doon him. Whanne she hadde seid þes wordis, she turnede abac fro þe sepulcre, and she saw Jesus stoundinge, and she wiste not þat it was Jesus. Jesus seide to Magdaleyn, Womman, what wepist þou? whom sekist þou? She, gessinge þat he was a gardyner, seide to him, Sire, zif þou hast taken him away, telle me where þou hast put*

Christ risen
appears to
Mary Mag-
dalene,

¹ om. E.

him, and *Y* shal take him þennes, and þus he shal not be chargious to þis gardyn. *Jesus seiþ to hir, Maria.* And so she knewe bi vois and name þat þis persone was Jesus, and she was turned, and seide to him, *Rabony, þat is to seiþ, Maistir.* And it semeþ þat she wolde have kist Cristis feet as bifore. *Jesus seiþ to hir, Nyle þou touche me, for ȝit Y have not steied to my fadir.*

the reason why he will not let himself be touched by her.

Marie lovede here fleishli Crist; and he was not steied in her herte as a bodi glorified, as he shal be after assencioun. And bifore þis ascencioun shal he not be fleishly tretid, for bi his ascensioun his body shal be goostly knowun, and not bi sich fleishly kissing as Marie wolde have kissid Crist. *þerfore go þou to my breþeren, and seiþ to hem, Y steie to my fadir and to ȝour fadir, to my God and to ȝour God.* Here Crist spak homely bi his manheed as he shulde, for þe Trinite is þus his fadir, and he haþ a God as we han. And þus he shewide his broþerheed, and telliþ þat þei shulen aftir be blessid. *And herfore cam Marie Mawdeley, and tolde to disciplis þat she sawe þe Lord, and þes þingis seide he to hir.*

ÞE FRYDAY GOSPEL IN ÞE EESTIR WEKE.

[SERMON CLXXXVI.]

Undecim discipuli abierunt.—MATT. xxviii. [16.]

MATHEW telliþ how Crist apperide in Galile to his disciplis. *Enleven disciplis wenten into Galile, into an hil where Jesus ordeynede hem. And þei seyngþ him loutiden him, but summe doutiden.* And bisie we us not here, wher þes enlevene disciplis weren apostlis, or what þing þei doutiden here, siþ Thomas, ferrest fro bileeve, trowide bifore þat Crist was risun. Wel we witen þat men mai doute where þis be Crist, and ȝit bileve þat Crist is risun fro dede, alȝif we witen not which is he.

Christ gives mission to his apostles to teach and baptize all nations.

And Jesus cam nyȝ, and spake to hem, and seide, Al power is ȝouun to me in hevene and in erþe¹. It semeþ to sum men þat þes wordis weren seid of þe manheed of Crist, and þat he haþ, after

after assuring them of his power.

¹ So rightly E; A excludes the whole sentence from the quotation.

his up-risyng, a maner of power, boþe hevenli and erþeli, boþe in doweris of his bodi, and in worching of his Chirche. For Crist mut nede abide his tyme to worche, boþe in hevene and in erþe. And strive we not aboute þis word, þat þe same power of his manheed myȝte now have worchid þus and now þus, aftir þat his tyme axiþ. Wel we witen as oure bileve, þat Crist haþ al sich power; and þes wordis weren wel seide here, to þat witt þat God menep.

Whanne Chist haþ confortid his disciplis of his power þat he haþ, he enjoyneþ hem an office to alarge his Chirche here. *þerfore go ȝe, seiþ Crist, and teche ȝe alle heþene men, and cristene ȝe hem in þe name of þe Fadir, of þe Sone, and of þe Holi Goost. And teche ȝe hem to kepe alle þingis, whatever Y have beden ȝou; and lo, Y am wiþ ȝou in alle daies, to þe end of þe world.* Here mai we see how Crist worchiþ dyversely, for dyverse tymes; for sum tyme he biddiþ his apostlis go not out into þe heþen mennis weye, and here he biddiþ þat þei shulen go and teche alle manere of heþene men. But wel we witen þat þes wordis reversen no þing hemsilf; for, as clerkis seyn, contradiccioun is of þe same þing in þe same tyme; as, now spekiþ a man to me, and now he is stille and fer fro me. Sum men seien, þat Crist bad men go not out into þis weye, for he wolde þat þei pas-siden not resoun, ne token þe wey of heþene men. And þus Crist wolde þat his Chirche growede fro a litil flok to many flok¹; and first he wolde þat it were litil, and siþ more, as skil was.

Men musen aftir, how apostlis cristeden² men in þe name of Crist, siþ Crist telliþ here þe fourme to cristen, in þe name of þe Trinite. But here seien wise men, þat neiþer Crist, ne his apostlis, chargiden not siche wordis so myche as þei diden vertues and dedes. And so, to maken Crist more knowun, þe apostlis baptisiden wel in þis word; and þei hadden lore of God to do as þei shulden, for dyverse tymes. But men douten ferþere-more, how Cristis manheed mai be til domesday bi al þis world, siþ he is oonly now in heven. But here men seyn comunli, þat Crist is everywhere bi his Godhede, and bi man-heed wiþ his apostlis and her suters, til domesday. And þis is gret

The form of words in baptism.

¹ folc, E; and this seems rather the best reading.

² cristenyden, E.

confort to hem, to be stable in þer dedis; for þis office þat Crist haþ ʒovun hem myzte not ellis be performyd. Lord! siþ an erþeli kyng is boþe bi vertue and power bi alle places of his rewme, more shulde þis acorde to Crist. Crist haþ many maners of being in his rewme, as clerkis knowen. And so algatis þis is soþ, þat unto þe daie of dome he is wiþ ech part of his Chirche, on oo maner or on oþer.

ÞE SATURDAI GOSPEL IN ÞE EESTIR WEKE.

[SERMON CLXXXVII.]

Una Sabati.—Jo. xx¹. [1.]

Þis gospel of Joon telliþ how Marie Mawdeleyn was afrayed in sekinge of Jesus bodi, and how Petre and Joon diden. *Þe firste day after þe Sabot, þat was on þe Sunday, cam Marie Mawdeleyn to þe sepulcre eerly, þe while it was derk. And she saw þe stoon taken away fro þe sepulcre. Herfore she ran, and cam to Symount Petre, and to þat disciple þat Jesus lovede, and seiþ to hem, Þei han taken my Lord fro þe sepulcre, and Y not wher þei han don him. And herfore Petre and Joon wenten out, and camen to þe sepulcre. And þes two runnen togidere, and Joon ran bifore Petre, and cam bifore to þe sepulcre. And whanne he hadde bowid him, he saw lynnenn cloþis of Crist leide aside, but he entride not. But Symount Petir cam after him, and entride in to þe sepulcre, and sawe þes lynnenn cloþis leid biside, and þe sudarie þat was on Cristis heed, not put wiþ þe lynnenn cloþis, but bi itsilf wlappid in o place. Þanne entride Joon in to þe sepulcre, and saw, and bilevede. For ʒit þei knewen not hooli writt, þat Crist muste rise fro deed.*

Here men seien comunli þat Joon figuride þe synagoge, and Petre þe heþene men þat camen after to bileve. But Joon wolde not entre in þe tumbre for Jewes, for a litil part camen in to bileve of Crist, and þe more stood wiþouten. Petre entride

¹ So rightly E and Q; A has *Luk. xxiv.*, apparently confounding this gospel with that for the second Wednesday after Easter, *infra*, p. 145.

Mary Magdalen, Peter, and John, convinced of the resurrection.

Peter represents the belief of the Gentiles, John that of the Jews.

wiþ heþene folk, and saw how þe lynnen cloiþ was departid fro sudarie of Crist; and ech of þes was in his place. Þis bi-tokeneþ þat dignite and¹ prelacie is severid now fro traveile in Chirche, and fewe ben þat taken þe traveile, but worship of þis lynnen cloiþ many taken wiþ greet wille. And so Joon stondiþ wiþouten, and fleeþ to take þis sudarie.

ÞE FIRSTE WEDNESDAI GOSPEL AFTER EESTIR WEKE.

[SERMON CLXXXVIII.]

Surgens Jesus mane, prima [sabbati].—MARK xvi. [9.]

ÞIS gospel of Mark telliþ how þat Crist roos to liif. Mark seiþ þat, *Jesus, risynge eerly þe firste Sunday after þe Sabot, þat is, þe firste day of þe weke, þat comeþ after Pask day, apperide first to Marie Mawdeleyn, of whom he caste oute seven fendis; and in her weren sevene synnes, and answeringe sevene fendis. Þis Marie, goinge, tolde to hem þat weren wiþ Jesus, morenyng² and weþyng; for she tolde to apostlis, and oþer wymmen þat weren wiþ her. And þei, heerynge þat Crist lyvede, and was seyn of hir, trowiden not. And after þes³ was Crist shewid to two of þes disciplis walking to a toun a litil fro Jerusalem, but in anoþer liknesse; and þei wenten forþ, and tolden to oþer. Here men tellen and corden⁴ þes gospelis; þat Marie Mawdeleyn cam ful eerli to þe sepulcre, and wente aȝen, and cam aȝen wiþ oþer wymmen. For love þat languishiþ traveiliþ faste aboute þe þing þat is loved.*

The unbelief
of many in the
resurrection.

¹ of, E.

² moornynge, E.

³ þis, E.

⁴ So E; A has *recorden*.



DE FIRSTE FRIDAI AFTIR EESTIR WEKE.

[SERMON CLXXXIX.]

Exierunt mulieres.—MATT. xxviii. [8.]

Christ meets
the women
after his
resurrection.

Þis gospel telliþ how þat Crist apperide eft to þes wymmen. Maþew seiþ þat, *Þes wymmen wenten out of þe sepulcre, wiþ drede and myche joie.* But þis was alone drede, for þei bileveden þat Crist was risun, and þat he was boþe God and man, but þei dredden what veniaunce God wolde take for þis synne. *But þei runnen to telle his disciplis; and lo, Jesus cam aȝens hem, and seide, Heil be ȝe. And þei camen nyȝ, and helden his feet, and lowtiden him. Þanne seide Jesus to hem, Nyle ȝe drede; go ȝe, and telle ȝe my breþeren þat þei gon in to Galile, for þer shulen þei see me.*

The high
priests give
money to the
guards.

And whanne þes wymmen wenten forþ, lo, summe of þe knyȝtis þat kepten þe sepulcre camen in to þe citee, and telden þe princis of preestis alle þingis þat weren doon of Cristis resurreccioun. And þes princis, gederid wiþ elders men of Jewis, token a counceil, and ȝaun þe knyȝtis myche moneye: and seiden to þes knyȝtis, Seie ȝe, his disciplis camen on þe nyȝ, and stolen his bodi, while ȝe sleepten¹. And ȝif þis be herd of Pilat, we shulen gree wiþ² him, and make ȝou sikir. And þes knyȝtis token þis money, and diden as þei weren tauȝt; and þis word is publishid among þe Jewes til þis dai.

Application to
modern times.

As þis lesyng sprong of preestis, so lesyngis spryngen to day; to bigynne at þe hye preest, and go bi preestis of his sort. And as it semeþ to many men þis gabbing smatchiþ blasfemye, and so it semeþ grevouser þan was þis gabbing of princis of Jewes. For þei gabbiden on Cristis bodi, but þes gabben aȝens his Godhede. Þei seien þat þei soilen³ men boþe of peyne and of synne; and ȝit summe sich ben Goddis traitours, þat God jugiþ to be dampned. For þes þat þus disseyven þe puple blasfemen aȝens God. And þus in lawis and in bullis ben gabbingis þicke sownen; and freris, clerkis of þis prince, han sum part in þis crafte.

¹ slepten, E.² So E; om. A.³ assoylen, E.

ON SECUNDE WEDNESDAI AFTIR EESTIR WEKE.

[SERMON CXC.]

Una Sabati.—LUC. xxiv. [I.]

Þis gospel telliþ how Crist apperide, after tyme þat he was deed. Luk telliþ, *On þe Sunday next*, after þe sabot of Jewis, *eerli and in þe grey day, camen wymmen to se þe sepulcre, bringinge þe oynementis þat þei hadden maad redi.* And so þes wordis of Mark, þat þes wymmen camen to þe sepulcre whanne þe sunne was risun, moten be wel undirstonden. Sum men seien þat þei camen ofte, and ofte wenten aþen. Mark telliþ of þis comyng, þat þei camen at þe sunne risyng; but Luk telliþ of þe first comyng, þat þei camen on þis Sunday; and þis semeþ more lik to soiþ, þan þat þei tarieden bi þe wey, til þat þe sunne was risun; for love was spore to þes¹ wymmen, to make hem to haste faste. *And þei foundun þis grete stoon turned fro þe dore of þe grave. And þei, comyng in, founden not þe bodi of þe Lord Jesus. And it felle, while þei weren astonyed in þeir mynde of þis, lo, two men stonden biside hem, in shynyng cloiþ, and þes two men weren two angels. And while þei dreden, and castiden down þer face to þe erþe, þe angelis seiden to hem, What seken 3e þe lvyng among deed men? He is not here, now in bodi, but he is risun; þenke 3e how he spak wiþ 3ou, 3it whanne he was in Galile, and seide, þat mannis sone mut be bitrayed in to synful mennis hondis, and be pitchid upon þe cros, and rise on þe þridde day. And þei hadden mynde of Cristis wordis, and þei turneden aþen fro þe sepulcre, and tolden alle þes to þe enlevene, þat weren apostlis, and to alle oþer. And þes wymmen weren Marie Mawdeleyn, and an oþer womman was Joone, and Marie James modir, and oþir wymmen þat weren wiþ hem, þat seiden þes þingis to apostlis.* And so it semeþ bi þes wordis þat here weren fyve wymmen at þe leste. *And þes wordis weren semyng*

Christ's resur-
rection de-
clared to the
women by
angels,

¹ So E; A has þis.

to þes men, as þei weren founed wordis, for wymmen, whanne þei ben affrayed, speken ofte wordis out of witt, and þes disciplis trowiden not hem. And Petre roos, and ran to þe grave, and knelynge down, sawe þe linnen cloþis put bi hem silf; and he wente away, wundringe bi him silf þat þing was doon¹.

and believed
in by them
before it was
believed by
the apostles.

And here men seien comunly, þat Crist apperide here to Petre, whanne he wente bi him silf; but, for he wantiþ oþir witnesse, þefore þis gospel telliþ it not. But þe gospel telliþ þat Crist apperide to Petre; and it is licy þat in þis tyme. And of þis gospel it semeþ opyn, þat þes wymmen trowiden wel þat Crist was risen fro deef bifore þe apostlis, as Petre, or Joon, or ony oþer. Crist shewide him goostli to his modir, and telde hir how he was risun. Marie Mawdeleyn wiste not zit alle þe treupis of þis uprisyng, but hadde doute of many oþer, as it semeþ of Joones gospel. And so Petre and Joon passiden þes wymmen soone aftir in many pointis; but þes wymmen trowiden to þe aungels, þat Crist was risen and was alyve.

PE SECUNDE FRIDAI GOSPEL AFTIR EESTIR WEKE.

[SERMON CXCI.]

Accesserunt ad Jesum.—MATT. ix. [14.]

Þis gospel telliþ how Crist tauzte Joones disciplis bifore Cristis deþ. Mathew seiþ, þat Joones disciplis camen to Jesus, and axiden þis questioun, *Whi we and Pharisees fasten ofte, but þi disciplis fasten not? And Jesus seide to hem, Wher children of þe spouse may moorne, as longe as þe spouse is wiþ hem? But þer shulen come daies, whanne þe spouse shal be taken from hem, and þanne þei shulen faste. For no man puttliþ a clout of a strong cloiþ into an oold cloiþ, for it shal take away þe fulnesse of þe newe cloiþ, and þer is maad a wers brekyng. And men putten² not newe wyn into oold botelis; ellis þe botelis ben broken, and þe wyn is shed, and þe botelis perishen; but þei senden newe wyn into newe botelis, and boþe ben kept.*

Christ defends
his disciples for
not fasting.

¹ of þat þyng þat was done, E.

² So E; A has *ine* puttliþ.

It semeþ þat Crist wolde meene bi þes two licnessis, þat boþe disciplis of Joon and disciplis of Phariseis weren good in þer tyme, but þer tyme is passid; but disciplis of Crist ben stronge as a newe garnement, þat shulde evermore laste, wiþouten ony cloutyng. And God wolde þat þes newe ordris studieden in þis mater. Þe secounde ensample of Crist turneþ to þe same witt. For Cristis disciplis ben newe botelis made of him; and newe lawe is newe wyn, þat Crist haþ ʒetid¹ in þer hertis. And oþer ceremonyes shulen not lette hem to worche werkes of God, as þes newe ordres letten to worche after þe gospel. And þus þes newe hoolis, þat ben maad in oold botelis, letten profit of þe Chirche bi olde and newe cloutid² togidere.

Interpretation.

DE ÞRIDDE WEDNESDAI AFTIR EESTIR WEKE.

[SERMON CXCI.]

Facta est questio de.—JOHN iii. [25.]

Þis gospel telliþ how Jewis and disciplis of Joon strooven, and how Joon baar witnessse of Crist, þat he is hyere þan þei boþe. Joon telliþ þat, *a question was maad of Joones disciplis of purificacioun*, þat men hadden of baptim³. Joon baptside, and Crist baptside; and þei stroven which of hem was beter. And Joones disciplis *camen to him and seiden, Maistir, he þat was wiþ þee biþonde þe water of Joordan, to whom þou barist witnessse, lo, he baptsiþ, and alle comen to him. Baptiste answeride, and seide, A man mai not take ouzt, but ʒif it be ʒouun him from hevene. ʒe ʒou silf beren me witnessse, þat Y seide ʒou, þat Y am not Crist, but þat Y am sent bifore him. He þat haþ a spouse is an housebonde; and þe frend of þe housebonde, þat stondiþ and heeriþ him, joieþ bi joie for þe vois of þe housebonde.* Joon wolde meene bi þes wordis, þat Crist is more worshipful þan he; for Crist is an housebonde, and al hooli Chirche his spouse; and Joon is but a frend to þis housebonde, and a membre of þis spouse. And so Joon haþ moche joie boþe in bodi and in soule, whanne he heerिþ Cristis vois, þat is

John bears witness that Christ must increase and he must decrease.

¹ ʒettis, E.

² cloutyng, E.

³ baptyme, E.

þe housebonde¹ of holi Chirche. And ȝif a spouse do a worship to her housebonde, for he is beter, myche more þe Chirche and her membris shulden do worship to Crist. *And þis² my joie is fulfillid. He mut wex, and Y mut wanese³.* And so Joones fame muste wexe for a tyme, and Cristis be hid; and after þe fame of Crist muste creese, and þe fame of Joon wexe lasse. For Joon was ordeyned for þis eende, to bringe in þe name of Crist; and whanne he haþ do þis office, he muste ceesse of þis maistirship. For as bristil⁴ bryngiþ in þe þreed, and knyttip not þe leþer wipinne, so Joones penaunce brouȝte Crist in, but Joon is not þe grace þat knittip. *He þat comep from above is above alle; he þat is of þe erþe spekiþ of þe erþe⁵; he þat is comen from hevene is above alle. And þat þing þat he haþ seen and herd, he witnessiþ, and no man, to regarde, takiþ witnesse of him. But he þat takiþ his witnesse, haþ marked þat God is trewe.* It semep þat Joon wolde seie, þat Crist is boþe God and man, and þus he cam from hevene, and he leeeþ not to be in hevene, alȝif he toke mannis kynde, and is maad lesse þan angelis. And þus men ben myche to blame, þat trowen not to Cristis word. *For he whom God haþ þus sent, spekiþ wordis of God;* but what man of bileve wolde not trowe to Goddis wordis? And so many ben out of bileve þis day in þe Chirche, for þei trowen to sensible wordis, and oþer signes þat men maken, but unsensible wordis of Goddis Sone, þat mai not passe, þei trowen litil or nouȝt, but putten þes wordis bihynde. And þis is an untreuþe aȝen þe firste commaundement.

For not in mesure ȝyveþ God spirit. For God ȝyveþ þe Hooli Goost, þat is wipouten mesure myche; and hise ȝiftis ben not mesurid bi man, alȝif symonyens mesuren þer grace, and ȝyven pleyner⁶ absolucion, and more suffragies for more money^a. But

The grace of God without measure, unlike the absolution of ecclesiastics.

¹ So E; *bose-bonde*, A. ² in þis, E. ³ *vanyschen*, E.
⁴ *bristel*, E. ⁵ So in E; the words *He þat comep—erþe* are excluded from the quotation in A. ⁶ *plener*, E.

^a The indulgences of which the friars had the distribution carried with them the plenary or partial absolution of sin, so far as the temporal punishment due to it was concerned, to the persons obtaining

them. But the same indulgences might also be applied *per modum suffragii*. 'Suffragium,' as explained by Ferraris and one of his later editors in his useful *Bibliotheca*, is the spiritual aid which one believer

sipen þes ben nawfragies, wel is him þat bieþ not. For Joon seiþ here, þat no man mai take ouzt but of God; and siþ þes prelatiſ ben of erþe, þei speken of erþe, and ofte fals. *De fadir loveþ þe some, siþ he is þe same God, and 3af alle þingis in his power, as alle þingis ben Cristis*¹. *He þat bileveþ in þe sone, haþ liif þat aye shal laste; and he þat is unbileveful to þe sone, shal not se þe blis of hevene, but Goddis ire dwelliþ upon him*². And siþ þes wordis of Baptist, put biside wordis of popis, ben so contrarie togidere, þei moten have contrarie endis. But 3it Baptist was more to God þan alle þes popis þat speken þus.

ON ÞE ÞRIDDE FRIDAI AFTIR EESTIR WEKE.

[SERMON CXCIII.]

Ego lux veni in mundum.—JOHN xii. [46.]

Þis gospel of Jon telliþ how Crist seiþ Baptistis sentence, and for what ende he cam doun, and he³ profitiþ to his Chirche. For þis turtill discordiþ not from oþere foulis of hevene, but bi lownesse and meekenesse he singiþ wel undir hem. *I lizt, seiþ Crist, cam into þe world, þat ech man þat trowiþ þerinne dwelle not in derknesse.* Crist is lizt bi his Godheed þat noon here mai dwelle wiþ; but þis lizt is sumwhat shadewid bi þe manheed þat he haþ takun. And so þe ende wherfore Crist is man, is profitable to his Chirche, siþ men han bi Crist grace to trowe in him, boþe God and man. First, men mai se his manheed, and

Christ the light of the world.

¹ So E; A includes the clause in the quotation. The words *He—him* are excluded from the quotation in A.

² So in E; the ³ om. E.

affords to another for the sake of obtaining from God a remission of the temporal punishment due to sin. It was in this form that indulgences were applied for the benefit of the dead. For *Indulgentiæ non conceduntur mortuis per modum iudicii et absolutionis, quia Ecclesia exercere iudicium nequit in illos, qui suæ jurisdictioni non subjacent, ut sunt*

mortui: istis itaque conceduntur per modum suffragii. Wyclif means that the friars taught the people, that the more money they gave them for pious, or ostensibly pious, objects, the more indulgences they gained, applicable by way of suffrage to the spiritual benefit of their friends and relatives, whether living or dead.

bileve þat boþe it and his Godhed ben o persone of God, and lyve after lore of þis persone. And so þis list haþ out of men derknesse of synne, þat ellis wolde shende hem. And as many men in umbre seen betere þan men in greet list, so meke men in þis list seen betere þan men in worldli lyzt. For men þat seen þis list of heven moten nedis be lowe, and se it in umbre. And þus it semeþ þat many prelatis, for þei ben hye in þer list, for þei trowen not in Crist, ben blynde bi glorie of þis world.

His word shall
judge mankind
at the last day.

And 3if ony man heere my wordis, and kepe hem not, I juge him not; for Y cam not to juge þe world, but for to save þe world. Here Crist takip jugement for riht jugyng to peyne, and spekip of his manheed for tyme þat he wandriþ here. For as Crist, bi his Godhede, jugip even wij þe Fadir, so bi his manhede he jugip at þe dai of dome. *He þat despisip me, and takip not my wordis, haþ a juge þat jugip him, for þe word þat Y have spoken shal juge him in þe laste day.* And þis word is in beyng¹ a þe blessid God in Trinite. *For Y have not spoken of myself, but þe fadir þat sente² me, he 3af me a mandement, what Y shal seie, and what Y shal speke.* For Crist myzte not, bi his manheed, neiþer erre in þouzt ne in speche; for he muste nedis seie in his soule þat þat his Fadir bad him seie. *And³ Y woot þat þe fadris mandement is liif everlastinge, and þerfore þingis þat Y speke, I speke so as my fadir seide to me.* And hereinne shulde ech man sue Crist, to speke and do þat God biddip; and 3if he be contrarie herto, he synneþ, difformed⁴ fro Cristis wille. And so al þat God bad Abraham shulde he do, and dide myche; but God bad him not sle his sone, but offre him; and so he dide. And þus in þingis þat ben to do, shulde man speke and do mekely, evere redy for to do what ever God wole þat he do. But 3if God wole þat he do not þis for þis tyme, 3it God wole þat he do it, 3if he shulde, for anoper tyme, do þis after Goddis wille.

¹ So E; A has *biyng*.
cludes from the quotation.

² So E; *sende*, A.
⁴ *defourmyd*, E.

³ So E; A ex-

* That is, essentially.

PE FOURPE WEDNESDAI AFTIR EESTIR WEKE.

[SERMON CXCIV.]

*Respiciens*¹ *Jesus*^a.—JOHN xvii. [11.]

Dis gospel telliþ how Crist preiede for þe noumber of his apostlis. Joon seiþ þat Crist preiede þus; *Hooly fadir, kepe hem in þi name which þou hast zoven me, þat þei ben oon, in maner, as we ben. Whanne Y was wiþ hem, Y kepte hem in þi name; Y kepte hem þat þou zapest me, and noon of hem perishide, but þe some of perishinge, þat was Judas Scarioþ*², *þat þe Scripture were fulfillid. But now Y come to þee; and þes þingis Y speke in þe world, þat þei have my joie fulfillid in hemsilf. Y zaf hem þi word, and þe world hadde þem in hate, for þei ben not of þe world, as Y am not of þe world.* And here is þe world³ taken for men þat lyven worldli, and shulen be dampned at þe laste, for defaute of charite. And þis worldlyshipe shal laste as longe as prelatis ben þus worldli; for þei shulden bere up oþer men, and teche hem þe weye to hevене. *Y preye not, seiþ Crist, þat þou take hem now out of þe world, but þat þou kepe hem from yvel, þat nedip men to be dampned. For þis synne is moost yvel þat mai falle here to men.*

Christ prays for his disciples.

¹ *Aspiciens*, E.

² So E; A includes the clause in the quotation.

³ So E; A has *word*.

^a These are merely from the introductory words, which are not found in the gospel itself, but, in the Sarum as in the Roman missal, are

so frequently prefixed to it. The text ought to have been, 'Pater sancte, serva eos.'



ÞE FOURÞE FRIDAI GOSPEL AFTIR EESTIR WEKE.

[SERMON CXC.V.]

Filioli mei adhuc modicum.—JOHN xiii. [33.]

Christ with his
disciples at the
Last Supper.

Þis gospel telliþ how Crist spak to his disciplis on Shire Þursdai. *My children, seiþ Crist, 3it I am a litil tyme wiþ 3ou. 3e shulen seke me, and as Y seide to þe Jewis, Whidir Y go 3e may not come, but to 3ou Y seie now.* Crist seide to þe Jewis, þat þei myzten never come to hevене, but he seide to his disciplis þat þei myzten now comen. For siþ alle þingis moten nedis be, apostlis moten dwelle 3it hereafter, and edifie holi Chirche, as Crist haþ enjoyned hem.

The new com-
mandment of
love.

A newe mandement Y 3yve to 3ou, þat 3e loven togidere ; as Y have loved 3ou, 3he, þat 3e loven togidere. Crist 3yveþ here ensample to hise, þat þei shulden þus love togidere, as Crist lovede hem ; and þanne þei procuren not to hem worldli worship and worldli riches. For Crist lovede hem not þus, as he shewide in James and Joon. And in þis newe maundement failen popis and oþer prelatiþ, for þei loven men þat þei clepen þeir frendis to fatte dignities in þe Chirche. And siþ þis was ende of Cristis love, whi þat he lovede his apostlis, þat þei myzten have ensample of Crist to love togidere as he lovede hem, it is greet synne among þes prelatiþ to love þus fleishly þer frendis ; for it is not verri love, but raþer hate of hem ; for ech good love of man mut be ensamplid of Cristis love. And here ben many prestis grounded, þat for love of Crist þei wishen and worchen, þat clerkes wanten worldli lordship ; for in þis forme Crist lovede apostlis, and he biddiþ us þus love togidere. And here mai we see how preestis ben knyht togidere in harmful hate ; for siche worldli love of hem is contrarie to Cristis love. But neþeles Crist seiþ, *In þis shulen alle men knowe 3ou þat 3e ben my disciplis, 3if 3e han love togidere.* Here mai we see opynly, what man loveþ þe Chirche bi love þat Crist lovede his apostlis. *Symount Petre seiþ to Crist, Sire whidir goist þou ? Jesus an-*

sweride to him, Whidir þat Y go þou maist not sue me now, but aftirward þou shalt sue me¹. Here men taken of þis tixt, how þei shulden love þe Chirche, and procure to it bi charite þat it kepe Cristis ordenance. For worldli love, contrarie herto, is myche hate þat Crist forfendiþ; as 3if a man wolde fede a bridde, to take him aftir in þe² granes. But þis treuþe is not knowun here, for worldlynesse þat men ben inne.

DE MONEDAI GOSPEL IN PROCESSION^a WEKE.

[SERMON CXCVI.]

Quis vestrum habebit amicum.—LUC. xi. [5.]

Þis gospel telliþ bi opyn resoun how þat Crist mut love his children. Luk telliþ how Jesus seide to his disciplis þis ensample; *Which of 3ou shal have a frend, and shal 3o to him at mydnyzt, and shal seie to him, Frend, lene þou me þre loves, for my frend is comun out of þe weye to me, and I have not mete þat I shal putte bifore him. And he wiþynne answeringe seie, Nyle þou be hevy to me, now þe dore is shitt, and my children ben in bedde wiþ me; I may not rise and 3yve to þe. And if he laste knockinge, I seie to 3ou, ab3if he shal not 3yve him and rise, for þat þat he is his frend, neþeles for his shrewidnesse, and noye þat þe frend makip him, he shal rise and 3yve him looves, as manye as him nedip, sip he shulde have more anoye to dwelle stille in his bed. And I seie to 3ou, seip Crist, Axe 3e, and it shal be 3ouun to 3ou; seke 3e, and 3e shal fynde; knocke 3e, and it shal be openyd to 3ou. For ech man þat axip takiþ, and he þat sekip fyndip, and it shal be opened to him þat knockip. For which of 3ou axip his fadir breed, and wher he shal 3yve him a stoon? Or if he axe a fish³, wher he shal 3yve him an eddir for þe fish? Or if he axe an ey, wher he shal dresse him a scorpioun? Þerfor if 3e, sip 3e be yuele,*

The efficacy of instant prayer.

¹ So in E; om. A.

² his, E.

³ fische, E.

^a From the earliest times the Litanies used to be chanted by the clergy and faithful, walking in pro-

cession, on the Rogation days. See Bingham's *Antiq. Eccles. xiii. 1, 12.*

Interpretation
of the gospel.

kunnen ȝyve goode ȝiftis to ȝoure sones, how moche more ȝoure fadir of hevene shal ȝyve a good spirit to men þat axen him. For God is more lovyng, more merciful, and more fre to ȝyve hise sones, þan men may be to ȝyve her children any goodis.

It is seid comunli þat mannys frend comyng from þe weie, is mannys spirit þat is waginge¹ aboute desiir of worldli þingis. But whanne þis spirit seeþ bi resoun þat þis is bisynesse and no profit, þanne it turneþ aȝen to þe man, and axiþ him foode medeful to him. Þis man comeþ at mydnyȝt to God, þat axiþ him in derknesse of synne, bifore he be purgid of lustful willis þat he haþ had in þe world. For clerkis seyn, þat where mannys spirit is, þere he is, siþ he is þat spirit; and filosofris seien over, þat mannys spirit is where evere his affecioun is. And þus seiþ Poul þat his conversacioun is in hevene, as ouren shulde be. Þes children ben in þe bed wiþ man, þat ben in reste of hevene wiþ God, and may not ryse and disserve to man, as prelatiþ þat serven here to þer breþeren. Þis lastinge knocking is purging of man þat haþ lyved synfully; þis improbite to þis purpos is just taryng of God, to ȝyve to man þat is unable þingis profitable to him. Þes þre loovys ben þre knowingis þat man haþ of þe Trinite; as ech knowing of an article of bileeve is clepid a loof.

And þus þat man of þe world ȝyveþ a stoon instide² of breed, þat instide of articlis of þe troupe ȝyveþ doctrinal conclusiouns; þei ben stable in truþe everlastinge, but þei feden not mannys soule. He ȝyveþ a serpent to mannys soule instide of a fiȝsh, þat ȝyveþ bisi werkes of þe world þat venemyn men as an eddre. And so fiȝshis ben medeful werkis, for to gete þe blisse of hevene; and serpentis ben bisie werkis, to gete here worldli welfare. Þat man ȝyveþ a scorpioun in þe stide of an ey, þat ȝyveþ worldli frendship or love for love or frendship in God. For such worldli frendship mote styng a man at þe laste, but love in Crist lastiþ evere, til þat it haþ brouȝt a man to blis. And þus, if we taken good hede, worldli frendis serven þus men, bitwixe whom þei seien is frendship and love, for þer jugement is blynd.

Application to
the hierarchy.

And þus þe popis, and oþer prelatiþ, ȝyven ofte to þer fleishli

¹ *walkyng*, E.

² *in steede*, E.

frendis, stoonys, eddris, and scorpious, instide of þingis þat shulden fede þer soulis. For popis lawis ben harde as stoones, and hie prelacies ben eddris, and poweris or privileges ben scorpious to mannys soule. And, for þis passiþ charite, and is not samplid in love of Crist, þerfor it bringiþ yn dampnyng, boþe to þe o part and to þe toþer. And in þis blyndnesse travelen þei, þat hyren hem proctouris to þe pope, to gete hem suche stoonys or eddris or scorpious, to fede hem here. But where is more foly in þe world, þan þus to hyre men to do hem harm? And such procuracie is synful and yvele takun.

Dyverse men speken dyversly herein, expownyng of þis gospel; but many wittis þat semen dyverse, ben alle good and ordeyned of God. But here men seien soþeli, þat many men axen of God þingis þat wolden do hem harm, and þerfore God grauntiþ hem not; as Poul axide to be delyvered of þe pricke of his fleish, and ȝit he hadde answer of God þat it profitide to his soule. And þus seiþ Crist to hise disciplis, þat if þei axen ouȝt of þe Fadir in his name, he shal ȝyve hem. Man shulde axe no temporal þing, but if it were weie to his blis; ne any þing, but if it were truþe and worþi þat God shulde ȝyve it him; and no þing but if it were blis, or meene to come to blis. And þus Crist seiþ in Johnys¹ gospel þat he is weie, truþe, and liif; and he axiþ in Cristis name þat þus axiþ in þes þre.

What things we ought to ask of God.

ÞE GOSPEL ON ASCENCIOUN EVYN.

[SERMON CXCVII.]

Sublevatis Jesus oculis.—JOHN xvii. [I.]

Þis gospel of Joon telliþ what looves mennys soulis shulden ete. For wordis of þe gospel ben breed of liif to mennys soulis; and þerfore he is cursid of God þat chaungiþ þis breed for stoonys. For among alle men out of charite, þes ben ferþest fro charite, for þei ensegen þe soulis of men, and pynen hem bi þe worste hungir. John telliþ how, *Crist lifte up hise*

Christ prays to his Father to glorify him.

¹ Jones, E.

yzen into heven, and seide, Fadir, tyme is comun; clarifie þou þi sone, þat þi sone clarifie þe; as þou hast ʒovun þi sone power of al fleish;—as who seie, Clarifie þi sone, as þou hast ʒovun him power of al mankinde;—þat al þing þat þou hast ʒovun to him, he ʒyve hem liif wiþouten ende. As who seie, Mankynde, of which þi sone haþ power, is dividid in two partis; o part shal be dampned, anoþer shal be saved; and in boþe þes two partis shal shyne power and mercy of Crist. Crist shal ʒyve being wiþouten ende to boþe þes two partis, but þe firste part shal be dampned, and shal be stoppid in helle, and lyve in ful just peyne, bi þe grace of Jesus Crist. So if þei weren led wiþ resoun, þei shulden be fayn of þis peyne, for þis plesyþ to God, and to alle seintis þat ben in love. And it were moche more peyne þat þei weren in hevene wiþ þis synne, wiþouten any oþir peyne, þan is peyne þat þei now han. For filþe þat þe world hadde þanne were in þes synful men in hevene, and so þei mooten nede be dampned, for fairnesse of Goddis riȝt. And þe firste part of þis word telliþ all þis sentence, how dampned men, stoppid in helle, han fairnesse of Goddis riȝt. But it is not Cristis maner to clepe þis, liif wiþouten ende, alȝif a sofistre wolde graunte þat þei lyven wiþouten ende. But þe secunde part of mannys kynde, þat is sprad in brood hevene, is toold in þe secunde part of þis word þat Crist haþ spokun. So þat þe ende whi þe Fadir ʒaf Crist power of þes, is, þat Crist ʒyve hem liif in blis wiþouten ende. And boþe þes partis ben o þing, for þei ben mankinde hool.

Christ gives eternal life to all mankind, but in diverse manners.

And so al hool mankinde, boþe saved men and dampned, han beyng of Crist wiþouten ende, but on two maners. And so men construen þes wordis to double entent;—and first þus, þat al mankinde þat Crist haþ have beyng wiþouten ende, but þe bettere part of þis kynde ben þei to whom God ʒyveþ blis. Þe secunde grammer of þis word haþ anoþer undirstonding, þat al þat is ʒovun to Crist, into oonhede of his persone, ʒyve¹ blis wiþouten ende to seintis þat ben in hevene. For boþe Godhede and manhede of Crist is oonheede of hooli Chirche, and þis heed ʒyveþ blis to ech membre of þis Chirche.

Christ declares that He is God.

And þis is þe blisful liif, to knowe þee, oon verry God, and

¹ ʒyven, E.

hym þat þou hast sent, þat is oure Lord *Jesus Crist*. And here it semep openli þat Crist seiþ þat he is God; siþ blisful liif stondiþ in knowinge of þis truþe, þat seyntis han to knowe þe Fadir and his Sone, aloone verry God. And þis is good witt of þes wordis; and þis witt denyep not þat ne þe Hooly Goost also is þis same God, þe which is aloone verri God. And þis knowyng þat Crist spekiþ of, stondiþ not al oonly in witt; siþ fendis knowen þat þis is soþ; but it stondiþ in witt and wille. And þus seyntis han anoper knowing þan han dampned men, þat clerkis clepen intuycioun. For, as clerkis seien wel, a man seep not bi face of spirit þe unmaad Trinyte, but if he have joy of þis siht.

Crist seiþ aftirward to his Fadir, *I have clarified þe above þe erþe*. And it semep þat Crist spekiþ here to þis witt, as in Matheu, þat Crist haþ preisid his Fadir here above þe erþe wiþouten errour; as¹ þes prestis bynden and unbynden above þe erþe, þat doen þus wiþouten errour of discord to wille of þe Godhede; and al þis moot nedis be boundun or unboundun in hevене. *I have endid þe werk þat þou zvest me to do. And now clarifie me þou, fadir, at þisilf, wiþ þat clarite þat I hadde bifore þe world was at þe*. For Crist hadde clarite and blis at his Fadir, þe which was þe Godhede bifore in kynde, but not in tyme þat þe world was maad of him. *Y have shewid þi name to men, þe which þou zvest me of þe world; þei weren þin, and þou zvest me hem, and zit þei ben þine as bifore, and þei han kept my word. And now han þei knowun, þat alle þingis þat þou hast zoven me ben originali of þee. For Y have zoven to hem þe wordis þat þou hast zoven to me, and þei han taken, and han knowun treuly þat Y cam out of þee, and þei han bileved þat þou hast sent me. Y preie for hem; Y preie not for þe world, but for hem þat þou hast zoven me, for þei ben þine; and þus þis preier is skileful. And alle my þingis ben þine, and þi þingis ben myne, and Y am clarified in hem*. For Crist is clarified, boþe in Godhede and manheed, in þingis of his Fadir. For alle hise Fadris þingis ben hise, siþ he is þe same God; but þis he leeveþ to telle opynly.

And now Y am not in þe world, and þei ben in þe world, and Y come to þee. Dis 'now' bitokenep a short tyme of a day þat

¹ and, E.

Crist was inne; and he was deed in þe same day. And so now he lyveþ not þus, but apostlis lyveden longe after, but 3if it were Scarioth, þat hangid himsilf wiþ a grane; but þis Judas is noon of hem þat Crist spekiþ of in þis place.

ÞE GOSPEL ON ASCENCIOUN ÞUR[S]DAY.

Recumbentibus undecim. MARK xvi. [14.]

[The sermon which follows in all the MSS. is the same, word for word, with that already printed at p. 360 of the first volume. The reader will see, on referring to that sermon, that the Douce MS. (E) did not include it in the list of its festival sermons, the scribe being probably aware that it was contained among the Ferial sermons, and desiring to save himself the trouble of a double transcription. An important error in the text, as printed (solely from Bodl. 788) in the first volume, can now be corrected by the help of these additional copies. On p. 361, l. 33, by reading 'as Crist seiþ' for 'And Crist seiþ,' which all the copies of the Ferial sermons authorize us in doing, the whole difficulty of the passage is removed; the reference being to Apoc. xxi. 4, 5.]

ÞE FRIDAI GOSPEL NEXT BIFORE WITSONDAY.

[SERMON CXCVIII.]

Et ego mitto promissum.—LUC. xxiv. [49.]

Christ's parting charge to his apostles before his ascension.

Þis gospel telliþ, bi Lukes sentence, how Crist toke leeve of his apostlis. Luk seiþ how Crist bihiȝte hem, *Lo, I sende into 3ou þe bihiȝt spirit of my fadir*, þat is þe Hooli Goost, þat þei shulden take soone aftir; and þefore, *sitte 3e in þe citee, til 3e ben clopid wiþ vertu from above*. *Crist ledde hem out into Bethanye, and reiside up his hondis, and blesside hem. And it fel, þe while he blesside hem, he wente from hem, and was born into hevene.* And þus, Crist dide ever good fro bigynnyng of þe world¹ to þe eende; and he dide good bi his manheed fro bigynnyng of it to

¹ E om. of þe world.

þe eende of þe world, siþ he blesside at þe ende þat he toke his leeve of man. And þus it semeþ to many men, þat prelatis þat ben so redy to curse shulen not sitte on Goddis riȝt hond, but on his left hond in helle; and þes cursingis of sich persones bryngen in blessing of God. And herfore justifie þi soule to God, and drede þou not sich cursinges; but þi drede shal stond in þis, þat þou laste not in Goddis grace til þi soule and þi bodi be departid. And þis þing shulden men drede, and litil or nouȝt mannis curs. *And þes apostlis louting Crist turneden aȝen into Jerusalem wiþ greet joie. And þei weren evere in þe temple, herinyng and blessinge þe Lord.*

ÞE GOSPEL ON VIGILE OF WITSONDAI.

[SERMON CXCIX.]

Si diligitis me mandata.—JOHN xiv. [15.]

Þis gospel telliþ how Crist bihiȝte þe Hooli Goost to his apostlis. Joon telliþ how Crist seide to his apostlis wordis¹ of greet wisdom. *Ȝif ȝe love me, kepe ȝe my mandementis*; for ellis, as Crist seiþ aftir, þei loven neiþer Crist ne God. And ȝif a man kepe his mandementis, he loveþ þe Godhede and manhede of Crist. And herfore Crist, discryvyng him þat loveþ Crist, spekiþ þus here, *He þat haþ my mandementis, and kepith hem, he it is þat loveþ me*, as resoun techiþ. For ȝif a man love not Crist, he kepith not his heestis of love; and ȝif a man kepe þes heestis, he it is þat loveþ Crist, siþ he is God. And so it is al oon to love Crist and kepe his heestis; and also it is al oon to loove Crist and be in grace. And þus a man may juge himsilf, bi kepyng of Goddis heestis. But how a man shal do hereaftir is hid to ful many men; but man shulde hope to kepe Goddis heestis til þat deþ come to him, as he shal hope to be saved bi sich kepyng of þes heestis. *And Y shal preie þe fadir, seiþ Crist, and he shal ȝyve ȝou anoþer Comfortor.* For þe Holy Goost is anoþer persone, and anoþer þing, but he is noon oþer God,

Christ promises to send the Comforter to his disciples.

¹ So E; om. A.

ne oþer substaunce, ne oþer kynde. Þis goost shal dwelle wip-
outen ende, wip alle men þat shulen be saved. *And þis world
mai not take him, as it mai not take spirit of treube.* For as þis
world mut nedis be dampned, so it mut nedis faile of¹ þe riȝt
eende þat God haþ ordeyned to mankynde, þat is, to be blessid
in heven. *For þis world seep not þis spirit, ne knowiþ him bi
his werkes; but ȝe shulen knowe him, for he shal dwelle at ȝou,
and he shal be in ȝou, as fier is in a brennyng coole.*

*Y shal not leue ȝou wipouten fadir, for Y shal come to ȝou.
ȝit a litil tyme passiþ, and þe world seep me not þanne; but ȝe
shulen se me; for I lyve, and ȝe shulen lyve.* And þis is blisful
lyf þat Crist spekiþ of here. *In þat day ȝe shulen knowe þat Y
am in my fadir, and ȝe in me, and Y in ȝou.* For sich knyitting
mut be in blis; and herfore seiþ Crist aftir, *He þat haþ my com-
andementis, and kepiþ hem, he is þat ilke þat loveþ me; and he þat
loveþ me shal be loved of my fadir, and Y shal love him, and Y
shal shewe him mysilf.*

¹ The world' is
to be under-
stood in several
different
senses.

Here men seyn, þat þe world is taken on many maneris.
Sum tyme for þe multitude of alle creatures þat ben; and þus
seiþ Joon in his gospel þat þe world is maad bi God. Þat sum
men seyn, þat þis world is oonli bodili substance, and neiþer
spirit ne accident, is a wilful speche of man². But sum tyme
þe world is taken for al þe multitude of men þat shal be saved
or dampned; and þus seiþ Joon þat þe world knewe not God,
alȝif it were maad bi him. And þus seiþ Crist a litil bifore, þat
he took seintis of þe world. And many tymes is þe world taken
for men þat loven so myche þe world, þat þei shulen be
dampned þerfore. And þus seintis ben not of þis world. Sich
maner of undirstonding shulden preestis cunne þat reden þe
gospel. And þus Crist preieþ not for þe world, as for þes men
þat shulen be dampned, but for men þat shulen be saved, for
Cristis preier mut nedis be herd.

¹ So E; A has *on*.

² *men*, E.

ÞE MONEDAY GOSPEL IN ÞE WITSON WEKE.

[SERMON CC.]

Sic Deus dilexit mundum.—JOHN iii. [16.]

ÞIS gospel tellip of Goddis love; how he loved mannis kynde, to teche man to love God bi þe meedful crafte of love. Joon seiþ þat, *Þus God lovede þe world*, and mankynde and his Chirche, *þat he schulde ȝyve his oon born sone for hem*. And no man mai seie here, þat God failide in wisdom of þis werk; siþ God may not ȝyve his sone, and aliene havynge of him fro God; but oþer creaturis ben betereid, and noon ben worsid, bi þis ȝifte. For bi þe manheed of Crist, and þe merit þat he dide, alle manere creaturis serven God in betere stat. And so bi þe manheed of Crist is þe world maad beter now. And so, however we taken þe world, but ȝif it be for dampned men, it is soip þat God haþ loved so þe world, þat he schulde ȝyve his sone for it, and algatis for holi Chirche. God ȝaf his sone to make it free, for noon oþer redempcioun was ynowȝ for mannis synne. Þe ende whi þis marchandize was maad of God stondiþ in þis; *þat ech man þat trowiþ in Crist perishe not, but have liif of blis*. For God muste nedis save mankynde, siþ he ordeynede summe to blis, and movede hem to disserve¹, for þis ende þat he desiride.

For God sente not his sone in to þe world to juge it now, but þat þe world be saved bi him. For ech dede þat Crist worchiþ haþ an ende wherfore he doip it; as his Incarnacioun was for to save þis world, and his liif þat he ledde here was for þis ende, and to plesse God. But comyng to þe day of dome shal be for to juge þe world, and to make þe world betere, and þus algatis to plesse God. But God forbode þat we seie, þat God sente Crist in to þis world for to dampne þis world, or holi Chirche, but algatis for to save þis world. *He þat trowiþ in Crist is not*

God's love to mankind in Christ.

It is His will that the world should be saved not condemned.

¹ *dissolve blis*, Q.

The origin of
man's con-
demnation.

þus jugid; but he þat trowiþ not is now jugid to helle, for he trowiþ not in þe name of þe oon born sone of God.

Þis is þe jugement, þat lizt is comen in to þis world, and 3it men han loved more derknesse þan lizt; þat is to seie, þis is mater or cause of Goddis jugement, siþ for þis folie of men God shal dampne sich foolis; for þer werkes weren yvel; and herfore þei loveden yvel, þat is derknesse of synne, and hatiden lizt of rihtwisnesse. For ech man þat doiþ yvel hatiþ lizt, and comeþ not to lizt, þat his werkes be not reprovod. But he þat doiþ treuþe, comeþ to lizt, þat his werkes be shewid, þat þei ben maad in God. And þis word þat Crist seiþ here mai be shewid now in dede; for errours þat now ben doon ben hid and defendid, not bi resoun but tirantrie, bi mannis strengþe and bi lesingis. And siþ Goddis lawe is lizt, þei haten to come to Goddis lawe.

DE TEWISDAI GOSPEL IN ÞE WITSON WEKE.

[SERMON CCI.]

Amen, Amen, dico vobis.—JOHN X. [I.]

Christ the good
shepherd.

Þis gospel telliþ a parable of Crist, how men shulen knowe goode heerdis. Crist seiþ þus at þe bigynnyng, *Sopli Y seie to 3ou, he þat entriþ not bi þe dore in to þe folde of sheep, but stieþ above bi þe roof, he is nyzt þeef and day þeef^a. But he þat entriþ bi þe dore, he is heerde of þe sheep. Þe ussher openeþ to him, and þe sheep heeren his vois, and his owne sheep he clepiþ bi name, and lediþ hem forþ. And whanne he haþ sente out his owne sheep, he goiþ before hem, and þe sheep suen him, for þei knowun his vois. But an alien þei suen not, but þei fleen fro him; for þei knowun not þe vois of aliens. Þis proverbe seide Jesus to hem, but þei knewun not what he wolde speken to hem.*

^a The resemblance between the versions of the gospels found in this series of sermons, and those found in the Wycliffite bible, is usually so slight, that the former might, for aught that such resemblance would prove, be of wholly independent

origin. But in this passage there is a remarkable coincidence; both the Wycliffite versions render the 'fur et latro' of the Vulgate 'nyzt þeef and day þeef,' a singular translation, which two persons would not be likely to hit upon independently.

And þerfore seide Jesus anoþer tyme to hem, Sopli, Sopli, Y seie to 3ou, þat Y am a dore. And so alle þat camen biside me ben nyzt þeves and day þeves, but þe sheep herden hem not. Y am dore of þe sheep. 3if ony man entre bi me, he shal be saved; and shal come in, and wende out, and he shal fynde pasture. Þe þeef cometh not but for to stele, and slee, and lese; Y am come þat þei have liif, and þei have more aboundaunli.

It semeth þat Crist seiþ in þes wordis þat his Chirche is a spiritual hous, and þe sheep of his Chirche ben persones þerof þat shulen be saved. And Crist in his owne persone haþ resoun of many þingis; for he is dore, he is ussher, he is heerde, and he is pasture. And þes prelatiþ þat comen not bi him, ben þe þeves þat he spekiþ of. A dore haþ resoun, þat it is weie for to come in to þe hous, and to kepe þe hous fro þeves bi closyng of þe dore; and þis resoun is in Crist to regarde of his Chirche. He seiþ himsilf þat he is wey, to come to hevене and to þis Chirche. For no man mai come to it, but 3if Crist ordeyne him bifore; and þis ordeyning bifore mut be in Crist wiþouten eende. And bi þe same skile he holdiþ out men þat ben not of þis Chirche, but he latiþ hem come in wiþ his sheep, and do hem harm. Al3if þis harm be for a tyme, 3it it turneþ at þe laste to good; for pursuyng of þes þeves, and helpyng of mennis owne discrecioun, and trust to Crist, þe hierste heerde, ben ful meedful to sheep. And whanne þes þeves shulen be dampned, þe sheep shulen have joie þerof. Prelatiþ þat comen not bi mekenesse, ne for to traveile in þis office, but for to have worldly glori bi þe spuylyng of þer sheep, -- þei comen not in bi þis dore. For Crist fledde alle þes þree þingis, but þei leeven lowenesse, and styen up, and han entent of þe kyng of pryde. And þus þei ben nyzt þeves in þe entree, and day þeves in þer opyn spuylyng; for bi feyned riht of þes ypocritis þei seien þat þei mai wel do þus. But þes sheep þat Crist haþ ordeyned to blisse, heeren not þe vois of hem, for þei obeishen not to þer maners, ne suen hem, al 3if þei gon bifore. For þei wolen lede hem harde weies, and at þe laste brynge hem to helle. And oþer þree officis of þe herde ben declarid in anoþer place^a.

Interpretation
of the parable.

^a See Sermon XLVIII., vol. i., p. 140.

DE GOSPEL ON WEDNESDAY IN WITSON WEKE.

[SERMON CCII.]

Nemo potest venire.—JOHN vi. [44.]

No man can come to Christ except he be drawn by the Father.

In þis gospel telliþ Crist how þat he kepiþ his sheep. And first he telliþ one help þat men han of þe Fadir of hevene, in þer comyng to Crist; and þis help mai not faile. *No man may come to me, seip Crist, but ȝif þe fadir þat sente me drawe him.* For þe Trinite nedip ech man to alle goode dedes þat he doip. And þis spiritual drawyng lettip not fredom of wille, for God þat drawip and nedip here, makip man for to wille; and þus violence is excludid, and free wille is brouzt in. And sip þis Fadir is almyȝty, no man mai lette þis drawyng. And preie þou God þat he drawe þee, for worþinesse of þi liif; for man mai be so unclene þat God wole not leie hond on him. But, for þe werkes of þe Trinite mai not be departid, þefore telliþ Crist what he shal do in day of þe laste dome. *I, he seip, shal reise him to liif in þis laste day.* As Crist drawip wip his Fadir, so mut his Fadir *quykene wip him.* *It is writun in prophetis*¹, *þat alle þes shulen be Goddis scolers*; for sich ben able to be tauzt of him, and so to be drawun of him to heven. Ech scoler *þat haþ herd, and lerned of þe fadir, comeþ to me*; for Y ȝyve forme and grace, for to do þis traveile, and come to þe ende þat he haþ lerned. And þus acord of þe Trinite mut move ech man þat goip þis gate. *Not for ech man seep þe fadir; but he þat is of God, he seep þe fadir*, here bi bileve, and in heven cleerly. And so scoleris of þe Trinite moten nedis first have þe bileve.

Christ gives eternal life, and is the bread which sustains that life.

Sopli, Sopli, Y seie to ȝou, he þat trowip in me haþ liif wipouten ende. þat man trowip in Crist, þat haþ bileve, formed wip grace, þat God haþ ordeyned him to blis, and haþ good love after þis ordenaunce. And þis is in mannis power, þat takip good heede

¹ So in E; .A excludes the clause from the quotation.

to Cristis werkes, for Crist dide evermore good, and dide not harm, in punishing. And þus men þat þe Fadir drawiþ perishen not for hunger; for Crist seiþ here soþli, *þat he is þe breed of liif*. For bi his manheed and his Godhede he fediþ goostly his clerkes, þat gon þe wey bi which he drawiþ, in forme þat he haþ seid bifore. Holde þou his mandementis, and he drawiþ and fediþ þee, and defendiþ þee. Þis breed is beter þan angel mete; for, *many fadris eeten þis breed, and 3it weren deed on double maner, bope bodili and goostli. Þis is þe breed comyng down from hevene,*—and þis is þe ende whi Crist cam down for entent of mannis profit,—*þat 3if ony ete of þis breed, he shal not die þe secound deþ*. Þus seiþ Crist, *þat he is quyke breed þat cam down from hevene; 3if ony eete of þis breed, he shal lyve wipouten ende; and þe breed þat Y shal 3yve is my fleish, for liif of þe world*. Þis bileve criep ofte on us, and 3it we showen þat we trowen it not, for we kepen not Cristis wordis, ne þenken ouzt of his werkes. And 3it we shulden ete Crist goostli in oure soule, whanne oure þouzt and oure wille weren þus on Cristis bodi.

ÞE ÞURSDAI GOSPEL IN ÞE WITSON WEKE.

[SERMON CCIII.]

Convocatis Jesus xii apost[ol]is.—LUC. ix. [1.]

Þis gospel telliþ how Cristis apostlis weren tauzt of him to go and preche, and in hem ben we tauzt to kepe þe fourme þat Crist telde hem. *Crist clepide togidere his twelve apostlis, and 3af hem vertue and power upon alle fendis, to lette hem; and so it semeþ þat Scarioth hadde þis power for a tyme. And Crist 3af þes apostlis vertue, for to heele siiknesse of men. And he sente hem for to preche þe rewme of God, and hele seke men; and Crist seide to hem, Nyle 3e bere ouzt in þe wey, þat wole lette 3ou in þis office,—neiper a staf, ne a scrippe, ne breed, ne money; ne have 3e two cotis.* And to þes¹ fyve weren þei oblischid evere, whanne

The first mission of the apostles.

¹ So in E; þis, A.

þei shulden do þis office; and ony of þes fyve wolde lette on ony side to do þis office. And þus þei myzten wiþ þes wordis have ech of þes fyve þingis, 3if þei wolden helpe hem bi skile to do þe office of preching. *And in to what hous þat 3e entren, seiþ 3e first, Pees to þis hous. And 3if þer be a some of pees, 3oure pees shal reste on him; ellis it shal turne aȝen to 3ou^a. And dwelle 3e in þe same hous, and wende not þennes bi insolence. And whoever resseyve not 3ou, 3e shulen wende out of þat citee, and shake þe poudre of 3our feet in witnessse upon hem. And þei, wendinge out, wenten aboute þe wallid touns, prechyngþe þe gospel, and heelingþe on ech side.*

The preaching of the friars of a very different nature, as in the case of the late expedition to Flanders.

In þis gospel may men see wher freris and oþer holden þis forme in þer preching to þe peple. But fruyt of hem shewiþ þat nay. For, first, þei synnen in þer purpos; for þei wolen not heele goostli, but cast meenes to spuyle þe puple, and þer-after þei shapen þer wordis. And þus þei prechen not þe gospel, as Crist biddiþ in þis place, but bi dremes and oþer fablis þei moven men for to fiȝte; as in a passage late to Flandris þe freris prechiden a lady¹ dreem^b, and bi a feyned soilyng þei spuyliden þe peple; but freris hadden part. And þus þei spuyliden þe rewme of Engeland of men and money and of feiþ, and þei harmeden men of oþer rewmes many weies, and quencheden love. Þis is fruyt of þer prechingþe, and many oþer fendis fruytis. And fewe freris and clerkes, or noon, may denie soply þat ne þei assentiden to alle þes harmes, and þus many ben irreguler. Who was he þat grutchide aȝen, or in word or in wille? And whoever may lette, and doþ not, he assentiþ in a maner. And so we alle ben accusid bifore God of oure conscience, and fewe freris mai shake þe powder of þer feet to Cristis entent. For þei ben chargious to þe puple, þat

¹ a ladi, Q; a ladyes, E.

* This passage, concerning the declaration of peace, is not found in St. Luke, but is added here by Wyclif from the parallel passage in St. Matthew,—Matt. x. 12.

^b Probably the friars announced, while preaching up the crusade in favour of Urban (for this clearly is

what the 'late passage to Flaundris' refers to), that some pious lady had received assurance in a dream that the souls of all those who fell in the holy warfare would be admitted immediately to Paradise;—at any rate some current story of this kind must be intended.

coveiten þer goodis and not þer soulis; for þer wordis and dedis techen of al þis, how it is soij. Þei seyen not, Pees be to þe contre, þat þei ben dwelling inne, but, werres and strives be to hem. And þus þei techen and seien in dede, and þus þei dwellen not in o countre, helpinge after Cristis forme, but rennen to Rome for dignites, and to bigile þe folk of pardoun. And ȝit alle þes harmes of þes fendis moven not þe folk to knowe hem, ne to be war of þer werkes, ne of perelis þat comen of hem.

ÞE GOSPEL ON ÞE FRIDAI IN WITSON WEKE.

[SERMON CCIV.]

Factum est in una dierum.—LUC. v. [17.]

Þis gospel telliþ a miracle of Crist, how he heelde a siik man, and how wickide men sclaunderiden him, and he avoydide þer blame. Luk telliþ þat, *It bifel in o day, and Jesus sat and tauȝte, and þer weren Phariseis, and doctouris of lawe, þat camen of ech castel of Galile, of Jude, and of Jerusalem; and vertue of þe Lord was to heele siike men. And lo, þer weren men berynge in a bed a man þat was in þe palsie, and þei souȝten to brynge him, and putte him bifore Jesus. And þei founden not on what side þei shulden brynge in, for þe puple. Þei stieden upon þe hous, and bi þe lappis¹ þei senten him down, wiþ his bed, into þe place bifore Jesus. Whos bileve whanne Crist saw, he seide to þe parlatik, Man, bi synnes ben forȝyven þee. And Scribis and Phariseis bigunnen to þenke, and seiden, What is he þis þat spekiþ blasfemyes? who mai forȝyve synnes but aloone God? But as Jesus knew þer þouȝtis, he answeride, and seide to hem, What þenke ȝe yvelis in ȝour hertis? Which is lizter, for to seie, Þi synnes ben forȝyvun þee, or to seie, Rise and go? As ȝif he wolde seie, he þat haþ power to seie þe toon, and do it in dede, haþ power to seie þe toþer, þat ȝe seyen is blasfemye of me. But for ȝe*

The cure of the man sick of the paisy.

¹ lappis, Q; laytbis, E.

shulen wite, þat mann's sone hap power in erþe to forȝyve synnes, þanne he seide to þe paralatik, Y seie to þee, rise þou, and take away þi bed, and go into þi hous. And anoone he, risynge bifore hem, toke up his bed in which he lay, and wente into his hous, seiynge þat God is greet. And wundir took hem alle, and þei magnifieden God, and þei weren fulfillid of drede, and seiden, þat we han seen wundirs to day. Of þis is seid in Mathew gospel on a Sunday^a what it menep.

ÞE GOSPEL ON TRINITE EVYN.

[SERMON CCV.]

Surgens Jesus de Synagoga.—LUKE iv. [38.]

The healing of
Simon's wife's
mother, and
other cures.

Þis gospel telliþ of a myracle þat Crist dide in a womman. Luk seiþ þat, *Jesus roos of þe synagoge, and entride into Symond's hous. Men seien þat þis Symont was Symount Petre, his owne disciple; for longe after his first clepyng Petre suede him not al. And þe wyves sistir of Symount was holde wiþ greet feveris, and þei preiden him for hir. And Crist, stondege above hir, comandide þe fever, and it lefte her; and she roos anoone, and servede him. And whanne þe sunne was go down, alle þat hadden siik men in dyverse siikenessis, brouzten hem to him; and he leide hondis upon ech of hem, and heclide hem. Also fendis wenten out of many of hem, þat crieden, and seiden þat, Þou art Goddis sone. And Crist blamede, and suffride hem not speke þus longe to þe puple, for þei wisten þat he is Crist; and sich fendis ben foul wittnesse.*

And on þe morewen¹, whanne it was day, Crist wente to a desert place; and þe folk souzte him, and camen riȝt unto him, and þei helden him þat he shulde not wende from hem. But Crist seide to hem þat, Y mut preche to oþer citees þe reawme of God. Here men moralisen ofte of þes feveris, and oþer siiknesis,

¹ morew, E.

^a See Sermon XIX., vol. i. p. 46

and seien, whanne Crist heelide comunly of ony bodily siiknesse, he heelide of goostly sikenesse, figurid bi þis oþer siiknesse. And so, siþ feveris is a siiknesse maad of distempour of humoures, and blood is moost kyndely umour¹, answeringe to þe love of God, þre oþere umors in man answeren to þree oþer loves. Sum men love to moche þer bodi; and summe to myche þe world; and summe loven to myche slouþe, and oþer bidding of þe fend. And þus ben grete feveris in þe soule, þat troublen it more þan þis þe bodi. Of þes feveris, and medecyne of hem, may men make a longe speche.

ÞIS IS ÞE GOSPEL ON CORPUS CHRISTI DAY.

[SERMON CCVI.]

Caro mea vere est cibus.—JOHN vi. [56.]

It is seid ofte bifore, how Crist telliþ in þis gospel of Joon, þat men shulden goostli ete his fleish, and goostli drynke his blood. And siþ Crist is þe firste treuþe, and hatij lesyngis, algatis þree treuþis shulden men sue, and flee wysely þree lesyngis. First, men shulden have treuþe of bileve, and flee þe error of mys-bileve. After, men shulde have treuþe in wordis, and fle þe falsheed þat is in wordis. Siþ, men shulden han þe treuþe of liif, and flee falsheed² in þis liif.

It is seid comunly, þat mannis soul mut have two chaelis, boþe þe over and þe neþere, and þes moten eete Cristis bodi. Þe neþer chawle stondiþ in witt, þat men wite wel what Goddis lawe menep, and fle errours in þis mater, for þis is a foul synne. But Goddis lawe biddiþ þat we shulden not speke fals of oure neizbore; and it is moche more synne to speke fals of Crist, boþe God and man. Þes ben to rude heretikes, þat seien þei eten Crist bodili, and seien þei parten ech membre of him,—nekke, bac, heed, and foot. And alle siche heresies springen, for þei witen not what þis oost is. Þis oost is breed in his

Christ's flesh
meat indeed,
and his blood
drink indeed.

The writer's
view of the
Eucharist.

¹ *bumour*, E.

² So E; *falseed*, A.

kynde, as ben oþer oostes unsacrid, and sacramentaliche Goddis bodi; for Crist seiþ so, þat mai not lye. And so, ȝif þis sacrament be foulid in þat þat it is breed or wyn, it may not þus be defoulid in þingis which it figurip. And so a man brekiþ not Goddis bodi, ne drynkiþ his blood wiþ his mouþ, alzif he ete and drynke þe breed and þe wiin þat is þes; for þei ben not þes in kynde, as Baptist was not in kynde Hely. And þus a mous etiþ not Cristis bodi, alzif he ete þis sacrament; for þe mous failiþ goostli witt, to chewe in him þis bileve.

And so, after þis neiþer chawle, in which ben piȝt many teef, as articlis of þis bileve þat a trewe man shuld have, þe over chawle is nedeful, which is groundid in mannis love; þat for þis fleish, and þis blood, and þis passioun þat Crist suffride in hem, we loven Crist for his worship and oure profit bi hooly liif. And bodily mete of þes sacramentis is litil worþ, but ȝif þis come. And he etiþ betere Goddis bodi, þat haþ bileve and þis good love, þan he þat etiþ þis sacrament, and failiþ more in þis spiritual mete. And herfore seiþ Austyn^a, Bileve and þou hast eeten. And here mai we se, þat men þat gon to chirche, and kissen pileris, and heeren aftir many massis, and han wiþ þis an unclene herte, eten not or yvel Goddis bodi, as þei taken yvel his¹ sacrament. For þer wordis and þer liif ben false comunly; and so þe treuþe, þat is Crist, hatip hem for þis falsheed.

¹ þis, Q, E.

^a S. Aug. *Tract. in Johan. Evang.* xxv. cap. 6. § 12. As this passage is frequently quoted by controversial writers, it may be as well to give it *in extenso*. 'Respondit Jesus, et dixit eis, Hoc est opus Dei, ut

credatis in eum quem misit ille. Hoc est ergo manducare cibum non qui perit, sed qui permanet in vitam aeternam. Ut quid paras dentes et ventrem? Crede, et manducasti.'



DE FIRST WEDNESDAI AFTIR CORPUS CHRISTI.

[SERMON CCVII.]

Nolite putare.—MATT. v. [17.]

Þis gospel is toold bifore^a, and expowned in literal witt; but men shulden marke þis over, how slowe þei ben in Goddis lawe. But mannis lawe and ydil werkis occupien men to myche, as þe popis lawe and þe emperour's lawe ben fer stretchid in oure lond, and love wiþ lyking of hem makij hem more loved þan Goddis lawe. For men wolen more stonde for hem, more kepe¹ and more loke in hem, þan þei wolen on Goddis lawe; and þis is token of more love. And no drede whoso loveþ ony of þes more þan Goddis lawe, he is an heretike out of bileve, blasfeme and cursid of God, more þan þe pope makij man bi alle his cursingis or shewyng of him. For, as Crist seip, it is al oon to love him and to love his lawe; and þus no man worchij medefulli, but 3if he kepe Goddis lawe. And how shulde he kepe þis, but 3if he knowe it on sum maner?

And sij ech man shulde lyve and worche for þis eende, to be in blis, and no man mai be þus but bi love of Goddis lawe, it is lizt to us to se how nedeful and hiz þis lawe is. Mannis lawe doþ no more but getij to man worldly þing, and is cause to bigile his broþir, and lesse telle bi Goddis lawe. And þis lawe mai not laste but here in þis wrechide liif, but Goddis lawe mut ever laste in hevene wiþ seintis, and make hem blessid. And Crist cam not to undo þis lawe, but to fulfille it and teche it. For lawe of þe Olde Testament techij not but charite, for alle stories and prophetis hangen in þes two wordis, love þi God and love þi neiþbore; and þis is to kepe þe ten comamentis. Alle ceremonies and judicial lawes in þe Olde Testament oblischen not Cristene men, but 3if þei moven to þis

Christ came not to destroy but fulfil the existing law of God.

The high importance of obeying this law.

¹ *kepe hem*, E.

^a See Sermon LXXX., vol. i., p. 270.

eende. But wel we witen þat þei ben just, and techen at þe laste þis eende. And þus moralte of þe olde lawe, þat stondiþ in þe lore of vertues, lastiþ in þe newe lawe, and wiþouten eende in hevene. And þus Crist filliþ þe olde lawe and makith a perfit eende þerof, for it is purgid bi þe newe lawe, and more list us to kepe.

The old and new dispensations are the matter and form of the divine law.

And þus seyen clerkes, þat as a man is maad of bodi and of soule, so ful lawe of God is maad of þe olde and of þe newe. Þe olde is mater of þis lawe, and þe newe forme þerof. And as mater and forme ben oo þing in substaunce, as þe bodi and þe soule ben o persone¹, þat is þe spirit,—so þe olde lawe and þe newe ben oo þing in substance. And þis forme is charite, þat was everemore in þe Chirche, but it toke perfit degree bi charite þat Crist tauhte. 3if we wolen þryve, love we þis lawe, and caste aweie all oþer lawes, but 3if þei helpen and serven herto, and so myche mai þei be suffrid. But sum men þenken þat as two partes of þe old lawe ben abreggid, myche more two mannis lawes,—þe popis and þe emperours, — shulden be leste; for þei acorden lesse wiþ Goddis lawe, serven it lesse, and speden it lesse. Þis sentence shulden prestis seie, and defende it bi resoun.

ÞE SECUNDE WEDNESDAI AFTIR CORPUS CRISTI.

[SERMON CCVIII.]

Cum venisset Jesus.—MARK xi.² [MATT. xxi. 23.]

Christ putting to silence the priests and elders.

Þis gospel telliþ how þat Crist stoppide his enemyes in þer questioun. *Whanne Jesus was comen into þe temple, þer comen to him, as he tauhte, pryncis of preestis, and eldre men, and axiden þis questioun of him; Telle us in what power þou doist þes þingis, and who 3af þee þis power.* And þus axen princis of preestis to day, whanne men tellen bi þe gospel þe defaultis þat ben in þes princis, Who 3af þee leewe to preche? Y suspende þee, wiþouten

¹ þyng, E.

² A and E concur in describing this gospel as taken from Mark, whereas it is in fact from Matt. xxi. Q does not name any evangelist.

my leeve to preche in my diocese. *Jesus answeride, and seide to hem, And Y shal axe you oo word, þe which 3if 3e seien to me, Y shal seie you in whos power Y do þes þingis. Þe bapty m of Joon, of whennes was it? of hevене, or ellis of men? And þei þouzten amon3 hem, and seiden, 3if we seien þat it was of hevене, he shal seie, Whi trowen 3e not him? For Joon bare open witesse of Crist, þat he is God and þe grete profete; and al þe bisynes of Joon was to preise þe state of Crist. And 3if we seien, þat Joones state was of men, we dreden þe comunte of puple, for alle hadden Joon as a prophete. And þei answeriden to Jesus, and seiden, We witen not. And he seide to hem, Ne Y seie to you in what power Y do þes þingis.*

Here shulden trewe prestis and cunnyng holden hem in boundis of þe gospel, and preche noo þing but witt of it, and þing þat falliþ as knowen to men; and þanne mai þei answeere to bishopis, and to folk þat axen hem wher is þer power. But gidere þei not of þe puple bi symonye, as freris doon, and kepe hem clene fro oþer synnes, and þanne God haþ sent hem. For þei han lerned þat Crist is Lord of þe lond þat þei walken inne, and Crist bad his prestis preche þe gospel to alle men for his lordship. And for þis men shulden not be yvel payed; siþ þis hyerste¹ office falliþ to bishopis, and þei shulden not be yvel payed, þat men helpen hem þus freely. Þei 3yven leeve to þes freris for to preche, but on oþer maner; for þei prechen fablis and dremes and lesyngis, and beggen after. And Anticrist haþ founden a lawe, þat þes prelati s shulden 3yve sich leeve, and haþ ordeyned þat no persoun shal have cure but bi his leeve. And þus, siþ many Anticristis prelati s ben fendis, as was Judas, he haþ ordeyned þat siche curatis shulden be confirmed of þe fend. But 3if Anticrist wolde seie þat sich prestis ben endurid bi ensaumple of his prelat, þanne he spake more propirly. But what trewe man wolde not have orroure² þat prestis shulden not serve þer God, but 3if þe fend 3af hem leeve? In þe hierste werk þat God haþ beden, þe puple shulde lette þis lawe to rengne; and preestis shulden preche wiþouten þe Chirche. But here it is a skilful þing, 3if pseudo-preestis prechen amys, þat

Poor priests, of whom bishops demand their authority for preaching, are safe if they keep close to the Gospel.

¹ biest, E.

² borroure, E.

bishopis letten hem to preche; but errour shulde be first knowen, for Goddis werk shulde not be lettid for þing þat men supposen to falle. For þanne no man shulde seie his preieris, and freris preching shulde be suspendid, for it is knowun þat þei erren in þes foure þingis þat we han seid. And bishopis shulden letten alle þes foure, and maynteyn Cristis ordenance; for ellis þei shewen wiþ whom þei ben, and how þe fend is þer fadir.

ÞE WEDNESDAI GOSPEL AFTIR ÞE ÞRIDDE SONEDAI AFTIR TRINITE.

[SERMON CCIX.]

Esto consentiens.—MATT. v. [25.]

The Christian is to agree with his adversary.

How this is to be understood.

S. Austin's explanation.

Þis gospel of Matheu telliþ, how a man shal lyve here in erþe. First, Crist biddiþ to alle men to assente to þer adversarie soone, while þei ben in weye wiþ him, lest he ȝyve hem to þe juge, and þe juge ȝyve hem to þe mynystre, and þei ben put in prisoun. Soþly seiþ Crist, *Y seie to þee, þou shalt not go out þenne, til þou ȝelde þe laste ferþing.* But in þese wordis ben þree doutis; first, who is þis adversarie; aftir, who is þis juge, and mynystre, and prisoun, þat Crist spekþ of; þe þridde doute, of Origene, is, what is þis laste ferþing? For it semeþ of Cristis wordis, þat alle dampned men shulen come out of helle.

Seint Austyn, after greet sekyng, techiþ þat þis adversarie is þe lawe of God while man is in synne*; and siþ alle men aftir Crist ben in synne more or lesse, Goddis lawe is adversarie to alle maner of sich men. And man consentiþ to þis lawe, whanne he accordiþ him wiþ it; as men þat impungnen þis lawe, or loven not þis lawe at þe fulle, or synnen aȝens þis lawe, shulden soone here consente þerto. And þe liif þat we lyven here is clepid a weie to a terme.

Þe secounde doute is more lizt; for þis juge is Jesus Crist, þat shal come at þe laste day of dome, and deme alle men bi

* The passage here referred to is in the ninth of S. Austin's *Sermones ad Populum*, ch. iii.

þis lawe, and aftir 3yve hem to his mynystris. Cristis mynystris ben spirits, boþe good aungels and yvel. Þis prisoun þat Crist spekiþ of is helle wiþouten doute.

Þe þridde doute touchid here is more to many men. But men seien comunly þat þe laste ferþing of þis prisonere is peyne of his leste¹ part, þat haþ synned azens God; and in tyme wiþouten ende shal be 3olde² al þis peyne. And ech part of þis peyne, þat conteyneþ al but þe first part, is clepid þe laste pay³ þat man shal 3elde to God in helle. And siþ man mai not wende out bifore he have payed al hool þis peyne, and þis peyne is evene wiþ tyme þat shal laste wiþouten eende, men mai see bi Cristis wordis, þat he shal nevere go out of helle. But Crist spekiþ here þus, to teche þat peyne and synne moten answere even, þat þe toon be as long as þe toþer; for þis axiþ Goddis rihtwisnesse.

3e han herd, seiþ Crist, þat it was seide to olde men, þou shalt be no lecchour. But certis I seie to 3ou, þat ech man þat seep a womman and coveitliþ hir, to synne wiþ hir, is now lecchour in his soule. And þis roote of þis synne shulden men drawe out of þer herte, for þanne wole not þis synne buriowne in dede and in custome. *And 3if þi riht eye sclaundre þee, drawe him out and caste him fro þee.* Many men lyven here in erþe þat done werkes good⁴ in kynde, and 3it þei failen in þes werkes, for þei done hem in yvel maner; as many men speken wiþ wymmen of hevене, of vertues, and good þing, and 3it disposyng dwelliþ⁵ in hem to make hem þenke amys aftir. And þes werkes, al3if þei ben goode, and ben clepid þe riht ey3e, 3it for perils þat comen aftir men shulden remove hem, and caste hem from hem. And þus men shulden fle to shryve algatis wymmen in pryvy placis. *For whi? it spedliþ to þee þat oon of þi membris perishe, þan þat al þi bodi be sent into þe fier of helle.* For it is beter to man to wante here werkes of þes wittis, þan to have here delicis of þes werkes, and herfore be dampned in helle. And þus it is good to men to be punishid in helle; and 3it it is not good to synne, al3if it be convertible wiþ peyne; for þe toon is just bifore God, and þe toþer is unjust.

¹ leest, E.² be 3elde, E.³ pay, E.⁴ So E; A has *and good*.⁵ So E; A has *dwellynge*.

The duty of
feeling dan-
gerous oc-
casions.

And ȝif þi riȝt hoond sclandre þee, kille it awey and caste it fro þee; for it spedip to þee þat oon of þi membris perishe, þan þat al þi bodi go into þe fier of helle. And þis hond is good werkes þat men doon in almes dedis; and it were betere to leeve þes werkes, whanne þei ben mater of pride aftir. No man undirstondiþ þis gospel þat Crist biddiþ to kitte mennis hondis, or ony oþer part of man, or þat he shal wante hem in blis. But Crist techiþ to take away, ȝhe, goode werkes of þes partis, alȝif man wante in blisse of hevene þat he hadde don þes goode werkes.

ÞE WEDNESDAY GOSPEL AFTIR FOURÞE SUNDAY AFTIR TRINITE.

[SERMON CCX.]

Interrogaverunt Jesum.—MATT. xvii. [10.]

John the Bap-
tist likened
to Elias.

Þis gospel telliþ how Crist answeride to a questioun of his disciplis, and how he dide a myracle after, þat his disciplis myȝten not do. Matheu seiþ þat, *Þe disciplis axiden Crist, and seiden, What seien scribis þat Hely mut first come bifore domes day? And Crist answeride, and seide to hem, Hely is to come, and shal restore alle þingis. Sonly Y seie to ȝou, þat Hely is now comen, and þei knewen him not, but þei diden in him whatever þei wolden. And so mannis sone is to suffre of hem. And þanne þe disciplis undirstoden þat he telde hem of Joon Baptist.* Crist seiþ here, and bifore also, of Joon Baptist, þat he is Hely. For if we taken Helias¹ office, and þe liif þat he hadde, and putte it bi Joones liif, boþe two lyves weren oon. For Hely is to seie on English, lordship of God, or strong lord; and boþe þes acorden wel to Hely and to Joon. And it semep þat þei acorden also to Crist, whom þei figuren. And it semep þat Crist seiþ here, þat he is Hely, þat shal restore alle þingis. And so Hely is taken here on þre maneres, for þree persones,—Hely, Baptist, and Crist; for alle þes þree tellen o þing. But Hely and Baptist weren moche like in lyvyng, for boþe þes two lyveden in penaunce in

¹ *Helyes. E.*

desert, and weren pursued of wickide wymmen, and of princis bi movyng of þes wickide wymmen. And as Hely cam longe bifore þe comyng of Crist whom he figuride, so Joon cam anoon bifore þe same comyng of Crist figurid.

Aftirward þis gospel telliþ þis miracle þat Crist dide. *Whanne Crist was comen to þe puple, a man cam to him, knelyng bifore him, and seide, Sire, have mercy on my sone, for he is lunatik and yvel suffreþ; for ofte tymes he falliþ into þe fier, and ofte tymes into þe water. And Y offride him to þi disciplis, and þei myzten not heele him. And Jesus answeride, and seide, and spak to his disciplis, O kynrede untrowful and weiward¹, how longe shal Y suffre zou? brynge him hidir to me. And Jesus blamede þis spirit, and þe fend wente from him, and þe child was heeled fro þat hour.*

Here men seien comunly, þat Crist kepte þis to himsilf, to hele men of syknesse, but 3if þei weren disposid in hemsilf, to teche þat God heeliþ no man of goostli syknesse, but 3if he wole worche himsilf þerto in undirstonding and wille. And summe seien here, þat þes apostlis synned in infidelite; and to teche þat þe prestis aftir may undispose hemsilf bi shrewid lyf goinge fro God, þat God take from hem vertue to mynystre ony sacramentis, or to do ouzt medefully. And, in confirmacioun of þis, þes apostlis failiden in þis lunatik, þat hadde² an unstable siknesse, þat varieþ as þe moone. For as þe moone is modir of moiste þingis, so it hath unstable movyng, þat is unknowun to many men. And þus þes siik men ben unstable, and, for þes apostlis weren unstable in feiþ, þefore þei failiden in þis cure. God woot what was cause of þis, but wel we trowen þat it was so.

¹ weyward, E.

² So E; A has *badden*.

The cure of the lunatic.

Speculations on the inability of the disciples to work the cure.



ÞE WEDNESDAI AFTIR FYFÞE SONDAI AFTIR TRINITE.

[SERMON CCXI.]

*Factum*¹ *est in una dierum.*—LUC. viii. [22.]

Christ rebuking
the winds and
the sea.

Þis gospel telliþ of a miracle þat Crist dide, to conferme men in bileve. Luk telliþ how it fel *on a day*², *Jesus styede in to a boot, and his disciplis wenten wiþ him. And Crist seide to hem, Verie*³ *we over þe water, and þei steiden over. But as þei roweden, Crist slepte; and þer fel a tempest of wynd in to þe water, and it was fillid wiþ wawis, and þei weren in point to be perishid. And þei camen nyȝ, and wakiden him, and seiden, Comandour, we perishen. And Crist, risynge, blamede þe wynd and þe tempest of þe water, and it ceeside, and þer was maad stilnesse. And Crist seide to hem, Where is ȝour bileve? And þei dreding woundriden, and seiden togidere, Who, trowist þou, is he þis? for he comandip þe wyndis and water, and þei obeishen to him.*

Many siche wordis and dedis of Crist shulden conferme men in bileve; for Crist mai not faile to his Chirche, alȝif it be ofte in peril. For he doip al for þe beste, and þei shulden do þat falliþ to hem; and þis bileve shulde stable men to stonde stilly in Goddis cause.

¹ So in Q; A has *Facta*. ² So E; A has *in on day and*. ³ *Ferie*, E.



ÞE WEDNESDAI AFTIR ÞE SIXTE SONDAI AFTIR TRINITE.

[SERMON C CXII.]

Cum ingressus esset Jesus.—MARK X. [17.]

ÞIS gospel telliþ how many men wenen þat þei ben clene, but zit þei failen; as Mark telliþ þat, *Whanne Jesus wente forþ in þe wey, þere cam oon rennyng biforn, knelyng biforn Crist, and preiede him, and seide, Good maistir, what shal Y do to take liif wipouten eende? And Jesus seide to him, What seist þou þat Y am good? þer is noon good but God aloone.* And here Crist tauhte to fle fagyng, and tauhte an article of bileve. Goodnesse haþ dyverse resouns, in God and in creaturis; so þat bi gode-nesse þat God is good¹, no þing is good but God himsilf. And here shulde þe pope lerne to be not clepid moost blessid fadir. *Hast þou knowe þe comandementis?* seiþ Crist unto þis man. And þis man seide, *Which be þei.* And Crist reherside sixe comandementis, þat weren more nedeful to þis man. *Do þou no leccherie, and slee þou not, and stele þou not, and seie þou not fals witness, and do þou no fraude; worshiþe þou þi fadir and þi modir. And he answeringe seide² to Crist, Good maistir, alle þes have Y kept fro my zongþe. And Jesus lokide on him, and lovede him, and seide to him, O þing failiþ to þee; go and selle alle þingis þat þou hast, and 3yve hem to pore men, and þou shalt have tresour in hevne, and come þou and sue me.* Here men seien comunly, þat þis was an averous man, but he desiride to han blis, and he was in a maner just. And herfore seiþ þe gospel aftir, þat he *wente away mournyng, for he hadde many possessiouns*, and moo possessiouns wolde have hadde; and so it was medicine to him to wante alle þes possessiouns, for þei maden him to coveite moo. And þus þis medicine is not general.

And freris seien here, þat þer stat is more perfit þan oþer

The rich man who could not face the conditions of becoming a disciple of Christ.

¹ þat is in God gode, E.

² So E; A has answeride seide.

The friars
boast of their
poverty, but
without reason.

The injunction
to give up
riches is not
of universal
obligation.

mennis, for þei han no possessioun, and þat falliþ to perfec-
cioun bi Crist. But þes foolis shulden lerne here two pointis,
and holde hem. First, þei shulden not have in comune þat
were not nedeful to þer state, for þis havynge more, aȝens kynde,
is more hatid of Crist and seintis. And however freris speken
here, þei kepen þe¹ contrarie to þis povert, siþ þei han comunly
in comune many þingis þat ben ydil. Leeve we to speke what
freris han in propre bileve of þer prelat; for wel Y woot þat God
grauntiþ not þat þei shulden murþere þus worldli goodis.

Þe secounde þing þat freris shulden note shulde be þis, þat
Crist seide here not to ech man, þat he shulde sille al þat he
haþ and ȝyve pore men, but to him whom it harmeþ to have
þis abundance of goodis. And so freris shulden not seie to
ech man þat he were frere, but to men undisposid to lyve betere
in þe world. And, for freris wanten þis wisdom, þei synnen
whanne þei maken ony frere; for he synneþ þat doiþ a dede,
and knowiþ not wher he do wel or yvel. And so þes freris
moten nedis seie, þat alle þes seculer men synnen þat comen
not to þer ordre. And þus alle ordris shulden be oon, siþ
variaunce of þe same ground mut algatis telle errour in summe
of hem. But þis is fals and vanite, as þes ordris ben ungroundid.
And bi þe same skile possessioneris, and alle þat wedden hem
wiþ a newe ordre, ben foolis in þe same caas. For þei ben
weddid wiþ staat ungroundid, and chargen hem wiþouten cause
wiþ more þing þan þei mai do.

ÞE WEDNESDAI GOSPEL AFTIR SEVENÞE SONEDAY AFTIR TRINITE.

[SERMON CCXIII.]

Abiit Jesus Sabato.—MATT. xii. [I.]

Þis gospel telliþ how Crist reproveþ þe Fariseis, for þei
tellen more bi oo ceremonye þan bi þe substance of þe lawe.
Matheu telliþ þat, *Jesus wente on a Sabot bi growynge cornes, and*

Christ con-
demns the
superstitious
observance of
the Sabbath.

¹ So in E; om. A.

his disciplis, for þei hungriden, bigunnen to plukke eeres and etc. As who wolde take newe whete, and rubbe it, and ete it. And þe Phariseis, seyng þis, seiden to Crist, Lo, þi disciplis doon þat is not leueful hem to doon on Sabotis. And Crist seide to hem, Han 3e not red what Daviþ dide, whanne he hungride, and þei þat weren wiþ him? how he entride into Goddis hous, and eet þe holy looves of propositioun, þe which it was not leueful to him, ne to þes men þat weren wiþ Daviþ, to ete, but oonly to preestis, bi comun lawe? Or wher 3e han not red in þe lawe, þat in Sabotis prestis foulen þe Sabot, in etinge in þe temple¹, and 3it þei ben wiþouten blame? For lo, I seie to 3ou, þat more þan þe temple is. And 3if 3e wisten what it is, þat Y wole mercy and not sacrifice, 3e shulden never dampne þus þes innocentis.

Here oure Lord supposiþ wel þat ech synne is in spirit, and siþ no spirit synneþ but fend or mannis soule, ech synne is in oon of þes, þat is defaute aȝens God. And so synnes þat ben in dedis, and in mennis bodies wiþouten-forþ, ben first groundid in mennis soulis, and ellis þei weren not sich synnes. Of þis may men see opynly, how it is no synne to ete corn or holy breed, whanne no synne goiþ bifore. And þis techiþ þe firste saumple of Crist; how Daviþ in hungre ete þe looves þat weren lymytid to prestis to ete; for sich nede haþ no sich lawe. And siþ þes postelis² hadden greet hungre, and God is Lord of alle þingis, God wolde þat his servauntis token of þis corn, to susteyne hem in Goddis service. And 3if þou seie þat in þe Sabot men shulden not ete in þis manere, certis þis etyng was homely, and men wolden scorne it to day; but Crist ordeynede it to be, to distrye pride of Phariseis. For many bishopis wolden þenke to day, þat it were dishonour to hem for to ete on þis maner, for nede of mete þat þei hadden. Þe secounde saumple þat Crist seiþ is seid for þe Sabot. For tyme in his owne kynde may neþer be holy ne pollut. But holy placis, þat men mai see, is seid ofte on þis maner. But, Lord! siþ preestis in þe olde lawe myȝten leuefulli ete in þe temple, whi shulden not þes preestis in tyme of nede ete in presence of Crist? Þes weren sensible conseitis, þat Crist tolde but litil by. And Phariseis

Commentary.

¹ So in E; A includes the clause in the quotation.

² apostlis, E.

chargen to day þer custumes þat þei han foundun ; but mandementis þat God haþ bedun þei putten bihynde, as untrewen men. And þus þei fasten as Joones disciplis ; but Cristis disciplis taken noon hede but þat þei serve God wel, what meene ever helpe to þis eende.

ÞE WEDNESDAY GOSPEL AFTIR EȚȚÞE SONDAY AFTIR TRYNYTE.

[SERMON CCXIV.]

Dixerunt discipuli.—MARK ix. [38.]

He that is not
against Christ
is for him.

The text
turned against
the friars who
endeavour to
silence poor
priests.

ÞE¹ sentence of þis gospel is seid bifore for þe more part. Mark telliþ how, *Disciplis seiden to Jesus, Maistir, we sawen oon in þi name castinge out fendis of a man, and we forsendiden him, for he sueþ not us. But Jesus seide to hem, Nyle ȝe lette him ; for þer is no man þat doiþ vertue in my name, and myȝte soone yvel speke of me. For who so is not aȝens us, he is for us.* And here may we see þe synne þat þe fend haþ newe brouȝt in, to lette trewe preestis to teche, and kepe þe puple to þes freris, not to profit of þis puple, but to spuyle hem more privyly. Crist bad here not lette þis man to do goode dedis in vertue of him, alȝif he were not of his covent ; for Crist lovede more þe Chirche þan þis covent. And it is al oon to lette a trewe preest to preche þus, and to lette a good aungel to do good on Goddis side, or to holde not wiþ Goddis part, but wiþ þe fend aȝens God. For Crist seiþ here sopli, þat who þat is not aȝens him is wiþ him. And so þes preestis moten nedis be on Goddis side, and he þat lettij hem here lettij Goddis werk to be doon. And over þis, freris han feendis maneris, þat oo frere grutchij aȝens anoþer, and fiȝtij wiþ him, whanne he prechij treuþe in his lymytacioun, as fendis fiȝten togidere ; but goode aungels ben ever acordid. And þis techij how freris coveiten þer privy spuyling more þan soule helpe. And myche of þes freris malis comeþ of þer shrewid coventis, þe which þei gederen above Crist, to

¹ So E ; A has þis.

make party aȝens him, for who so is not þus wiþ Crist mut nedis be here aȝens him. And bileve techiþ us, þat who so prechiþ in forme of þe gospel mai not faile to his harm, in þing þat he haþ nede of.

And þus seiþ Crist to his apostlis, to conforte her auditorie, *þat who so ȝyueþ hem drynke, ȝhe, ȝif it be water, in his name, for þat þei ben Cristis disciplis, sobly, seiþ Crist to hem, he shal not lese his mede. And whoever sclaundir oon of þes litil þat ben trowinge in Crist, it is good more to him þat a mylnstoon of an asse be bounden aboute his necke, and he be cast into þe see.* And þis shulden þes freris þenken on, and sclaundir^a not trewe prestis bi gabbing and backbitinge, boþe to þe puple and to þe prelatis, for hem were betere to be plowȝmen þan to be sich freris. And bi þe same skile, hem were betere to be lewde men in greet travaile, þan þus to sclaundir þe comune puple, and make hem be aȝens God in bileve and oþer vertues, as¹ þei bigilen ofte hem for wynnyng. *And ȝif þi hond sclaundre þee, kittle it awei;* as, ȝif werkes of sich freris þat þei worchen for þer coventis doon hem harm to þer soulis, caste þei awei sich frerehood,—*for it is betere be here feble and pore, as laboreres ben, þan to have here fals lustis, and to go into everlasting fier.* For sich men, dampned in helle, han a worm of conscience, and þis worm dieþ not, but gnawiþ hem to greet peyne, siþ þei myȝten liȝtli holde Cristis lawe, and caste awei þes feyned ordres. *And if þi foot sclaundre þee, kittle it awei;* as, ȝif þou have any affeccoun ungroundid in Goddis lawe, leeve it, and reule þi wille bi þe reule þat Goddis lawe techiþ. *For it is betere to a man to be crokid here, and aftir entre to þe liif of blisse, þan to have two feet here, and after be sent in to helle, havyng fier þat mai not be quenchild: where þer worm dieþ not, and þer fier is not quenchild.* For what avauntage shal man have, ȝif he have here ȝiftis of kynde þat ben susteyned to his

The guilt of slander.

¹ So in E; om. A.

* The reader will observe that the original sense of 'sclaundir,' and that in virtue of which alone it could be a correct rendering of 'scandalizare,' which means 'to throw

temptations in the way of,' is exchanged here for the more modern use of the term, by which it means to backbite or falsely charge.

nede, and, over þis, goodis of sich ordris, but þat herbi he haþ two feet, but to harm of his soule? And so it semeþ þat Crist wolde seie, þat ech man shulde go nyȝ þe state of kynde, and serve God, and leeve superflue þat man haþ foundid bi errour of his wille. *And ȝif þi eye sclaudre þee, take him out, for it is good to þee to have blyndenesse of þis world, and after entre in to þe rewme of God, þan to have here two eyen, and after be sent into þe fier of helle.* He haþ here two eyen, þat haþ boþe a kyndeli liȝt, and liȝt of þis worldis glorie, þat comeþ to him bi mannis fynding.

ÞE WEDNESDAY GOSPEL AFTIR ÞE NYNÞE SONDAY AFTIR
TRYNYTE.

[SERMON CCXV.]

Qui fidelis est in minimo.—LUC. xvi. [10.]

Fidelity in the
administration
of God's gifts.

HERE Crist reproveþ averice, and telliþ here of many loris. Luk telliþ how Crist seide, *He þat is trewe in leest þing, he is trewe in more þing.* It is seid comunly, þat God ȝyveþ men foure þingis, goodis of glorie and goodis of grace, goodis of kynde and worldly goodis. And þes^a goodis ben þe leste, to loke to¹ profit þat þei doon; but ȝit þei ben myche teld bi, and myche bysynesse is aboute hem. But he þat is trewe to God in coveiting of þes leste goodis, he is comunly trewe to God in service bi þes more goodis. *And he þat is wickid in þis litil, is wickid in þes more.* For boþ seculers and preestis, bi coveitise of worldli goodis, serven neiþer God bi ȝiftis of kynde ne bi² ȝiftis of cunnyng þat þei han. *And herfore, ȝif þei weren not trewe in wickide goodis of þe world, þe which ȝe seien ben ȝours, who shal trowe to ȝou in oper?* Summe seien þat þis tixt shulde be þus undirstonden; ȝif ȝe weren untrewre to God in þes goodis of fortune, who shal trowe to ȝou þat goodis of kynde or

¹ So E; A has *loke þe profit.*

² So E; om. A.

^a Namely, worldly goods.

grace ben 3ouris? 3e semen to have bodily lymes, witt, and oþer goodis of kynde, but alle þes ben not 3ouris, for 3e ben sold to þe fend. *And 3if 3e have be¹ untrewē in oþer mennis goodis, who shal 3yve 3ou goodis of blis, þat 3e shulden have 3if 3e weren trewe?* For men in blisse han verrily possessioun in alle þes goodis. *No man þat is servaunt may serve to two contrarie² lordis, for ouþer he shal hate þe toon and love þe toþer, or he shal drawe to þe toon and dispise þe toþer. 3e may not serve to God and þe worldli goodis.*

Phariseis herden alle þes wordis, and, for þei weren averous, þei scorneden him. And þus it wolde falle to-day of oure religious and oure clerkes, þe which ben 3ovun to averice; for þei loven þes goodis more þan oþer. *And Crist seide to hem, 3e ben þo ilke þat justifen 3ou bifore men; but God knowiþ 3oure hertis, whi 3e done þus.* Many men³ in þis world, boþe clerkes and seculers, doon þer dedis þat þei done here to seme just unto þe world, and to gete hem worldli goodis, fame of þe world, and oþer trifilis⁴, and þus þe ordre of þes goodis is now turned up so doun; bi þe leest men tellen moost, and þe moste þei chargen not. But neþeles Crist seiþ soþly, *þat þing þat is hye to men is abhominacioun bifore God;* and so mut it nedis be.

The clergy, like the Pharisees, despise the words of Christ.

ÞE WEDNESDAI GOSPEL AFTIR ÞE TENÞE SONDAI AFTIR TRINITE.

[SERMON CCXVI.]

Attendite vobis.—LUC. xxi. [34.]

CRIST techiþ in þis gospel to flee peril of worldli goodis. Luk telliþ how Crist seiþ a good lore to Cristene men: *Be war to 3ou lest 3our hertis ben hevied wiþ þes pree,—in gloterie, in drunkenesse, and bisynesse of þis liif.* And þis were ful nedeful boþe to prelatis and to comuns; for many men liggen in a sleep to regard of goostli wakyng, and þes pree þingis maken hem dreme til þe tyme þat þei ben dede, and þanne shullen þei

The danger of worldliness,

¹ ben, E.

² So E; A includes in the quotation.

³ So E;

A includes the words *wbi—men* in the quotation.

⁴ tryfles, E.

fynde nouzt of þe richesse in her hondis, and þer hertis ben so hevy þat þei plumben doun to helle. And þus seiþ Crist of þe day of dome, *þat þat dai come¹ sudeyn upon ȝou*; and herfore he biddiþ men wake to passe þe periles of þat day; *for þat dai shal come as a gnare in alle þat sitten upon þe face of al þe erþe*. Þes men sitten upon þe face of al þe erþe, þat coveiten worldis glorie þat is þerinne as a face; and þei resten in þat glorie, and bisien hem wiþ alle worldly curis. And þis mai fallen to popis and bishopis, fro þe tyme þat þe world haþ gnaryd hem wiþ temporal possessiouns, and oþer glorie of þe world.

and duty of
watchfulness.

And so wake ȝe, preiynge in al tyme þat ȝe be had worþi to fle alle þes þingis þat ben to come, and stonde bifore mannis sone. Ech man mote nedis stonde at þe barre bifore Crist, and be demed aftir his lyf, oþer to blis or to helle. And, as Crist techiþ here, þes þree bringen men to helle. But we sleepen and wanten bileve in alle þes þree þat Crist telliþ, for boþe bishopis and oþer men traveilen to gnare hem in alle þes. And no dreded þei failen foule in bileve of þis gospel, for ellis þei wolden fayne be delyveryd of lordshipes þat þei ben dowid inne.

ÞE ENLEVENÞE WEDNESDAI AFTIR CORPUS CHRISTI.

[SERMON CCXVII.]

Quia oportet semper.—Luc. xviii.² [1.]

Þis gospel telliþ a lore of Crist, how þat men shulden bisili preic. Luk seiþ þat, *Jesus tolde to his disciplis þis parable, to teche þat men moten ever preie and not faile³*; and seide þus, *Þer was a juge in o citee, þat dredde not God, ne shamede ony man. And þer was a widewe in þat citee, and cam to þis juge, and seide, Venge me of myn adversarie. And bi longe tyme he wolde not; but aftir he seide wipinne himsilf, Alȝif Y drede not God, and shame not of man, neþeles for þis widewe is grevous to me, I shal venge*

The efficacy of
unceasing
prayer; para-
ble of the im-
portunate
widow.

¹ *sehal come*, E. ² So in E rightly; A and Q have *x*. ³ These words ought to be included in the quotation, but are not, either in A or E.

hir, lest she come at þe laste and privyly anoie me^a. And þe Lord seiþ, Heere zee what þe juge of wickidnesse seide. Wher God shal not do veniaunce of his chosen men to blis, þat crien to him nyzt and day? Certis, I seie to zou, þat soone shal God do veniaunce of hem.

Sum men seien þat þes prelatiſ bi þe popis lawe, and lawe of þe chapitre, ben more grevous to þe Chirche þan was juge of þe citee, for þei cunnen summone þe Chirche, þat is wydowe for þis tyme, from oo place to anoper, to sooke of her moneye. And þus clerkis seien^b, þat suggilare is soukyng to do wrong. And noo doute God wole venge his peple of siche prelatiſ. But we shulen witen, þat he preieþ wel þat lyveþ wel bi Goddis lawe; and þis preier is myche betere þan wawyng of preestis lippis, for lippis ben þe worste part bi which men synnen azens God. How serven þei him moost worþili wiþ þis part þat is so foule?

ÞE WEDNESDAI AFTIR TWELFÞE SONDAI AFTIR TRYNYTE.

[SERMON CCXVIII.]

Cepit Jesus exprobare.—MATT. xi. [20.]

Þis gospel telliþ how Jesus reprovede many citees for þer synne. Matheu telliþ þat, *Crist bigan to reprove citees, in which weren done many vertues of him, for þei hadden not do penaunce, for þe synne þat þei hadden done. Woo to þee! Corozaym; woo to þee! Bethsaida; for if in Tire and Sidon hadde be done vertues þat ben don in zou, longe ago þei hadden do penaunce in aishen and hayre. Nepeles Y seie to zou, þat to Tire and Sidon lesse peyne shal be don in þe day of jugement, þan shal be to þes two citees. And þou, Capharnaum, where þou shalt be hied to hevене? þou shalt droppe down into helle: for if in Sodom hadden vertues be*

The danger of neglecting spiritual opportunities.

^a Not a very correct translation of the 'sugillet' of the Vulgate. Nor are the Wycliffite versions any better, which render, the one 'stran-

gle,' the other 'condempne.'

^b Imagining the word to be a derivative of 'sugo.'

done þat ben done in þee, perventure þei hadden dwelt into þis day. Neþeles Y seie to 3ou þat it shal be softere to þe lond of Sodom at domesday þan to 3ou.

And þes þree citees bitokenen þree synnes þat weren done in hem. And interpretatioun acordiþ wiþ þe storie of boþe sidis; for where God 3yveþ betere 3iftis, ben men more unkynde to synne. And for þes londis of heþene folk myzten be good of þer free wille, þerfore seiþ Crist, þat peraventure þei hadden do penaunce longe siþen. And seed of Goddis word þat þei token was more worþ þan mannis seed; and herfore þei hadden more synne to waste þis seed þan þe toþir. And 3if þou axe, siþ Crist wiste þis, what movede him to preche here, and not to preche in oþir countries, where he myzte have done more good, siþ he is God and al is his, and he may not accept persones,—we bileve þat þis is soþ, but God woot whi he dide þus, for worþnesse of his kyn, or meritis of patriarkes bifore. But al þe Chirche shal be betere for þis dede þat Crist dide, þan 3if he hadde convertid oþer, and leste to preche to þes folk. And þus bishopis ben more to blame, and alle þes newe religions, whanne þei ben unkynde to Crist, þan ben oþer lesse bounden.

ÞE WEDNESDAI GOSPEL AFTIR ÞRITTENÞE SONEDAI AFTIR
TRINITE.

[SERMON CCXIX.]

*Abeuntis Pharisey*¹.—MATT. xii. [14.]

Þis gospel þat Matheu telliþ spekiþ of vertue of Crist, how meke and vertuous he was aþens malice of his enemyes. Matheu seiþ þat, *Phariseis wenten out, and maden her conceil aþens Jesus, how þei shulden leese him, for he was contrarie to þer liif. But Jesus, þat knewe þis, wente þennes, and manye suden him, and he helide hem alle. And he bad hem þat þei shulde not make him opynly knowun; þat þis were fulfillid, þat was seid of Crist bi Isay; Lo, my child þat Y have chosen, my loved in whom*

¹ Pbarisei, E.

it pleside wel to myself; Y shal putte my spirit on him, and he shal telle judgement to hevene men. He shal not stryve, ne he shal crye, ne ony man shal heere his vois in þe stretis. He shal not breke a rede¹ brysid, and he shal not quenche flex þat smokith, til he caste out juginge to victorie. And in þe name of him shulen hevene folk hope.

Men expownen þis profecie soþeli of Cristis persone. For to þe manheed þat he took, alle þes condiciouns acorden; for he was moost vertuous man, and moost meke man of alle oþer, siþ he dide wiþouten defaute alle þe dedis þat he dide. For ȝif he were veniable here no man myȝte suffre his veniaunce. He was meke to seculers here, þat weren unstable as þe reed, and meke to preestis of þe chirche, þat smokiden bi pride as brent flex. But o dai of Crist shal come, in which he shal juge alle men; and þanne he shal shewe his miȝt, whanne it nedith not to spare more; but ȝit his mekenesse and his mercy shulen be medlid wiþ alle hise dedis.

ÞE FOURTENÞE WEDNESDAI AFTIR CORPUS CHRISTI.

[SERMON CCXX.]

Ait ad Jesum unus.—LUC. xii. [13.]

Þis gospel telliþ a parable, how men shulden fle averice, and specialli preestis of Crist. For Judas fel bi þis synne, and bitraiede Crist his maistir, as þe gospel beriþ witnes; and alle þe synne þat preestis done, in þe office þat Crist haþ ȝovun hem, comeþ of averice of hem; and þus þei ben his traitours, as Judas. Luk telliþ þat, *On of þe puple seide to Jesus, Maistir, seie to my broþir þat he departe wiþ me þe heritage.* For him þouȝte þat Crist was just, and sum part shulde he have, as freris seyn now þat bishopis cunnen fiȝte best of alle men, and it falliþ moost to hem, siþ þei ben lordis of al þis world. And þus Macabeus² fouȝten, and Crist bad hise apostlis sille þer cootis,

Avarice should be shunned by all, but especially by the clergy.

¹ So E; red, A

² Macabees, Q.

The friars
falsely assume
for the clergy
the right to
wield the tem-
poral sword.

and bie hem swerdis; but wherto but for to fizte? And þus freris wenden in greet aray, and stiryn many for to fizte. But sum men seyn, þat it helpiþ not but to gete hem newe martirs. For, as þei seien, ech man þat ¹ dieþ þus is fulli assoilid bope of peyne and of synne, and þus he fleiþ streitly to hevене, and þanne he is a martir. Who can denye þis? Suppose we þat þis is heresy, þat Crist tauzte his apostlis to fizte þus wiþ iren swerdis, but wiþ swerd of Goddis word, þat stondiþ in mekenes of herte, and prudence of mannis tunge. And as Crist was mekeste man, so he was moost drawen fro þe world, and wolde not juge ne devide heritage among men. And ȝit he cowde have do þis best, ȝif it myzte have fallen to him. And þis were lasse perilous þan to devide benefices, for mede of good were more, and errour of wickide were worse. And þus þe apostlis dursten not chese Mathi, but kepten þe chesyng to God.

And þus seiþ Crist in þis gospel, *O man, who made me juge or departere among you?* As who seiþ, God bad me not do þis, and whi shulde Y take þis office speciali? siþ God haþ ordeyned þis lawe and office for seculer jugis. And myche more, siþ God haþ ordeyned þat clerkis shulden not þus be dowid, to parte þis dowyng amonge hem falliþ for a fendis crafte. And here heretykes cryen, þat þis gospel denieþ not þat ne Crist departide þis heritage, but he axide a questioun herof; siþ Moises, bi conseile of God, was juge þus of heritages. But telle þes heretykes how Crist jugide here, and in what forme, and whi þe Hooli Goost hidde þis jugement fro þe Chirche.

And Crist seide to hise disciplis, Se ȝee, and flee ȝe from alle maner of averice, and speciali from averice þat stondiþ in siche jugis. For Crist myzte have wonnen myche money, ȝif he wolde have jugid þus; but he muste have jugid ofte þat neiþer of þes partis shulde have þis. And Crist seiþ aftir þus, *þat not in abundaunce of siche goodis þat a man haþ, stondiþ his lyf,* but in þe contrarie. For men shulden in state of innocence have lyved wiþouten sich goodis, and many men lyven betere þat han here nouzt of þes, as Baptist and oþer men, as þes Jewis moten nedis graunte. And so þis is a fals principle þat worldly men usen to-day,—ever þe more þat a man haþ, ever þe more worþ

¹ So E; om. A.

he is. And þus þes averouse men tellen myche þat oon be worþ a þousand pound. But we tellen hem of oure bileve, þat Joon was betere þan alle þes richessis.

Crist seide to hem a lienesse, to stire hem from averice. Þe feld of oo riche man brouzte forþ plentenus fruytis, and he þouzte wipinne himsilf and seide, What shal I do? for Y have not to whidir Y shal gadere my fruytis. And he seide, Þis Y shal do; Y shal distrie my bernes, and Y shal make more; and þidir Y shal gadere alle þingis þat growen to me, and my goodis. And Y shal seie to my soule, Soule, þou hast many goodis put up for many ȝeeris; reste, drynke and ete, and make feestis. But God seide to him, Fool, þis nyzt shulen þe fendis take away þi soule fro þee; and þingis þat þou hast maad redy, whois¹, trowist þou, shulen þei be? So it falliþ, whoso tresouriþ to him, and is not riche in God. And Crist seide to his disciplis, Herfore Y seie to ȝou, nyle ȝe be bisye to ȝoure lyf, what ȝe shulen ete, ne to ȝoure bodi, what ȝe shulen be clopid wip; for² þe liif is more þan þe mete, and þe bodi is more þan þe cloip. And so more bisynesse shulden men have for þis betere þan for þe worse, and specialy for þat place where þe soule and þe bodi shulen evere more dwelle. And þus men shulden gadere vertues, to fede þes partis in blis of hevене. Biholde ȝe þe crows; for þei neiþer sowen ne repen, and þei han neiþer seller³ ne bernes, but ȝit God fediþ hem; myche more God wole fede his servauntis. And þus for beste þing shulde man be moost bisye.

The rich man who enlarged his barns.

ÞE WEDNESDAY GOSPEL AFTIR ÞE FYFTENÞE SONDAI AFTIR TRINITE.

[SERMON CCXXI.]

Factum est in una dierum.—LUC. XX. [1.]

ÞIS gospel is toold bifore fulli to al þe lettre^a, but marke here how sikir it is to preche þe gospel and leeve dremes. For freris

On the false and interested preaching of the friars, both

¹ *uhoos*, E. ² So in E; the passage *So it falliþ*—for is wrongly excluded from the quotation in A. ³ *celir*, E.

^a See p. 172, supra.

those on the
side of Urban,
and those ad-
hering to Cle-
ment.

prechiden now late a dreem^a; but þei cowden not rede wel, and þei lesten treuþe of þe gospel. And þus þei han harmed oure lond, boþe in men and moneie, and love of God, and mannis frendshipe; for so myche frendship as we han lost, shulen freris nevere licylly gete azen. And so þe wynnyng þat þei shulden have getun for trewe prechinge of þe gospel, were betere þan many hundrid þousynd mark. But myche more þei maden us lese; for men þat knowen siche journeis and dispensis in money, wiþ hors and harnays, seien þat it comeþ to more, wiþouten oþer harmes þat ben fallun. And noo drede alle freris, or many, assentiden to þes heresies þat þes freris han prechid here, to gete moneie of þe puple. Lord! ȝif men weren led bi witt, and wolde no more fede sich, bifore þe rewme were restorid of þis harm þat þei han don. For it semeþ to many men, þat til þat tyme freris ben acursid; and comunyng¹ þus wiþ cursed men shulde not profit to oure rewme. And dedis of hem þat God cursiþ ben litil worþ or nouzt to blesse. Late hem lyve on þer werris, and on þer martris þat þei han getun, or sille þer feyned indulgence; and disseve þei no more oure rewme; for feyned gabbingis þat þei heepen shulde make no treuþe to man of witt. Have we alle þes freris in suspect, in mater of bileve or oþir; for þei han sown þus opynli lesyngis, azens bileve. And no drede Clementis freris wolen as faste feyne azens us; for come þei in anoþer lond, þei wolen soone assente to Clement; and so þei wolden now here, ȝif þei hopiden worldli wynnyng. But God forbede þat oure bileve be led bi sich heretikes; þat seien þat þe fendis eleccioun makip hem newe article of bileve; as freris þat ben wiþ Clement seyn þat it is þer bileve, þat Clement is heed of hooli Chirche; as oure freris feynen þus of Urban. Who shulde have hem not suspect of heresie þat þei han prechid?

¹ So E; A has *comune*.

^a See p. 166 supra.

PE SIXTENDE WEDNESDAI AFTIR CORPUS CHRISTI DAY.

[SERMON CCXXII.]

Venit Jesus ad villam.—MARK viii. [22.]

Þis gospel tellip of a myracle, how Crist heelide a blynd man. Mark seiþ þat, *Jesus cam to þe toun of Bethsaida, and þei bryngen him a blynd man, and preieden Crist to touche him. And Crist, takynge þe blynde mannis hond, [and]¹ ledde him out of þe strete; and Crist, spittinge in to his eyen, leide upon him his hondis, and axide him wher he saw ouzt. And he lokide, and seide, Y see men goinge, as trees. Þan Crist putte efte his hondis upon his eyen, and he began to se, and he was restorid to siȝt, so þat he saw clerely alle þingis. And Crist sente him into his hous, and bad him go into his hous, and ȝif he entre into þe strete, loke he telle no man.*

Crist fledde veyn preisng, and algatis of þis toun; for it was oon of þe þree touns þat Crist reprovede for her synne. And herfore Crist ledde him out of a street of synful men, to teche us þat summe synful men wolen veynly take goode dedis², and men shulen lette to worche bifore hem, for depravyng of þe werkes. But here men axen comunly, whi Jesus, þat is almyȝty, helide not first fulli þis man, siþ þe myracle hadde be more. But here men taken as bileve, þat alle þingis þat Crist dide weren doone for certeyn resoun, and for greet witt on þer maner. And here Crist propheciede how þis citee was disposid. Summe of þis citee weren goode, and weren growynge in vertues, and þis figuride Crist here, and leste counfort to oþer men to laste in vertues, alȝif þei done not beste anoon. And trowe we not þat Crist dide here dispiteously or dishonestly, spittinge in þis mannis face to ȝyve siȝt to his iȝen. For Cristis spotel hadde greet vertue, and was contrarie to venym of þe fend; as philosophris seien it is of spotil of a fastyng man. And þus Crist ȝaf devocioun and vertue to þis man to preie; and it is honest with sich spotele for³ Cristis hond to waishe his eyen.

¹ om. E.

² *Goddis dedis*, E.

³ So E; A has *fro*.

The blind man restored to sight.

Commentary.

DE SEVENTENÞE WEDNESDAI GOSPEL AFTIR CORPUS CHRISTI DAI.

[SERMON CCXXIII.]

*Dixit Jesus discipulis*¹.—MATT. xiii. [31.]

The parables of the grain of mustard seed and the three measures of meal.

CRIST telliþ here two parablis, þat tellen þe state of his Chirche. First he seiþ þat, *Þe rewme of hevenes is maad liche to a corn of senevey, þe which a man takip, and sowiþ it in his feld. Þis corn is lest of alle seedis, þat men sowun comunly in þe feeld. But whanne it is growun, it is more þan all wortis, and it is maad a tree, so þat foulis of heven comen and dwellen in his branchis.*

Commentary.

Men undirstonden comunly þis parable of Cristis Chirche, þat dwelliþ here upon erþe, and was but a litil floc whanne Crist chees his apostlis, bi suche ordre as he wolde. And þus þe Chirche is ofte clepid þe rewme of hevenes, for þe heed. A senevey seed in divers contrees haþ diverse propirtees. It is licy þat þis seed hadde þis propirte in þe lond þat Crist was inne; it was litil in quantite, and sowun in gardeynes, or in þe feeld; and of leeves, whanne it growiþ, men maken potage in þat cuntre; and after it growiþ to a tree, as done malues in sum contre. Þus growide þis Chirche bi vertue of Crist, þat was lest for moost meke. And þis seed was bigynnyng of alle þe Chirche, þat now is greet. Þis Chirche was sowun in þe feeld, whanne it growide here in erþe. And it contrarieþ not herto þat Crist was a whete corn, and fel in to þe erþe and was deed, as Joon telliþ þat Crist seide. Þis Chirche growide aftir to an hiþe tree, and cam to þe hiþnesse of hevene; and grete lordis here in erþe dwelten in branchis of þis tree. For emperours and kingis bicamen Cristene in particuler chirchis. Men seien þat senevey haþ þis kynde, þat it is good for sause of mustard, and confortiþ mannis nerves, alþif it be sharp to mannis nose. Þus Cristis Chirche lyvede first, þat² it was sause to oþer men; and not oonli salt of þe erþe, as Crist seiþ of hise apostlis,—for men weren confortid bi

¹ So E; A has *disciplis*.

² þat is, E.

Cristis preestis to holde his lawe and go his wey. And so senewis of many men weren confortid for to move, and paralasie was put away, for þei weren stable in bileve. But þei weren odious to many, for worldly men loveden hem not; and so fame or sause of nose was ful sharp in þes men. And so Crist telliþ in þis parable, on what manere his Chirche shal lyve.

þe secounde parable þat Crist seiþ here is seid þus. *þe rewme of hevenes is like to sour dowȝ, þe which a womman takȝ, and hidȝ in þree lumpis of mele, til þat al be soured.* Þis þing is knowe to wyves, and includiþ myche witt; for of comoun þing and knowun shulden þe comouns beste take þer witt. But we shulen first undirstonde, þat o þing bi þis witt may signefie diverse þingis bi diverse propirtees: as a lyoun bi Joones speche is Crist of þe kynrede of Juda, and a lioun signifiþ bi Petre þe fend as he temptiþ men. And þus sour dowȝ is old synne, bi þe witt þat Poul seiþ; but here sour dowȝ is savery þing þat fordoiþ wlatsunnesse¹. Þis womman is Goddis wisdom, þat hidȝ þis savery sour dowȝ in þre porciouns of mele, to make breed after savery. Men þat ben disposid bi God to be pastid in hooly Chirche, ben þis mele þat Crist seiþ here; and þis sour dowȝ is his lymes, þat darken in þre partis of mele, whanne þei ben moved of God to þenke and speke and do wisely, bi ensaumple of þe Trinite.

Alle þes þingis spake Jesus in parablis bi þe puple, and wipouten parablis spake he not now to hem; to fulfille þat word þat was spoken of þe prophete, þat seiþ þus of Crist; I shal opene my moup in parablis, Y shal shewe out hid þingis fro þe bigynnyng of þe world^a.

¹ wlatsunnes, E.

^a In the Sarum Missal this gospel is given as that for the *eighteenth* Wednesday after Trinity, or Corpus Christi; while for the gospel of the

seventeenth Wednesday reference is merely made to that of the twenty-third, *Cum venisset Jesus.*

Second parable
and com-
mentary.



PE NYNTENÞE WEDNESDAI GOSPEL AFTIR CORPUS CHRISTI DAI.

[SERMON CCXXIV.]

Accesserunt ad Jesum.—MATT. xiii. [36.]

ÞIS gospel tellith how Crist expowneþ a parable þat he hadde seid. Mathew telliþ þat, *Disciplis camen to Jesus, and seiden, Declare to us þe parable of taris of þe feld. And Crist answeride, and seide; He þat sowiþ good seed is mannis sone; and þe feld is þe world; and þe good seed ben sones of þe chirche, but þe taris ben wickid children. But þe enemye þat sowiþ þes taris is þe devyl, þat makip discord; but þe ripe corn is þe eende of þe world, and þe reperis ben Goddis aungels. Þerfore as taris ben gederid, and ben brent in þe fier, so it shal be in þe end of þe world. Mannis sone shal sende his aungels, and þei shulden gadere of his rewme all sclaudris, and hem þat done wickidnesse, and þei shulen sende hem in to þe chymeney of fier; þere shal be wepyng and gnastyng of tep. Þanne just men shulen shyne as sunne in þe rewme of þer fadir. He þat haþ eeren to heere, heere he þis witt expowned. Ech preest þat haþ witt shulde first knowe þis parable, and after þes wordis þat here ben seid, and þanne may he liztli knowe what þis parable wolde meene.*

The parable of the taris explained.

ON TWENTIÞE WEDNESDAI AFTIR CORPUS CHRISTI.

[SERMON CCXXV.]

Dixit Jesus principi.—LUC. xiv. [12.]

ÞIS gospel telliþ how a man shulde do his almes, and to what men. Luke telliþ how, *Jesus seide to a prince of Fariseis, Whanne þou makist a mete or soper, nyle þou clepe þerto þi frendis, ne þi breþeren, ne þi cosyns, ne þi riche neizboris, leste þey¹ bidden*

Parable of the supper.

¹ So in E; A excludes *lest þei* from the quotation.

þee azen, and reward be maad here to þee. But whanne þou makist a feeste, clepe þou pore feble men, blynde, and lame, and þou shalt be blessid, for þey¹ han not wherof þei shulen zelde þee, for it shal be zolden to þee in þe azenrysyng of just men. Whanne Crist hadde seide þes þingis, oon of hem þat eten togedere seide to him, Blessid is he þat shal ete breed in þe rewme of God.

Here men ben tauzte to what þre men þei shulden do þer almes bodili; for to pore feble men, to pore lame men, to pore blynde men. For a man may be feble, lame, or blynd, and ful riche; but whanne he is pore wiþ ony of þes þree, þanne he is able to take sich almes. And, for alle curatis shulden be pore, and ben alle feble to do þer office, and to traveile for þer mete, þerfore þei taken almes as pore feble, and don beter goostli almes azen. And þes blasfemes out of bileve, þat seien þat Crist spekþ here falsely or uncompletly to teche men to whom þei shulden do þer almes, ben comunly stronge beggeris, and tirauntis in Cristis Chirche. But þes heretikes shulden not be trowid, ne be nurishid wiþ sich almes. Men may 3yve sich men good bi oþer title þan title of almes, as bi felowship or lordship, as many taken ofte mete wel.

Commentary.

ÞE OON AND TWENTIÞE WEDNESDAI AFTIR CORPUS CHRISTI.

[SERMON CCXXVI.]

Factum est ut intraret in.—LUC. vi. [6.]

Þis gospel telliþ how Crist helide a man upon þe Satirdai, and answeride to men þat accusiden him, and proved bi resoun þat he dide wel. Luk telliþ þat it fel þat, *Jesus wente into þe synagoge, and tauzte þerinne. And þer was a man þere, and his rizt hond was drye, and þe Scribis and Fariseis aspieden, wher Jesus heelide on þe sabot, þat þei shulden fynde to accuse him. And Jesus knewe þe þouztis of hem, and seide to þe man þat hadde þe drye hond, Rise þou, and stonde in þe myddil. And he roos*

Cure performed on the Sabbath day

¹ So E; A has þe.

and stood. And Jesus seide to hem, I axe where it be leveful to do wel or yvel in þe sabot; to make a soule saf or to leese it. And Crist lokide alle men¹ aboute, and seide unto þis man, Stretche out þin hond. And he stretchide it out; and his hond was restorid. And þei weren fulfillid of unwise dome, and þei spaken togidere, what þanne þei shulden do of Jesus.

Commentary.

Crist makide many resouns þat man brekiþ not þe Sabot, ȝif he do miraclis on þis day, alȝif þei ben bodili werkes. For þanne shulden men moost do wel, in werkes þat God wole have done; but God wolde have þis werk done, for he him self dide þis myracle. ȝif Crist hadde do þis myracle for hyre, þanne þes Fariseis hadden wel argued. But it is good to traveil bodily, and freely to serve God. But þus dide Crist, in doynge myraclis, as he shulde² upon Sabot. For in state of innocence men myȝten traveile boþe bodili and spiritualy to serve God in nedeful þingis; and þus servide Crist to God, doyng miraclis on þe Sabot. And þis was a medeful werk, and God was auctor þerof; and herfore dide Crist sich werkes comunly on þe Sabot.

ÞE TWO AND TWENTIÞE WEDNESDAI AFTIR CORPUS CHRISTI.

[SERMON CCXXVII.]

Amen, Amen, dico vobis.—MARK XI. [23.]

Þis gospel telliþ men what vertue is in riȝt bileve. Mark telliþ þat, *Crist seide, Sobely Y seie to ȝou, þat ȝif ony seie to þis hill, Take þee away, and sende þee into þe see; and doute not in his herte, ȝif he trowe riȝtly, þat whatever he seiþ shal be do, þanne it shal be don to him.* Here ben many objeccions þat þes wordis of Crist ben false; siþ many men may axe þingis, and trowe into hem, and ȝit mai faile. But prove þou þat þis man doutiþ not, but spekiþ riȝtly, and þanne þou makist an argument þat Crist and his gospel ben false. But þou provest not þat þou

The power of faith.

¹ on alle men, E.

² schulde do, E.

takist, and þefore caste þis skile away. But ech Cristene man shulde trowe, þat what skilful þing he axiþ God shal do to him, be it more or be it lasse. But discrecioun is here nedeful, þat man axe þat he shulde axe; as þat he tempt not God, to axe þing þat is not nedeful, but nedeful to prove Cristis bileve; and þanne mut it nedis be, siþ God failiþ not in nedeful þing, and in power he mai not faile. And God haþ kept evere a word, answeyng to men þat tempten Crist. *For which þing Y seie to you, alle þingis whateuer ze axen in good preier, bileve ze þat ze shulen take hem, and þei shulen come to you.*

And whanne ze shulen stonde to preie, forzeve ze if ze han ourt azens ony, so þat your fadir þat is in hevne forzyve to you your synnes. And þus ech man shulde forzyve alle þe synnes doon azens him, for he shulde forzyve his injurie, and leeve to God what he wole do. But injurie don azen God is propre to God to forzeve. And it is ofte resonable to aske faste bodily dettis, as men axen almes of men; and God biddiþ þat þei shulden do almes; but be war þat þou axe noo veniaunce of þing þat is propre to God.

And here men seien, þat Crist haþ grauntid to alle hise prestis, and first to popis, þat whatever þei bynden or unbynden above erþe, it shal be þus doon in hevne. And þis is soiþ whanne þei done þus above þe erþe,—as we han seid bifore,—so þat þei han cunnyng to acorde wiþ þe keyes above; and ellis þei done not þus above þe erþe, but in þe erþe, or byneþe þe erþe. And þus a man shulde forzeve his wrong, and leeve to Crist riht punishing. And so it semeþ no gospelis dede¹, neiþer to fyzte ne prisoun men, but 3if God bidde to do þus; and þanne men don as Goddis servantis. And þus seiþ Crist þat, *3if ze forzeven not, þanne your fadir þat is in hevne shal not forzeve you your synnes.* Here mai we see þat Crist wole part þe wrongis þat men doon azens men, and þat men doon azens God; for þat forzyveþ noon but God. And 3if a man be Goddis trewe viker, þis viker forzyveþ in Goddis name. But þis forzyvyng is al oþer þan forzyvyng þat God forzyveþ.

Forgiveness of injuries.

The power of the keys.

¹ gospel dede, E.

DE WEDNESDAI GOSPEL AFTIR þRE AND TWENTI SONDAI AFTIR
TRINITE.

[SERMON CCXXVIII.]

Cum venisset Jesus.—MATT. xvii. [23.]

Christ pays the
didrachma.

Þis gospel telliþ how meke Crist was, þat he 3af tribut to þe emperour; and 3it þe emperour bi mannis lawe shulde not axe þis of Crist. Mathew telliþ þat, *Whanne Jesus and his discipulis camen to Capharnaum, þer camen, of þe emperours seruauntis, þat token tribut of men to Petre, and seiden to him, 3our maistir paiþ no tribut. And Petre seid, 3he. As who seiþ, soþ it is he paiþ noon, for he is noon housholding man, and he haþ noo rentis ne goodis, wherfor he shulde paiþ þis tribut. And whanne he was entrid into þe hous, Crist cam bifore Petre, and seide, Symount, what þinkip þee? Kingis of erþe, of whom taken þei tribut or taliage? of þer sones, or of aliens? And Petre seide, Of aliens. And Jesus seide to Petre, Þanne sones be free fro þis. For it semeþ þat Crist wolde meene þis resoun unto Petre; 3if þe kingis of erþe taken no taliage of þer sones bi mannis lawe, myche more þei shulden not take of Goddis Sone bi mannis lawe. But þat we sclaudre hem not, go to þe see, and caste an hook, and þat fishe þat comeþ first up, take to þee, and opene his moup, and lo, þou shalt fynde a manere of money^a. And þis money is as moche or more as þes seruauntis axiden of Crist, for *dragma*¹, as men seien, was worþ aboute sevene pens, and *stater*, as men seien, is worþ so myche or more. Crist bad Petre take þis *stater*, and paiþ it for Crist and Petre; and þanne þe maistir and² his covent weren quit of paiyng of þis tribut.*

Here seien clerkis soþeli, þat Crist shulde paiþ þis tribut, for Goddis lawe, þat is Goddis wille, nedide Crist to paiþ þis. And

¹ So E; A has *didragma*. ² So in E; A has *of his covent*, and also *weren*; evidently therefore *and* is the right reading.

^a The first Wycliffite version explains 'stater' to mean 'a certeyn of moneye;' in reference doubtless to the original meaning of the word,

which is simply 'standard.' The stater then current in Palestine was equivalent to 4 drachmas.

Christ's ex-
ample teaches
that princes
may tax the
temporal pos-
sessions of the
clergy.

here mai men see bi resoun, þat Cristis preestis shulden not grutche ȝif men token¹ þer temporaltes; for oure Jesus grutchide not. And ȝit he hadde no temporaltees of kingis þat dwelten in þis erþe; for he ordeynede in þe olde lawe þat his preestis shulden have no sich lordship; and he kepte it in þe newe lawe, for him and hise, ful strenghtly. But ȝit Crist tauȝte Petre to take þe stater of þe water, and þat passide mannis possessioun, and mannis witt, þat it was þere. And þus Crist tauȝte þat God wolde þat he obeishide þus to þis kyng, for ellis hadde Crist synned here, in doinge þat he shulde not do, or þat God wolde not þat he dide; but cursid ben þei þat trowen þis.

ÞE WEDNESDAI GOSPEL AFTIR FOURE AND TWENTI SONEDAI AFTIR TRINITE.

[SERMON CCXXIX.]

Homo quidam habebat duos.—Matt. xxi. [28.]

ÞE witt þat þis gospel seiþ is toold bifore in þe fyfþe weke aftir *Domine ne in ira*, and þere men mai see þis gospel^a. But siþ al witt is in Goddis lawe, and bi þe same skile in þe gospel, sumwhat moten men seien here of þe witt þat þe gospel telliþ. Matheu seiþ in þis gospel, þat God hadde two sones, boþe þe heþene men and þe Jewis. But þe firste seide, he wolde not do his bidding; aftirward he hadde forþinking, and dide þe dedis þat God bad him. Þe Jewis seiden þat þei wolden do, and failiden falsli in þer dedis; and þus þei weren more to blame, for more falsehede in word and dede.

And here men douten comunly of þe sixte maner of conscience², þat is whanne a man leeviþ to reprehende an opyn synne. Þus seien seintis, þat him wantiþ not scripul of privy felowship, þat leeveþ to blame an open synne. And anoþer

¹ taken, E.

² consent, E.

^a See above, p. 27. 'Domine ne in ira' one would suppose to be the first words of an introit; but there

is no introit with such a beginning in any office falling near the octave of the Epiphany.

The professing disobedient, and the repentant obedient son; by the first are meant the Jews, by the second the Gentiles.

Whether men who do not reprove open sin are guilty of consenting to it.

seip, he þat may amende and is necligent, wiþouten doute he makip him partener of þe trespas. And þis same techip Cristis dede, þat is comaundement to Cristene men, for it seþ hizet to hem þan ony man mai speke bi vois. Crist, al vertuous and al witty, blamede hie preestis and Phariseis, and 3it he wiste þat herfore þes ypocritis shulden shape his dep. And no man of bileve haþ drede þat ne here was ground of errour; for Crist reprovede where moost was nede, and so shulden men do to-day. Crist 3af þe forme how men shulden blame þes folk bi weie of charite; for he seip þat hem þat he loveþ, he reprovip and chastisip. And he seip in Joones gospel, þat he 3yveþ a newe mandement þat hise lymes love togidere rijt as he lovede hem. And þus asprie þou what is cause of þe synnes of þes two¹ folk, and drawe mekely away þis cause, and þanne þou doist as Cristis child. And siþ lordship and temporal goodis nurishen synne in þes two folk, drawe away þes two brondis, and þis boylyng wole after quenche. And no drede assent to þes menes is to assente to þes synnes. Many seien þat þei wolden þat þes synnes weren fordone in þe Chirche, and 3if eijer þei ekyn² þe fier, or leeven to wiþdrawen þe brondis;— as who seip, Y wolde fayn þat þe hete of þis water were³ quenched, and 3it Y putte under fier, and leve to wiþdrawe þe brondis. Þis consence is wel knowun of Crist, þat knowip al þing. And þis blamyng shulden men do, for love to þes two folk; for no drede Crist for love reprovede hie preestis and Phariseis.

But here men replien comunly, þat bi þis skile ech man assentip to ech synne doone in þe Chirche; for a man assentip þat ceesip to speke a3ens þis synne. Also many knowun not þis synne, and ben not in power to ceese it; how ben þei oblishid herto of God, þat worchip al bi resoun? Here Cristene men shulden have no drede þat ne þis consent is comune now. And so it is seid ful soþly, þat whoever synneþ ony wey assentip to al synne þat is done þanne, as many men drawun a boot. But here we moten distingue blame fro list synne þat we moten have, for ellis holy men assentideh ever to al manere synne. Do we now þat in us is, and God wole

Objection
stated and
answered.

¹ So in E; A has *two*.

² *eken*, E

³ So E; *weren*, A.

have us excusid. And to þis secounde evydenche a man shulde nevere ceese to azenstonde þes synnes, wher he be alyve or deed. For lyve a man ritzfully, and for him God helpiþ his Chirche. And þus ech hooly deed man helpiþ aþens ech synne here in þe Chirche. But summe shulen helpe in o maner, and sum in anoþer; as lyvyng, to whom God 3yveþ witt, shulen helpe bi resoun and bi wordis, and oþer lyvyng, to whom God 3yveþ power, shulen helpe bi prudence of þis power, and oþer, symple idiotis, shulen helpe bi þer good liif; and so no man is excusid þat he ne shal helpe on sum maner. And siþ þe helpe is in Goddis hond, feblenese of bodi excusiþ¹ not. And bi þis mai men undirstonde how þe þridde object shal be assoilid^a. As ech man knowiþ al þing in generalte, so he knowiþ synne. And lyve he medefully, and God wole departe his meed, and helpe bi him where nede is. And þis shulde ech man knowe, as Goddis lawe shulde be al knowun of ech man in his degree, of summe more and of sum lesse, after þat God haþ oblischid him. And so ech man shulde wite þat preestis shulden lyve a pore liif; and þus necligence, or levying for to helpe in Goddis cause, is þe firste and mooste synne þat rengneþ now in þis Chirche. And Crist diede in þis cause, to prynte it betere in Cristene men, þat þei shulden þenke to helpe here for more profit þat comeþ þerof.

ÞE WEDNESDAI GOSPEL IN YMBER WEKE IN SEPTEMBRE MONEÞE.

[S E R M O N C C X X X .]

Respondens unus de turba.—MARK IX. [16.]

Þis gospel telliþ how Crist dide a miracle, þat he reservede to him. And many seien þis is þe same þat Luk telliþ of þe lunatik. Mark seiþ þat, *Oon of þe puple answeride, and seide to Jesus, Maistir, Y have brouzt my sone to þee, þat haþ a domb spirit.* Þis spirit is clepid bi þat name of þe siiknesse þat he

The casting
out of the
dumb and
deaf spirit.

¹ So E; A has *excusid*.

^a How the third objection is to be solved.

makip; and þus, for he makip a man domb, he is clepid a domb spirit. And he harmed many weies þe man þat he dwelte inne; for where evere þis spirit takip him, ȝif he may, he fruyship¹ him down, and þanne he froþip, and gnastip wiþ his teþ; and aftirward he wexip drie. And Y seide to þi disciplis þat þei shulden cast out þis spirit, and þei myzten not. And Crist answeride to hem, and seide, O kynrede untroweful, how longe shal I be wiþ ȝou! how longe shal I suffre ȝou! brynge ȝe þis siik man to me. And þei brouzten him to Crist. And whanne Crist hadde seyn him, anon þis spirit troublide him, and he, cast down in þe erþe, was waltrid and froþide. And Crist axide his fadir, How myche tyme is it fro þat þis is fallun to him? And þe fadir seide, Fro childhood. And ofte tymes hap he puttid him in fier, and watris, to lese him; but ȝif þou maist ouȝt, helpe us, and have mercy on us. And Jesus seide to him, ȝif þou maist bileve, alle þingis ben possible to him þat bileveþ. And anon þe fadir of þe child cryede wiþ teeris, and seide, Sire, Y bileve; helpe myn untroupe. And whanne Jesus hadde seyn þe folk rennyng þidir, he manasside þe unclene spirit, and seide, Þou deef and domb spirit, I comande þee, wende þou from him, and entre þou no more in to him. And þis spirit, cryinge, made him scrawle², or, al to-teeryng him, wente oule from him; and þe child was maad as deed, so þat manye seiden, þat he is deed. And Jesus, holdinge his hond, reise him to him, and he aroos.

And whanne Crist hadde entrid in to þe hous, his disciplis axiden him privyly, Whi myzten we not caste oute þis fend? And Crist seide to hem, Þis kynde of spiritis mai not wende out but in preiour and in fasting.

Commentary.

Men seien comunly here, þat Crist kepte þis werk to him silf, for his apostlis failiden here in sadnesse of bileve. And herfore Crist reprovede hem, and movede þis fadir to trowe sadly. And þes apostlis weren presumptuous, and wolden not mekeli preie to God; and herfore seip Crist here, þat þis fend is casten out in preier and fastinge. For as fendis han dyvers poweris, so dyverse vertues contrarien hem. And noo drede Crist wolde þat his lordshipe were here shewid, and þus he spekip here as a lord. And myche peple saw þis deede.

¹ fruschip, E.

² spraule, E; scraule, Q.

ÞE FRIDAY GOSPEL IN ÞE SAME YMBER WOKE.

[SERMON CCXXXI.]

Rogabat Jesum quidam.—LUC. vii. [36.]

ÞIS gospel telliþ how Crist dide mercy to Marie Mawdeleyn. Luk telliþ how, *O Farisey preiede Jesus to ete wiþ him, and Crist entride into þe Phariseis hous, and sat down¹ to þe mete. And lo, a synful womman þat was in þe citee, whanne she knewe þat Jesus restid in þe Phariseis hous, she brouzte a box of oynement, and stood bihynde biside þe feet of þe Lord Jesus, and bigan wiþ teeris to waishe his feet, and wipte² hem wiþ þe heeris of her heed, and kisside his feet, and anoyntide hem wiþ þe oynement. And þe Pharisey þat clepide Crist, seyng þis dede of þis womman, seide wiþinne to himsilf; He þis, 3if he were a prophete, certis he shulde wite who and which is þe womman þat touchiþ him, for she is a synful womman. And Jesus answeride, and seide to þis Pharisey, Symount, Y have sumwhat to seie to þee. And Symount seide, Maistir, seie. And Jesus answeride, and seide, Þer weren two dellouris to an usurer; oon ouzte fyve hundrede pens, and anoper fifty. And whanne þei hadden not for to paie, he for3af hem boþe. Who þerfore loveþ him more? And Symount answeride, and seide, Y gesse þat he to whom he 3af more. And Jesus seide to him, Þou hast jugid ri3tly. And Crist, turned to þe womman, seide³ to Symount, Seest þou þis womman? I have entrid in to þin hous; þou 3avest noo water to my feet, but she þis haþ waished my feet wiþ teeris, and haþ wipt hem wiþ heeris of her heed. A cos⁴ þou 3avest me not, but she þis, fro Y was entrid, cesside not to kisse my feet. Wiþ oile þou anoyntidist not myn heed, but she þis anoyntide my feet wiþ oynement. Þerfore Y seie to þee, many synnes ben for3ovun her, for she haþ myche loved; for to whom is lesse for3ovun, he loveþ lesse, as þou hast seid. And Jesus seide to hir, Þi synnes ben for3ovun þee. And summe þat saten togidere at þe mete bigunnen to seie wiþinne hem*

The penitence
of Mary Mag-
dalene.

¹ So E and Q; A has *don*.

² So E; *wepete*, A.

³ and *seyde*, E.

⁴ *cosse*, E.

silf, Who is he þis þat þus forȝyveþ synnes? And Jesus seide to þis womman, Þi bileve haþ maad þee saaf; go þou in pees.

Private confession,

Here may we see how pryvey shrifte is auctorisid of¹ oure Jesus. For but in þis place aloone men shulen not grounde þis oonly shrifte. But bi þe sentence of þe gospel, ȝif man have ful sorew for his synne, ȝif he speke not aftir oo word, but do wel and leve to synne, God forȝyveþ þis synne, as he forȝaf þis wommans synne. And neiþer gospel ne resoun mai aȝen-seie þis sentence. And so þe pope haþ newe founden a rownyng shrifte, and beden it streitly; and þis shrifte doip sum tyme good, and also myche harm in þe Chirche; for bi þis han prelati men undir foot, and spulen hem of worldly goodis. And þus boþe prestis and þer sugettis synnen many gatis in þis point. And þus men erren in bileve, boþe preestis and þe peple. For an hundrid pointis ben feyned of assoilinge and cursinge þat han no ground in Goddis lawe, and ȝit men doren not aȝen-seie hem. And fro þe tyme þat þe fend was unbounden, þe þridde pope Innocent brouȝte þis inne*. And siþ þis doip myche good to many men to be þus shryven, and to many it doip harm,—and herof þei hem silf shulden be juge, —men seien þat it is nedeful to many men to be þus shryvun, but whanne and to whom men shulden be shryvun is in þer owne discrecioun. As etynge of mete is nedeful, but not ever in ech place; and maner of metis þat ben founden men shulden take after þat þei done hem good. Þe popis lawis in þis mater ben litel worþ for to trowe, but inasmyche as þei ben groundid of Goddis lawe or of resoun. And it semeþ hard þat þe Chirche shulde be nurishid wiþ newe fode, and leve fredom þat Crist haþ ordeyned, and be constreyned to take þis fode. Shryve a man him wel to God; þis suffisiþ a man to soulis helþe. And ȝit it is nedeful þat sum men shulden shryve hem þus.

its effects partly good and partly evil.

But for þe firste part of þe gospel we shulen wite þat þer ben two usuris. Summe usuren here in erþe for þer prou, and want of love; and þus usure is forfendid, for it smatchiþ coveitise. But oþer usure is ȝovun to God, whanne he ȝyveþ men his

Two kinds of usury, the human and the divine.

¹ in, E.

* At the fourth council of the Lateran, A.D. 1215.

ȝiftis to profite wiȝ and disserve hevene, to avantage of mennis silf. But God wole wite how men han chaffarid, al ȝif God ȝyve hem al þe vantage. And þus God usuriȝ for oure prow, for alle þingis þat God ȝyveȝ us he ȝyveȝ us for þis eende, wheȝer þei ben goodis of grace, or kynde, or goodis of fortune þat he ȝyveȝ us. And of þis usure spekiȝ þe gospel here, and in many oȝir placis. And þus he to whom God ȝyveȝ more schulde more love his God; and þis more love is encrees þat God axiȝ for his ȝifte. And þus Marie Mawdeleyn ȝaf to God a greet encrees, ȝhe, more þan þis Pharisei, as she hadde more grace of God. And ȝit God axiȝ þis encrees for mannis helȝe, and not for his. But we shulen undirstonde here how Crist techiȝ us to haunte oure mercy. As þe soule is betere þan þe bodi, so goostli werkes of mercy ben betere þan bodili mercy. And noo werkes ben werkes of mercy, but ȝif þei doon good to þe soule. And þus ȝiftis of worldli goodis blynden ful many men. For it is sum tyme a work of mercy to denye men worldly goodis, and sum tyme to take from hem, and sum tyme to putte hem in prisoun, and sum tyme to mayme hem, and sum tyme to sle hem. And God woot whanne sich dedis profiten to mannis soule.

ÞE SATIRDAI GOSPEL IN YMBER WEKE IN SEPTEMBRE MONEȝE.

[SERMON CCXXXII.]

Dicebat Jesus turbis.—LUC. xiii. [6.]

Þis gospel telliȝ two parablis þat Crist seide to confirme his werk. Luc telliȝ how, *Jesus seide to his discipulis þis similitude: þer was a man þat¹ hadde a fige tree plauntid in his vineȝerd. And he cam to seke fruyt in it, and he foond noon. And he seide to þe gardener, Lo, þer ben þree ȝeer siȝ Y come to seke fruyte in þis fige tree, and Y fynde noon; þerfore kille it down, for whereto occupiȝ it þe erȝe?* And þis gardener answeride, and seide to him, *Sire, late it stonde, ȝhe, þis ȝeer, til þat Y delve aboute it, and*

The parable of the barren fig tree.

¹ So E; A has *and*.

sende donge to þe rootis. And ȝif it bere þus fruyt, it is a good werk and a wiis, and ellis afurward þou shalt kille it down.

Commentary.

Þis man is þe godhede of hevene; þis vyneserde is his chirche. Þis fige tree is þe rewme of Judee. And it was bareyne in þree eeldis; but Crist, gardener of þis vyneserde, grubbe inne and dongide it; for he prechide to þe Jewis, and lefte his bodi in lond; but ȝit þis fige tree bare noo fruyt, and herfore it was kitt away, þe two and fourtiþe ȝeer aftir Cristis assencioun.

Miracle of healing.

Luk telliþ after how, *Jesus was techinge in þer synagogis in sabotis, and lo, a woman þat hadde a spirit of syknesse in eizten ȝeer, and she was bowed down, and myzte not on ony maner loke up. And whanne Jesus saw her, he clepide her to him, and seide to hir, Womman, þou art left fro þi longe siiknesse. And Crist putte to hir his hondis, and anoon she was streizt, and glorifiede God. And þus þis womman was heelid bi þe myracle þat Crist dide here. And þis persoun¹ of þe synagoge answeride, dedeynyng þat Crist heelide on þe sabot, and seide unto þe puple, þer ben sixe daies in which men moten worche, þerfore come ȝe in þes daies and be ȝe heelid, but not on þe sabot. And þe Lord answeride to him, and seide; ȝe ypocritis, where ech of ȝou unbyndiþ not in sabot his oxe or his asse fro þe cratche, and lediþ him to drynke? And was it not nede to unbynde þis Abrahams douxtir, þat hap ben bounden for eiztene ȝeer, fro her boond in þe day of sabot? And whanne Crist hadde seid þes wordis, alle his adversaries weren ashamed; and alle þe puple hadde joie in alle þingis þat weren gloriously doon of hym.*

ÞE GOSPEL ON DEDICACIOUN DAY OF A CHIRCHE.

[SERMON CCXXXIII.]

Egressus Jesus ibat.—LUC. xix. [1.]

Þis gospel telliþ how Crist dwelte in þe hous of Sache². Luke seiþ þat, *Jesus wente out, and wente unto Jericho. And lo,*

The faith of Zaccheus.

¹ So E; A has *persoun*.

² *Zacbee*, E.

þer was a man þat hiȝte Ȝachee, and he was prince of publicans, and he was a riche man, and he souȝte to see Jesus, and he myȝte not for þe puple, for he was litil in stature. And he ran bifore, and stiede into a sycomor tree for to see Jesus; for he was to passe þerbi. And whanne he cam to þe place, Jesus lokynge up saw him, and Jesus seide to him; Ȝache, haste þee to come down, for to-day Y moot dwelle in þin hous. And Ȝachee hastide him, and cam down, and took Crist ful joyfulli. And alle þe men, whanne þei sawen, grucchiden, and seiden þat he turnede to synful man; for puplicans weren holden synful boþe in liif and in craft. And Ȝachee stood, and seide to þe Lord, Lo, þe half of my goodis, Sire, Y ȝyve to pore men; and ȝif Y have ouȝt bigiled ony, Y ȝelde aȝen þe forefold. And Jesus seide to him, For to-day helpe is maad to þis hous, for he is Abrahams sone. For mannis sone cam to seke and make saf þat was perishid.

Dis gospel is red in ȝeeris whanne þe chirche is halewid, for no feste ne masse is worþ but ȝif þe gospel conferme it. And as Ȝachee resseyvede Crist, so chirchis resseyven Cristene men. But here shulden men undirstonde þat þe chirche is taken on many maneres. First, for men þat shulen be saved, which Crist clepip Abrams sones. After, for þe hous of liym¹ and stoon, þat conteyneþ sich men. We taken noon heede to oþer wittis þat þe chirche sumtyme bitokeneþ. Þes two þingis gederid togidere on what maner þat it be, þe firste chirche is Goddis spouse, in what place ever it be; þe toþir chirche is halowid and maad, as oþir places ben. And þes wittis ben diverse to speke þus of þe chirche. For no drede God is not spousid wiþ þis liym and þis stoon; but to sich places men gaderen, boþe good and yvel, for to heere Goddis word, and to resceyve þer sacramentis, alȝif it be not modir of men², but sich a temple is an hous to oure modir to reste inne. And many þingis þat men don here, men doon to Crist and his Chirche; and in worship of hem þei doon summe discretli, and summe doon folily, for defaute of enformynge.

¹ lyme, E.² bem, E.

Distinctions of
meaning in the
word Church.

DE SONDAY GOSPEL WIÞINNE OCTAVE OF DEDICACIOUN DAY.

[SERMON CCXXXIV.]

Omnis qui venit ad me.—LUC. vi. [47.]

The house
built upon the
rock.

ÞIS gospel telliþ how goostli Chirche shal be groundid in Crist. Luk telliþ how Crist seide, *ech man þat comeþ to me, and heer iþ my wordis and do iþ hem, Y shal shewe 3ou to whom he is like. He is like to a man þat bildiþ an hous, þat delveþ depe, and haþ put his ground upon a stoon; and whanne grete wetnesse is maad, þe flood is cast to þat hous, and it myzte not move þis hous, for it was groundid upon a sad stoon.*

Commentary.

By þis gospel may men see, siþ ech man shulde be Goddis hous, ech man shulde ordeyne so for himsilf þat God bi grace dwelle in his soule. And 3if he have sad bileve in Crist, þanne he is groundid on þis stoon. Þes waters and wyndis and oþer tempestis ben tribulaciouns of þis world, azens whiche stondiþ he wel þat haþ sad bileve in Crist, and trowiþ þat 3if he love Crist, what caas þat falliþ to him, it mut nedis falle to his betere, bi vertu of þis ground stoon. And þus stondiþ Cristis Chirche faste, what tribulacioun falle to it. And generaly, þis Chirche is paiid in what poverte þat it is inne. And 3if it be pursued in bodi, it trowiþ þat it is for þe beste. And, for noon of us shulde be proud ne covetous bi þis title, God haþ hid þis stoon from us, wher we ben men of holy Chirche. For 3if we shulen not be saved, we ben not men of holi Chirche. And among þree þingis þat God hid iþ from us, þis is oon. And þus he semeþ a blasfeme þat is þus proud, bi þis title, or þus spuliþ pore men, as he were God and wiste al þing. But certis þanne shulde he leeve þis synne, and be meke as Crist was. A man may wite whanne he is in worldly office wiþ a lord; but þis is fer fro þis title, to be a lym of holy Chirche.

ÞE GOSPEL WHANNE ÞE MASSE IS SEID FOR BRIÞEREN AND
SISTRIS AND FOR HEELÞE OF PEPLÆ.

[SERMON CCXXXV.]

Sedens Jesus contra gazophilacium aspiciebat.—MARK xii. [41.]

Þis gospel telliþ in what staat þe puple of Crist is more sikir. Mark telliþ how, *Jesus sate azens þe tresorie in þe temple, and Jesus biheld how þe puple caste moneye into þis tresorie, and many riche men castiden myche. And whanne þer was comen a litil pore womman, she caste two mitis, þat ben a ferþing. And Jesus callide his disciplis togidere, and seide to hem; Sobeli I seie to þou, þat þis widewe, litil and pore, 3af more in mede þan alle þat senten into þis tresorie. For alle oþer senten of þat þat was aboundant to hem, but she þis of her myschif sente alle þingis þat she hadde, and so she sente al hir lyveloode, and for love putte her in disese;* but so diden not þes oþer men, þat hadden mo þingis þan hem nedide.

The widow's
two mites.

And here may we see opiny, 3if we trowen to Cristis wordis, þat merit of a mannis 3ifte is not after þat it is myche, for þis widewe 3af more worþ þan alle þes men þat here offriden. And siþ þe puple shulde have noo good but for to wynne þe blisse of hevene, and þis falliþ comunlier in povertē þan in richessis of þes goodis, þe heele¹ of þe pore puple is more sikir þan it is in siche riche men. And on þis sentence shulde prelatis þenke, whanne þei seyen þis masse in þe chirche, and spoile not þe pore puple for to make þer state greet.

Commentary.

ÞE GOSPEL ÞAT IS SEID FOR ÞE PEES.

[SERMON CCXXXVI.]

Ecce venit hora et nunc.—JOHN xvi. [32.]

Þis gospel telliþ bi what weie men shulen have pees in þis world. Joon telliþ how Crist seide upon þe Shire Þursday, *Lo,*

The peace of
Christ.

¹ helpe, E.

*hour*¹ is comen, and now it is comun, þat ȝe be scaterid abroad ech on into his owne place, and ȝe shulen leeve me aloone; and Y am not aloone, for þe fadir is wiþ me. Y am aloone from mannis helpe, but not aloone from Goddis helpe. Þes þingis have Y spoken to ȝou, þat ȝee have pees in me. In þe world shulen ȝe have over-leyng²; but truste ȝe, Y have overcome þe world.

Here shulden men wite wel in what þingis stondiþ mennis pees,—not in strong folk and castelis, ne in assailing of oure enemyes, ne in preieris of freris, but in oure owne vertuous lyf. Triste we in Crist, and hope we wel to have in him oure pees bi vertues. For many moo freris preien aȝens us, þan feynen for to prei for us; and þes seien not, Pees to þis hous, what toun or cuntre þei dwellen inne, but shapen to hem axis of werre; and þis shewiþ no pees, but hate of Crist. And þus we wenen þat it were betere þat þes preieris helden þer pees, for þei witen nevere where þei ben ordeyned to peyne of helle, as fendis children; and it semeþ not bi þer lyf, þat ne þei assenten to þes grete synnes. How shulden þei bigilen þe puple wiþ chafferyng of þeir preier?

Errors of the
friars.

ÞE GOSPEL AT MASSE ÞAT IS SEID FOR ÞE DEEDE³.

[SERMON CCXXVII.]

Dixit Martha ad Jesum.—JOHN xi. [21.]

COMUNE custume of men⁴ is to make þer testament whanne þei dien, and for to make exequies for þat day þat þei ben buried. And in boþe þes þingis ben many erroris in bileve; for it is groundid in mannis ordenaunce for þe more part, and not in Goddis. A greet disseit in þis mater stondiþ in trist of mennis preiours⁵; as freris and oþer preestis seien þat þei wolen save þe⁶ soulis and bringe hem hastili into hevene bi þe vertue of þer preier. But here at þe first men shulden wite, what preier profitiþ to men. And preier of good liif profitiþ

On the right
manner of
making a will.

¹ þe boure, E. ² over-leyng, E. ³ The title in E is 'Missa pro defunctis.'

⁴ Cristen men, E.

⁵ preyours, E.

⁶ ber, E.

moost of alle oþer, and þis preier profitiþ more to quyke men and to dede. Þou woist¹ nevere wher þis dede man be dampned or in purgatorie; and if þat he be dampned alle preiours saven him not. 3if he be in purgatorie, good liif of þe Chirche here mai be meedful to þis man, after þat Crist acceptiþ it. And þerfore lyve þou wel, and do þou profit to þe Chirche, and leve þis parting of mede to God, for so mut it nedis be.

Many men ben disseyved in founding of chauntries, in coostli sepulcris, and in solempne sepulturis; and alle þes feden þe world, and done no profit to þe soule; but as þei harmen men lyvyng, so þei done harm to þe soul. And as anentis masse or preieris, Cristene men shulden wel wite þat good liif of a plowman is as myche worþ to þe soule as preier of þis frere, alþif it profite sumwhat. And þerfore it is an open foly to bargayne wiþ preestis for siche preier, siþ þei cunnen not grounde bi resoun þe valu of þer preier. And as God may accepte þer preier, so he may whatever he wole; and þus þis is a lewid ground to move men to triste to þer preier. 3if þis prest shal be dampned, his preier profitiþ litil or nouzt, but doþ more harm to quike and dede; and þus shulden men hiire hym to levee.

Preier of lippis bigiliþ many², and specialy whanne lippis ben pollut; for sich preieris of preestis don harm many gatis. And herfore þei shulden kepe þer lippis fro bloody servise of þe fend. For men seyen þat prestis wordis shulden be as þe gospel; but now þer lippis ben foulid on seven maners, wiþouten moo. First, in irous wordis, as scorneful and wraþful. Also in un-honest wordis, as worldly songis, and talis of japis. Also in gabbingis of þer breþeren;—and þis falliþ ofte to freris; whanne þei prechen of dede men, þei gabben boþe of quike and dede. Also in boostful wordis þat men speken of þer ordris, and of þingis þat fallen to hem; and sich lesingis hatiþ God. Also þei gabben upon God, þat is a foul blasfemye, as men may heere of freris in errour of þer speche, as þei tellen of þer begging in helpe of þer breþerheed, and in mede of fiþtinge, wiþ oþer errours þat þei sowun. Sich lippis ben unclene to please

Evil consequences of unwise bequests to pious uses.

Prayers offered by unclean lips.

¹ waste, E.

² hire hem to levee preyer of lippis, siþ þey bigilen many, E.

God bi þer preier. For Crist seiþ to Ysaye, þis puple worshipiþ me bi lippis, but þer herte is fer fro me. Her lippis passen in malis beris lippis or oþer bestis; for, as anentis gloterie¹, þei gederen ofte fatte gobettis, and as anentis lecherie, þei synnen ofte in unclene kissingis^a. Þese sevene shulden preestis þenke on, and kepe her lippis in clene speche; and þan shulden þer preieris profite, boþe to quyke men and dede.

ANOTHER GOSPEL AT MASSE ÞAT IS SEID FOR ÞE DEEDE.

[SERMON CCXXXVIII.]

Qui verbum meum audit.—JOHN v. [34.]

MEN shulden knowe þis treuþe in makynge of þer testament, þat þe leste nedeful werk þat þei don her in þer persone is more medeful to hem þan al þat her seketours² done, and oþer men þat preien for hem, be it nevere so costli. For bi ech sich medeful werk may a man disserve blis; but bi sich werkes, whanne a man is deed, he haþ but remissioun of peyne or sunner comynge to blis, and þis is myche lesse þan þe toþer. And herfore seide Crist in þe gospel, þat men lyvyng shulden sue him, and lete þe dede men birie þe dede; for mede þat þe Chirche on lyve doiþ, wole God departe for dede men after þei han made hem worþi here. And þus in sich dede preier ben many men bigilid. Þenke we on Cristis testament, and shape we oure deef after his, for he diede in moost charite, and shape we us to die in sum³. Oþer ben goodis of þe world, and bisie we us not þanne aboute hem, but bisie we us þanne in love of God and tristful sorewe for oure synnes, for no tyme þat man haþ here were worse to him to be distract. And þus sich makynge of testamentis is often a boon to many synnes; for bishopis and erchedekenes and þer clerkis synnen ofte here. Þe secutours synnen also by yvel dispending of þes goodis;

¹ *glotonye*, E.

² *sectours*, E; *secatours*, Q.

³ *to dyse so*, E.

^a Compare the account in Chaucer's *Sompnours Tale* of the affectionate salutation of the Frere to the wife of Thomas the housbondman.

and bi occasioun of þes two errours many oþer men ben discrasid.

And herfore it semep moost sikir to lyve þus evene wiþ þe world, þat man leve no worldly goodis þat wiþdrawiþ¹ his wille fro God; but as þe soule goiþ fro þe bodi, so his wille go fro þe world, and be set hoolli in God, and al oþer bisynesse be left. Triste not in freris but in God for goode werkes þat þou doist. For þou maist se þer coveitise bi þer liif þat þei leden; þei han not purchasid hem baptyem ne oþer leveful² sacramentis, but schriftis and sepulturis, and certis for devocioun of muc. And siþ hoolynesse of man makijþ holy place, and not aȝen, and sich acurside apostataas þat loven more muc þan men ben moost cursid ypocritis, þat place is enterditid of God, and to be biried in sich a place doiþ no good to þe soule. For herbi þei feden ypocritis, to þe greet harm of þe Chirche. And þus men shulden triste in God, and leeve oþer wordis þat now ben feyned; for he þat heerijþ wordis of Crist shal have liif wiþouten eende. Loke men whanne þei dien þat al þer love be fro þes goodis, and þat þei ben discretly departid where þei mai moost profite. For he þat biquetiþ³ to his frend ony sich good, for oþer cause þan for worship of God and profit of holi Chirche, failijþ in charite; and þis is not good now; for þis defaute in charite, for þe oure of mannis deef, is moost out of sesoun, for it makijþ a man dampned.

The prayers of friars of little use to a man after his death.

DIS GOSPEL IS SEID AT ÞE MASSE FOR WEDDINGIS.

[SERMON CCXXXIX.]

Accesserunt ad Jesum.—MATHEW xix. [37.]

Þis gospel tellijþ of matrimonie, how man and his wyf shulen love togidere. *Matheu tellijþ þat Scribis and Phariseis camen to Jesus, and temptiden him, and seiden; Wher it be leveful to a man to leeve his wyf for ony cause? Crist answeride, and seide to hem,*

Christian marriage.

¹ wiþdrawen, Q.

² leene, Q; lene, E

³ biquetiþ, E, Q

Wher 3e han not red þat he þat made hem at þe bigynnyng, male and female he made hem? For God made hem in þis kynde to love, and þus bryngre forþ fruyt. And so þer ben þree goodis in þis oon sacrament, feiþ, children, and chastite. For þei shulden love togidere, and love þer children, wiþ chastite. Þe man shulde holde him to þe womman, and þe womman hir to him, and 3if oþer of þes faile, þe toper, standing clene, mai leeve þe bedde. *And Crist seide to þes men, Herfore shal a man leve fadir and modir, and shal drawe to his wyf, and þei shulen be two in oo fleish. And so þei ben not two now, but oo fleish.*

Commentary.

And bi þes wordis wolde Crist meene þat moore oonhede shulde be bitwixe a man and his wyf þan bitwixe oþer men. Ech man wiþ his broþer is oo fleish, as o bodily kynde, and a man is maad oon wiþ an hoore on oþer maner, but þis sacramental oonhede passip þis in many maneres, for þis oonhede shal laste in hevене, but not bi sich fleishly knowing. And as preestis shulden preche pees, so þei shulden move to þis love; but as þei forȝetun pees, so þei forȝetun to move herto. For unkynde braunchis þat spryngen up doon harm to þe tree.

The excellency of the gospel, as God's own word.

And here men shulden þenken upon to do worship to þe gospel, for it is Goddis owne word, and so worshipe God in it. Wel we witen þat a lordis word is myche chargid^a for his worship, and word of kyng or emperour is more chargid for his hyȝenese. And siþ Crist is heier many weies, boþe in witt and in worship, charge his wordis for reward, siþ þis lord is greet and witti. And þis moveþ many men to hate alle oþer wordis for Cristis, and saveren hem lasse, but 3if þei ben groundid in wordis of þe gospel. And þus men ben to blame þat docken wordis of God, and þat avoutren Goddis word, as Poul pleyneþ on many men. Þes men docken Goddis word, þat takun a word of þe gospel, and aftirward reducen þer fablis, bi rymes or oþer fals witt. And certis þis is a foul synne, for þus Goddis sentence is hid, and mannis liking is prechid; but wo worþe him þat þus doip! What resoun shulde move freris to large þer cloþis and docke þe gospel? Certis, bi vertue of þe gospel, men kissen

^a To charge means here, as in many other places, 'to hold important,' 'to value highly.'

boþe bokes and wallis, but sich reverence þei don not to frere¹ cloþis, but 3if þei ben woode. And so þenke we on þis ende, þat þis gospel telliþ last. *Þat þing þat God haþ joyned shulde not a man departe.* And þus, siþ God joyned þis witt to wordis þat þe gospel spekiþ, men shulden not departe þis witt, and put an hoore witt þefore. For þanne þei avoutren falsely Goddis word, as Poul spekiþ^a.

¹ *freris, E.*

^a The concluding rubrick in MS. A is as follows :—

Here enden þe Ferial Gospels of al þe 3eer wiþ commemoraciouns, and bigynnen þe Sonedai Pistlis.



EPISTOLAE DOMINICALES.

[THE Sermons which follow, 55 in number, are, with two exceptions, upon the epistles (or lessons) for the Sundays throughout the year, according to the Sarum use. The exceptions are, the sermon on the lesson for the first mass on Christmas Day (Sermon V), and that on the epistle for the Sixth day after Christmas. Sermons on the *gospels* for these two days have been already printed under the head of 'Proprium Sanctorum,' (see vol. i., pp. 316 and 332). The difference in number between these that follow, and the 54 Sunday gospel sermons, arises from the fact of the last named set not containing discourses for Christmas Day and the Sixth day after, while, on the other hand, the epistle set has no sermon for the octave of the Epiphany. Throughout the series the writer follows the Sarum use. With this use the order of epistles in the English Prayer-book, as well as in the Roman missal, nearly agrees; where there is a divergence, it is pointed out at the beginning of each sermon.]

EPISTOLAE DOMINICALES.

DE FIRSTE SONEDAI PISTLE IN ADVENT BIFORE CHRISTEMASSE.

[SERMON I.]

Scientes quia hora est.—ROMANS xiii. [11.]

WE taken as bileve þat epistlis of apostlis ben gospelis of Crist, for he spak hem alle in hem, and Crist mai not erre. And alle þe gospelis speken good tipingis of joie of þe blisse of hevene. And alþif þe Holi Goost spekiþ ech word of holy writt, neþeles Crist spake in Poul more plentenously and sutilli. And þis moveþ sum men to telle in Englishe Poulis pistelis, for sum men may betere wite herbi what God meneþ bi Poul.

Þis pistle of Poul telliþ, how þat men shulden bigge þer tyme. For alþif God 3yve freely tyme, as li3t and oþer 3iftes of kynde, neþeles by synne of man tyme is lost to come to hevene; and not oonly bi synne of Adam, but bi synne of ech man þat wole not, in vertue of Crist, bigge þe tyme þat Crist 3yveþ for to wyne þe blis of hevene. And þis marchandize shulde ech man do—specialy for þis cause; for þe daies for synne ben yvel, and maken many to lese þer tyme, Poul bigynneþ to stire þus to take hede to Goddis tyme, and to lese not þis tyme, leevynge to disserve blisse. *Breþeren, we shulen be witynge þat our is now us to rise fro sleep, for now is oure helpe nere þan it was whanne we bileveden.* Eche man coveitiþ kyndely to have blis þat God haþ ordeyned to mankynde to reste inne, but many men contrarien hem silf, for þei coveiten comunli to have þis blisse, but þer lust and fleishli witt letten hem to wyne þis

Introductory.

The apostle tells us to redeem the time

blis, and bryngen resoun asleepe, and maken men to contrarien hem silf. For ech man shulde first coveite his beter, and flee his yvel, and so a man shulde more wille blisse þan ony sensible lif here. And þis takijþ Poul as bileve, whanne he biddijþ men rise fro slepe. And Poul meneþ bi þis sleep synne þat foolis lyven ynne. For riȝt as a man, whanne he slepiþ, wantijþ witt to kepe him, and is nere dede þan a best, so it is of synneful men. For what dede ever he doijþ, it lettijþ þanne to disserve blis, and disposijþ him to þe peyne of helle, þat is wers þan beestis deþ. And for men shulden rise on morewe, and do þer werkes aftir resoun, and men have now litil tyme to regarde of olde fadirs, þerfore seiþ Poul here þat our is now to rise fro sleep. An our is a litil tyme, and sunne of riȝtwisnesse is uppe.

þe secounde word þat Poul seiþ stireþ to þe witt of þe former word, whanne he seiþ þat now is oure helpe more nyȝe þan whanne we bileveden. It is knowun bi kyndely skill þat þe þingis þat moven kyndely, moven faster toward þe eende. And it is also knowen bi skile, þat as tyme passiþ to men, so it comeþ nyȝe domesday, whanne men shulen have fulli her helpe. For al if Crist be mennes helpe, ȝit he makijþ not helpe in man, but as resoun of tyme axijþ; and herfore to þe day of dome shal not al Cristis Chirche be in ful helpe, ne slepe in blis wiþ her spouse. To þis entent spekiþ Poul, in þe persone of al holy Chirche, þat now, whanne tyme is passid to bileve þat þe Incarnacioun is to come, but þat þe Incarnacioun is passid, as þe Chirche seeþ ascencioun, it mut nedis now be nere to þe ful helpe of þe Chirche þan it was bifore tyme, whanne þe Chirche oonly bilevede. For now þe Chirche passiþ bileve of þe Incarnacioun of Crist, siþ it wote wele in heven þat Crist haþ longe be þere man. And þis shulde move Cristene men to disserve hastely blisse, siþ þei ben neer þe eende þat þei coveiten kyndeli.

And to þis witt spekiþ Poul aftir. *þe nyȝt, he seiþ, haþ gon bifore, and certis þe day shal come nyȝe; and þerfore caste we away þe werkes of derknnessis, and be we clopid wiþ armes of liȝt. Walke we honestly as in þe day.* Here men undirstonden ofte bi þis nyȝt þe nyȝt of synne. For as angelis weren not conformed, but ever stoden in nyȝt of grace, so mankynde, siþ it

because our full and final salvation, which cannot be till the last judgment, draws near;

we must therefore put off the works of darkness

was made, stood sum wey in nyzt of synne, til þat Crist was maad man; and he is sunne of riȝtwisnesse, and he mai not falle to synne, siȝ he is riȝtwisnes him silf. And herfore seien grete men, þat Moises in boke of Genesis was moved bi God to seie þus, þat even and morewen was maad o day; and bi þis ordre of þes wordis God techiȝ how synne wente bifore. But be we ware and trowe we not þat God himsilf made synne, but boȝe in angel and in man was a maner of derknesse, bifore þat God confermede hem; and þis confermyng was bi his Sone. And after þe first tyme of þe worlde, Adam and Eve synned, and not in þe first tyme, in etyng of þe forfendid appul. But ȝit, bifore God confermede hem, þei hadden derknesse of even, and wantyng of Goddis grace, þat came whan þei weren confermed. And þus, alȝif Adam was confermed as soone as he was made of God, for Goddis ordenaunce was þanne upon him þat he shulde þanne come to blis, neþeles Adam was kyndely, bifore þat he was confermed of God. Þis day þat shal come after is undirstonden þe day of dome. But sum men þenken more sutilli, þat þis day is day of ordre bitwixe þe kynde þat man hadde first, and grace þat he haȝ of Crist, and to þis witt spekiȝ Poul. And siȝ þis ordre is reversid by grace of Crist, þat first is liȝt, and siȝen shyneȝ upon kyndely even, we shulden caste away werkes þat ben of derknes of synne, and first in þis goostli gendrure be clopid wiȝ armes of þe first liȝt. And þus divisioun in mannis kynde, and priorite in liȝt of grace, ben tolde here bi wordis of Poul, whanne he clepiȝ werkes of derknes, but singularly armes of liȝt^a. And þus in þis heavenly gendrure shulden we wandre in day of grace, and fle derkenes of synne, for ellis we kepen not Cristis ordre.

It is knowen to expert men, þat man shameȝ kyndely to do many synnes in liȝt þat he wolde do in derknes, as ben leccherie and þeste, and many oȝer suche synnes, þat man doiȝ in derknes of nyzt and shameȝ of hem in liȝt of day. And herfore Poul biddiȝ men walke honestly as in day, þat men shulden kepe hem silf in grace bi goode werkes, and flee synne; for ydilnesse in good werkes stireȝ many men to synne. And herfore Poul biddiȝ us walke, and not stonde ne ligge in þis

and walk
honestly as
in the day.

^a The words in the Vulgate are *tenebrarum* and *lucis*.

wey. And ȝit Poul specifieþ more of sixe synnes þat men don. *Dwelle we not in ofte etyngis, and drunkenessis* þat suen after. Many men have a maner to ete ofte for to drinke, and þis mete is an ale spore to stire hem for to drinke; and sich ofte etyngis of men ben clepid commessaciouns^a. And ofte, after sich etyngis, sueþ drunkenesse in men.

not giving way
to sensuality,

But, for men in þis lyf reversen þe ordre of God, þerefore in þis seconde ȝoke Poul rekenep synnes þat comen bifore. Siche men þat synnen þus liggen ofte to longe in þer beddis, and so þei have unchastnes in þouȝt, in word, and in dede. And herfore seiþ Poul after, þat we shulden *not* reste *in beddis, ne in unchastite* þat sueþ ofte aftir þis reste. For many ben temptid of fleishly synnes bi sich couchyng in þer beddis; and ȝif þei rysen and wakeden bifore, þei shulden fle sich unchastite. And herfore many men usen wel to come not in bedde wiþ sheetis, but be hilid above þe bedde, and rise anoon whan þei ben temptid; and þis semeþ Poul to teche, more þan to rise at mydnyȝt.

nor to envy
and bitterness;

Þe þridde ȝok þat Poul forfendiþ, is *chiding and envie*. For þes foure sisters bifore bryngen in liȝtli þes two; for ydilnesse in þis lyf makip men to stryve after; and for strif, wiþ yvele wordis, ben men groundid in long envie.

against all such
sins the true
remedy is to
be clothed
with Christ.

But medecyne for alle siche synne is, to *be clopid in Jesus Crist*. And þat man is clopid in Crist þat haþ freish mynde of his lyf, and cloþip his wille to sue him, lest his soule be cold in love. And þis were a general medecine to fle synne and sue vertues; for no man mai synne in þes, but in defaute of cloþing of Crist. And for þis al Cristene men han nede to knowe bileve of þe gospel, and so to knowe þe liif of Crist, and þe wisdom of his wordis. And so Cristene men shulden wite þat Poulis wordis passen oþere writingis in two þingis—þei ben pure, sutil, and plentenus to preche þe puple. Þe sutilte of Poulis wordis may make me and foolis to shame, whanne we cunnen not undirstonde sutilte of his short wordis. Þei ben also plentenus; for ech treuþe þat Poul spekip is knyttid wiþ ech point of bileve, and so after specheof oon may come speche of anoþer, after þat it profitip to þe heerers. As

^a Comessationes, banquetinges.

þe laste word of þis epistle biddiþ us be clopid wiþ Jesus Crist; and siþ þis is goostly cloþing, in whiche mannys soule shulde be clopid, al þe vertues of Jesus Crist may fittingly be brouzt hereynne. And siþ al vertues ben his, al vertues may here be tauzt. And vices þat ben contrarie to vertues may be declarid, to flee hem; as men þat taken privat sectis, or putten not Cristis sect alone, siþ þis cloiþ bi it silfe wolde suffice, ffailen of þe cloiþ of charite. And so it is to drede to hem, þat in tyme of þe laste soper þei shulen be dombe, for defaut þat þei have in bryde cloiþ. Þei shulen not be clopid in wolen and lymen, ne putte sect of Crist bineþe, but putte þis lordis cloiþ above, and charge hem not wiþ oþer cloþis,—siþ Crist biddiþ men of his suyt þat þei shulden not have two cootis.

ÞE SECUNDE SONDAI PISTLE IN ADVENT.

[SERMON II.]

Quecumque scripta sunt.—ROMANS XV. [4.]

Þis epistle of Poule techiþ how men shulden cloþe þer soule in bileve, hope and charite, and þanne þei ben clopid in Crist. Poul bigynneþ at bileve, and seiþ, *þat alle þingis þat ben writun in oþer of Goddis lawes ben writun for oure lore.* For þo þingis ben bileve þat men shulden cunne bifore oþer. We speken not of enke and parchemyn, but of þe sentence þat God seiþ; and bi þe seiynge of þis Lord we ben sikir þat it is sop; as, whanne a symple man seiþ a treuþe, we trowen it not for he seiþ it,—siþ he mai gabbe, and many þingis mai be unknownen to þis man,—but Crist is man of greet witesse, þat mai not faile in nouþer of þes. And so his speche makij treuþe to be bileve to Cristene men. 3it men taken more largely þes wordis þat Poul spekiþ here; for alle maner treuþis, þat ben writun in ony boke, 3it alle þes treuþis ben writun in Goddis lawe on sum maner; as treuþis þat ben more nedeful ben writun þere more expresly, and treuþis not so nedeful ben hid þere in comoun wordis. And siþ falshede, as Austin seiþ^a,

All truth, and in a sense all falsehood, is written in God's law, either for our profit, or for our warning;

^a See the second book of St. Austin's Soliloquies, chapters iv.—x.

is trewe in a maner, al falshed or heresie is writun in Goddis lawe, and so many travelen in veyn to witen how heritikes shulden be knowen. But shortly, al þis falshede þat is ungroundid in Goddis lawe is heresie in a maner; and al heresie is siche. And so many men wenen þat al þes newe sectis brouzt in, siþ þei ben not groundid in þis lawe, smatchen sumwhat of heresie. And perfore Cristene men shulden þenke shame to cloþe hem above wiþ raggis, and foule þe worpi suyt of Crist, as done al þes newe ordres.

Poul telliþ after for what cause God haþ ordeyned þes þingis be writen, *þat we have hope by paciens*, and bi confort of þes writyngis. But Poul passiþ over þes two vertues, and praieþ after charite; *þat God of pacience and of solace 3yve 3ou to kunne þe same þing among 3ou, ech to oper, bi þe lore of Jesus Crist; þat 3e be of oo wille, and wiþ o mouþ worshiþe God, þe which God is fadir of oure Lord Jesus Crist.* Poul clepiþ God of pacience, and of solace þat comeþ after, for Crist tauzþe men to suffre boþe in word and in dede, and putte hem in hope perfore to be solasid of God. For greet vertu is in þat man þat castiþ him to suffre, and kepiþ veniaunce to God, and hopiþ þat God for þis pacience wole conforte him. And herfore he is God of pacience and solace. And hereon many þenken to litil, þat fiȝten and pleden and casten weies how þei shulden be here vengid, as ȝif God knewe not þer wrongis. And so Goddis lawe undirstondiþ bi þis same þing unite, whanne men mekely knowen o Lord, and putten alle wrongis in his wille. And men þat slepen in þis þing resten surely in pees; and þis unite shulden men have bi þe lore of Jesus Crist, and þanne shulden þei be of o wille, and wiþ o mouþ herie God. Þes men have o mouþ, þat preien God for pees and love, and whatever þei speken or don it sounneþ in to pees and charite. And þis lessoun is þinne to day, for men speken of werris and stryves, and how þei shulden vencushe þer enemyes, boþe religiouse and oper. And certis þei have many mouþis þat ben amys sett upon; and siche fendis wiþ þer visers maken men to flee pees; and þes men worshipen not Crist, neiþer in his godhede ne in his manheed. For Crist þouzþe pees and love, and suffride perfore in his manheed; and he þat reversiþ

that we may
be patient
and full of
consolation,

Crist in þis is Sathanas azens Cristis Chirche. And bi his oonheed told here men worshipen þe Trinite; and bi discord of many mouþis þes foolis fiȝten azens God.

And for þis good of unite spekiþ Poul þus after: *And herfore take ȝe togider* ech oþer in charite, *as Crist haþ taken ȝou in to worsipe of God*; for Crist haþ made us Goddis children and breþeren to him silf, and þis is þe moost worship þat mai falle to ony man. It is holden a greet worship to be a kingis sone and his eire, but it is myche more worship to be Goddis sone and his broþer. And here þenken many men, þat þes newe ordres taken not þer breþeren bi þis forme þat Crist toke us, but þei breken charite, and maken þat discord of hem makij discord in good love. For noo drede licknesse of breþeren causij love among hem, and unliknesse is cause of discord and hate of hem. And in token of þis sentence, on ordre loveþ betere his broþer þan a man of anoþer ordre, alȝif he be betere loved of God. And þus þei have many mouþis to preie and to preche wiþ, for summe preien for þer breþeren, and accepten þer persone bifore God; sum men prechen for money, and sum for oþer worldis good. And so oonheed of mouþ shulde make acord in holy Chirche, but now diversite of mouþis makij discord among men.

But þis doublenessse was not in Crist, siþ he travellid for oonhede. And herfore seiþ Poul aftir; *Certis Y seie, þat Jesus Crist was ministre of circumcisioun for þe treuþe of God, to conferme bihestis þat weren maad to fadris*. Jesus, to gete þis oonhede, toke on him circumcisioun; and so he was mynystre of þis kynrede, to make oonhede among fadris. God bihiȝt to Abraham þat in his seed he shulde blesse al maner of folk, boþe kynde of Jewes, and heþene men. And for þis oonheede suffride Crist, and wrouȝte in soule bi his godhede; and þis is þe treuþe of God, for God is sovereynli oon. And so Poul seiþ, *þat Gentile folk shulden honour God wiþ oo mouþ, siþ þis fadir haþ doon hem mercy, and knyttid hem in broþerhed wiþ Crist*. And to þis aleggiþ Poul foure writingis in Goddis lawe. David seiþ in þe persone of Crist, Fadir, for þou lovest acord, *þerfore Y shal knoweliche to þee in dyverse maner of heþene men, and Y shal synge to þi name*. For men þat ben of oo wille

and he made one through charity.

For Christ is the saviour alike of the Jews and of the Gentiles.

singen in God þis unite. And eftē seiþ þe same lawe of God, *Be ȝe heþene men glade*, for ȝe ben oon wiþ his puple. And eftē seiþ þis same lawe, *ȝe alle heþene men, herie þe Lord, and alle pupleis preisen ȝe him*; for al maner of men of mankynde shulde be oonheed in oo Lord. *And Ysay seiþ eftē some, Þer shal be a rote of Jesse, þat shal rise to reule heþene men, and heþene men shal hope in him.* Þis rote of Jesse is Jesus Crist; for he was hidde bifore Jesse, and after he sprong to Cristene puple, and made o chirche of Jewis and heþen folk.

And to þis entent Poul preieþ, *þat he þat is God of hope fille ȝou wiþ alle joie and pees in bilewyng, þat ȝe be plentenouse in hope, and vertue of þe Holy Goost.* And þis vertue is charite; siþ þis Goost is love of God. And þus preien men now, þat holy Chirche be maad oon, and þes sectis be al left, but þe secte of Jesus Crist. For we have hope in God þat we shulden alle come to hevene, and wiþouten siche sectis lyve al in oo sect, and ech on have joie of oþer, wiþouten envie and discord. And to þis joie wolde dispose oonhede in Cristis secte; for Crist ordeynede þis o sect, to brynge to þis ful oonhede. And no drede þe fend haþ castid þis diversite in sectis; for if it were good, it hadde ground of scripture of God; but þis spekiþ of oonhede, and algatis of oonhede in soule. Þre partis ben in þe Chirche, prestis and lordis and comouns; and God haþ ordeyned al þes þree to helpe ech oþir to gendre love, and noon of hem to be superflu, but do þer office þat God haþ ordeyned. But þis diversite of þes sectis is comen in wiþoute cause, and þus it makip discord of men for wanting of good office.

FE ÞRIDDE SONDAI PISTLE IN ADVENT.

[SERMON III.]

Sic nos existimet homo.—I COR. iv. [I] ^a.

POUL tellip in þis epistle how men shulden mekely flee worldis stryves; and biddip first, bi oure life *þat man* have

^a The same in the Prayer-book; and that for the next Sunday change in the Roman missal this epistle places.

and his sect is better than these new sects invented by men.

The guilt of priests, when they are false stewards of the divine mysteries.

mater to *gesse us as mynystris of God, and dispensers of his servises.* And alȝif ech Cristene man shulde be founden trewe in þis, ȝit preestis boþe more and lesse shulden here be more trewe, and synne of failing of preestis in þis service is more foule. As, ȝif þe pope and his bishopis shamen to be Cristis servantis, and in þer maner of lyvyng þei shewen an emperours liif and lordly to þe world, siþ þat Crist hatide þis, þei ȝyven no mater to gesse hem to be mynystris of Crist, and so þei failen in þe first word of þis bileve þat Poul techiþ. Lord, what good doiþ þis gabbing, þat þe pope wole be clepid 'moost hooly fadir' here, and bishop 'moost reverent' man! Siþ þer lif discordiþ fro Crist, þei shewen in takyng of þis name þat þei ben on þe fendis side, children of þe fadir of lesingis. For ȝif he seiþ, after Gregori, þat he is servaunt of Goddis servauntis, ȝit his liif reversiþ his name, for he failiþ to sue Crist, siþ he is not dispensoure of service þat God haþ beden, but he partiþ þe lordship þat þe emperour haþ ȝovun. And so al services of þe Chirche þat Crist haþ lymytid to his preestis, ben turned to þe contrarie side, and so to þe service of þe fend; so þat if men taken hede to þe service of þe Chirche þat Crist haþ lymytid, it is al turned up so down, and ypocritis ben maad rehetours, so þat unneþe is left ony service of Cristis Chirche. And so bi þe service of men ben þei chaungid into oþer kynde, siþ þei ben Anticristis mynystris, and serven in anoþer Chirche. For, as þe gospel of Joon telliþ, Baptist held him in treuþe, and preiside him not in fals name, as many prelatis don to-day. And sich ben þe fendis servauntis and dispensours of his tresoure, þat is feyned falshede, as þe kyng of pride haþ tauȝt hem.

But napeles, as Poul seiþ, *here in þis liif wolden men axe þat a man be found trewe amongis dispensours of an house.* For þis stiward, among servauntis, may do myche harm to þe house. And it semeþ to many men þat þe service of Cristis house is turned amys up so down in changing into fals mynystris. And, for suche dispensours ben ofte jugid of þe house, for þei wolde fare more likyngli, þerfore seiþ Poul after, *To me it is for þe lest þing þat Y be jugid of ȝou, or ellis of mannis day; but Y iuge not mysilf,* þat Y serve treuly þe Lord, and mynystre to his ser-

The arrogance of popes.

God's judgment alone sure; man's judgment fallible.

vauntis as he wole; for *alȝif Y have no conscience þat Y do aȝens Goddis wille, ȝit it sueþ not hereof þat Y am just bifore God, but he þat jugiþ me, seiþ Poul, he is Lord of alle þingis.* For Lord, seid bi himsilf, menep Lord of alle lordis. And þus shulden men not be martrid for blynde jugement of men, for God mut juge al men, oþer to good or to yvel. And herfore takip Poul litil heede to jugement þat man jugiþ, for he wote wel of bileve, þat ȝif God jugiþ þus, þanne þis jugement mut stonde, and ellis not, but Goddis jugement. And þus þer ben two daies,—day of þe Lord, and mannis day. Day of þe Lord is þe day of dome, whan he shal juge al maner men; day of man is þan here, whanne man jugiþ bi mannis lawe; and þis jugement mut be reversid ȝif it ouȝt reverse resoun. But at þe laste day of dome al shal stonde to Goddis jugement; and þus þis is day of þe Lord, for al shal be þanne as he wole; and þis jugement shal not be contraried, for noþing may reverse it.

And herfore seiþ Poul þus here, *And so nyle ȝe juge bifore tyme, til þat tyme þat þe Lord come, þe which shal liȝt þe hidde þingis of derknessis, and shal make knowe þe conceilis of hertis; and þanne shal preising be done in dede to ech good man of God.* And ȝif at þe day of dome þes two þingis shulen be opyn,—þe lest purpos þat man haþ to do aȝens Goddis lawe, and þe lest conseil of his herte þat he haþ, to do wel or yvel,—what þing shulde be hid þanne to God and al his flok? Bokes shulen ben opened þanne, and men shulen knowe þer owne dedis, boþe good men and yvel. But good men shulen knowe al þing, for þei shulen se in þe book of liif al þing þat was or is. And þis moveþ many men to þenke upon Goddis lawe boþe nyȝt and day, for þat disposiþ to knowe what is Goddis wille; and wiþouten knowing herof shulde a man do noþing.

And þis moveþ many men to flee mannis jugement, boþe to be juge and witesse, and to plete in þis market; for þis maner of jugement sueþ to litil Goddis wille. And ȝif it sue ony tyme, it falliþ as a blynd man castiþ his staf; for ȝif man have riȝt to þing, þat riȝt comeþ of God to him, and God jugiþ þat he is worþi to have þis þing bi his dome. But what juge in mannis plee can knowe þis worþinesse? And herfore God forefendiþ þis strif; for boþe þe juge and his consentours done here aȝens

True Christians shun all proceedings connected with the law.

jugement of God. And þus þer ben two wickide lawes;—lawe of seculer^a jugis; but worse is þe lawe þat is maad of Anticrist. And in þes two plees of men is myche synne aʒens God. Poul chargide not þes jugementis; but þe trouþe of holy writ, þat is wille of þe first juge, was ynow³ til domesday, to have þe laste juge þanne in dede. And þus shulde stiwardis of þe Chirche juge not nakydly bi þer wille, but sikerly aftir Goddis lawe, in þing þat þei ben certeyn of. And siþ popis and cardinalis witen not wher þis man be able to be prelat of Cristis Chirche, þei taken ofte fole jugementis, and alʒatis ʒif lordship and wynnynge be cause herof; for þei wite nere wher þei juge aʒens þe jugement of God; and ʒif þei done, þei ben Anticristis, for Crist and God is al oon.

And herfore Crist ʒaf ensample to us to fle siche jugementis. O man, seiþ Crist, who made me juge and partere among ʒou? And sich lawes and jugementis þat Anticrist haþ brouȝt in, and put bihinde Goddis lawe, marren to myche Cristis Chirche. For Anticristis lawes ben reulis to þe stiward of þe Chirche, to make officers þerinne, and to deme lewid men. Anticrist chalengij here to be fulli Goddis felowe; for he seiþ, if he jugij þus, his wille shulde be taken for resoun; and þis is þe moste hye point þat fallij to God in his godhede. And herfore boþe popis and kyngis shulden seke resoun above þer wille. For sich blasfemye bryngij men ofte above þe pride of Lucifer. He seide þat he shulde stey up and be like to þe heiest Lord, but he chalengide not to be Goddis felowe, and evene wij him or passe him. God bringe doun þis fendis pryde, and helpe þat Goddis word renne, for Y wote wel þat þis smoke shal be wastid, whanne it is heirest. And so, ʒif we taken hede to popis and prelatis þat ben now, þei failen foule in bileve; for it stretchij not to domesday, but restij jugement of þer day; but domesday is point of bileve. And þus þei failen as beestis in þingis þat ben bifore hem now, for smoke of pryde and coveitise lettij sijt of þer bileve.

Popes and
cardinals often
at fault in their
judgments,

being blinded
by covetous-
ness and pride.

^a The sense requires the insertion of the words 'and law of ecclesiastical.'

DE FOURȚE SONDAI PISTLE IN ADVENT.

[SERMON IV.]

Gaudete in domino semper.—PHIL. iv. [4.]

Þis epistle of Poul telliþ fyve maners þat a man shulde have, wiþ þre vertues of God; and wiþ þes shulde he lyve for to come to blisse of hevene. Þe first maner þat God biddiþ is to be joyful and glade, and herfore bigynneþ Poul, and seiþ þus to Cristene men; *Joie ȝe in þe Lord evere more; ȝit Y seie, joie ȝe.* And wiþoute þis maner of lyf Cristen man failiþ alzatis in bileve, in hope, and charite. Þe ground of joie þat man shulde have shulde stonde clenly in his God, and þis joie shulde evermore be here in parte, and in hevene fulli. For what man may have þes þree, bileve, hope, and charite, but ȝif he þenke on Goddis goodnesse, and bi þis have joie þerof? And þus he failiþ in bileve þat wantiþ þis joie in God. And who hopiþ to come to blisse, þat feiþ telliþ is in heven, but ȝif he joie in þis hope þat he haþ of þis blis? Or who loveþ God bi charite, but ȝif he joie in Goddis heynesse? And siþ ech man shulde have þes þre, oþir in rote or in fruyte, ech man shulde ever joie in God þat is Lord of alle. And ȝif þis þouȝt, or þis joie, sleepe in man for a while, ȝit it shulde ever be, and quykene his spiritis to Godward. For noþing shulde quenche þis joie, but tribulacioun of man; but where is þanne hope of reward, in him þat þefore joieþ not? A worldli man haþ myche joie of hope of his victorie, of wyunnyng of worldly goodis, or fleishly lustis þat he coveitiþ; and siþ men shulden have more hope to have evermore blisse in hevene, how shulde not a man have joie in stablenesse of þis hope? Certis, defaute of hevenli hope makip þis joie in man to faile. Lord, how traveilen men in werre gladly for hope of victory; how traveilen men in marchandize for jo[i]eful hope of worldly wyunnyng; and how joiefulli traveilen men þat ben ledde here in fleishli love! And siþ þis hope shulde be more in blisse þat man shulde have, what man shulde not ay have joie, and þis joie shulde be in God?

Christians are
to rejoice
alway;

Of þis joie shulde come anoþer þat man shulde have in disservinge of þis joie; as we mai se bi ferþer ensaumplis, how wilfulli and joifulli man travaileþ for a worldli cause, as ben worldli victory, worldli richessis, or fleishli lust. And certis þis is a veyn cause,—short, and bryngiþ no man to reste. And for þis joie of travaile for blisse, Poul biddiþ us ȝit have joie.

Þe secounde maner þat man shulde have, *is sadde maner and knowun to men*; and to move men to þis maner, Poul seiþ *þat þe Lord is nyȝe*. Poul moveþ not here to joie, as joien unstable men in gegilotis, but to sadde joiyng in God, and suffre for him wiþ glade chere; so þat it falliþ not to men to wepe for suffring for God, but þat alle maner men myȝten knowe how his knyztis suffren gladly for him. And þus seiþ Matheu, by Ysaie, þat þe Holy Goost seiþ of Crist, þat he shulde not stryve ne crye, and no man in þe strete shal heere his vois. For in alle þe passioun þat Crist suffride, he failide not in sadde chere. He cryede not out for his peyne, and so suffriden hise after hym. And to move men to þis glade chere, Poul seiþ, þat þe Lord is nyȝe. Cristen men taken as bileve, þat Crist is Lord and spouse of þe Chirche; and þat tyme til þe day of dome is nyȝe to regard. But wel we witen þat a wyf, whanne she shal soone mete wiþ hir housebonde, she gladiþ her herte and hir chere, in hope to be confortid of him. Whi shulden not Cristen soulis do so, whan þei hopen þer Spouse is nyȝe?

Þe þridde tyme Poul biddiþ þat, *we shulde not be bisie*. Þes men ben bisie for noȝt, þat ben bisie for vanite. And þerfore, as Petir biddiþ, we shulden cast al oure bisynesse in God. For noȝing bat iþ more mennis contynauce, for þe plesyng to God, þan bisynes aboute worldli þingis, for suche casten doun þer heed fro God.

But Poul biddiþ þe fourþe tyme, þat we shulden rere up oure heedis, and axe boldli of oure Lord in þe name of þe Trinite;—*in al maner preier in þe name of þe Fadir of hevene; and al maner special preier in þe name of God þe Sone; and in al maner of þankingis in þe name of þe Holy Goost*. For God biddiþ us in Lukes gospel, þat bifore þe day of dome we shulden reise up oure heedis, for oure ful bigging is nyȝe. And þus, what Cristene man haþ good herte, his axing is knowun bifore God,

especially when they suffer for God,

and not to be over solicitous;

but full of thankfulness and prayer,

sip ech þing seiþ to God treuly, as þat þing is. And þus preiede Moises wel wiþ good herte for his folk.

Þe fyveþe maner þat man shulde have, for þes foure maneres bifore, shulde *come of God, bi his pees þat shulde kepe oure willis and undirstondingis*, and 3yve us hertely lastyng in þes fyve maners to oure Spouse. For no servise is crowned to blisse but 3if þis lastyng be þerwiþ. And þus seiþ Poul, þat Goddis *pees passiþ al maner of witt*; for he þat haþ his pees þus tryed is syker ynow³ of al his enemyes. And al þis þing is done bi mene *of Jesus oure alþer Lord*. Here it were for to speke of joie þat men han in blisse. And al3if Poul, þat was ravishid, seiþ þat þis joie is hid, so þat neiþer iþe haþ seyn it, ne eere haþ herd it, ne it haþ styed up into herte of man in erþe,—3it by glymeryng of Goddis grace may men knowe þis joie afer. Austin seþ, þat he is blessed þat haþ al þing þat he wole, and he wole noon yvel þing^a; and þis joie have men in hevене. Þenke what state were good to þee, and what þing þi wille wole coveite, and þat þing han seyntis in hevене in þe best maner for hem. For ellis men weren not fulli medid, þat sugetten here þer willis to Goddis, but 3if he 3af hem al þer wille and ledde þer resoun aftir his; for ellis þis wanting were harmful, and man were not fulli blissid.

And þus men seien þat two blessis ben,—blesse of þe soule and blisse of þe bodi. And of bodili blisse is first for to speke, as blaborers may take here. It is seid comounly, how Crist haþ dowid his spousis body wiþ foure doweris of þe bodi, and þerinne stondiþ myche joie. Þe first dower is sutilte; þe secounde is agilite; þe þridde dower is clerete; and þe fourþe immortalite. Seintis bodies ben so sotil and so shapen in þer partis, þat þei mai perse oþer bodies wiþouten lettyng of þer wille. And þus cam Crist out of his modir, and entride este to his apostlis, al3if þe 3atis weren shitt, for noþing stood þanne aȝens his wille. Þe second dower of þe body is agilite, or swiftnesse; so þat as soone as þe blessid soule wolde be ony where in a place, as soone it moveþ þe bodi þidir, bi ablete of þe bodi. And þe first dower of þe bodi helpiþ to bryng in þis

^a S. Aug. De Trinitate, lib. xiii. § 8. habet omnia quae vult, et nihil vult
' Beatus igitur non est, nisi qui et male.'

so as to enjoy
the peace that
passeth all
understanding.

The corporeal
bliss of the
saints.

dower,—and ellis holy men in blisse hadden not al þing þat þei wolden, but sumtyme þei myzten ellis be taried, and so mourne, for þing þat hem wantid. Þe þridde dower is clerete, þat mote nedis be medlid wiþ liȝt, so þat seintis shynen in heven as clere as þei wolen coveite; and no man þat is þere in blis desiriþ more clerete of his bodi. And þus was Crist clarified wiþ wnesse of boþe his lawes; and þus seiþ Crist in þe gospel, þat just men shulen shyne as þe sunne in þe rewme of þer fadir. Who wolde shame of foulnesse, but ȝif it were foulnesse of soul? for þat lettij ofte þis clerenesse. Þe fourþe dower of þe bodi is clepid immortalite or undedlynnesse of man, for he mai never wante þis blisse. And herfore seiþ Austin wele, þat þe moost part of seintis blis is surete þat þei han of þer joie, þat þei may nevere wante þer blisse^a. And after þis haþ crafte of God so medlid mannis partis togidere þat noon contrarieþ to anoþer, ne failiþ for contraiouste. For as soulis ben of o wille, so partis of bodies acorden in entent.

But scorne we here þes heretikes, þat seien þat noþing mai befallē liȝter, þan þat ech seint in hevene may be deed and dampned in helle, and ech body of dampned men may be Cristis bodi in hevene; and þis unstable bifalling seen seintis in Goddis wille. But trewe men trowen þat þis is fals; for alle Goddis wille mut nedis be, and þan blessid men shulen clerely see þe opyn resoun of Goddis wille, and þanne þei shulen scorne þes foolis þat wenen þat God may chaunge his wille. But ȝit men douten more in þis, how þat seintis shulen move in hevene, and what tyme shal be þanne, siþ blisse of seintis shal ever laste. But here men taken as bileve þat hevene and erþe shal þanne stonde, and so þis day shal not be þanne by movyng of þe sunne and moone, but Crist shal be sunne to seintis, in whom þei shulen be doubly fedde, boþe in soule and in body, as fulli as þei wolen coveite. And þus, ȝif seintis wolen moove in heven fro o place to anoþer, þei shulen move riȝt as þei wolen, and have what þat þei wolen have, boþe in tyme and in stede. But trewe men þenken ynowȝ to wite generalte of þis blisse, alȝif þei bisien hem no depper of þe willis of seintis in

False views:
answers to
objections.

^a De Civ. Dei, lib. xi. cap. 13.

hevene. And sum men trowen þat God meneþ bi þes tymes þanne in hevene, þat suen not cours of þe sunne, but seintis willes þat ben in blisse, 'Secula Seculorum,' þat ben al oþer þan þes tymes. Of þis joie shulden men þenken evere, and joifulli traveile to gete þis; and þanne men fillen þe bileve þat Poul biddiþ in þis pistle.

PISTLE ON CRISTEMASSE DAY.

[SERMON V.]

Puer natus est nobis.—ISAYE ix. [6.]^a

The Nativity
of Christ.

AFTIR þe joie þat Poul telliþ we may seie on Cristemasse day, þat *a litil child is born to us*. For Jesus bi oure bileve is born, and to þis entent spak God, boþe in figure and in lettre, þat a child is born to us in whom we shulde have þis joie. And so þre shorte wordis ben to speke of Ysaies speche, so þat men mai after joie in oþer service of þis child.

The necessity
for an atone-
ment.

First we taken of bileve, þat siþ oure first eldris hadden synned, þer muste aseep be maad þefore bi þe rihtwisnesse of God; for as God is merciful, so he is ful of rihtwisnesse. But how shulde he juge al þe world, but 3if he kepe here rihtwisnesse? For þe Lord aþens whom þis synne was done is God almyzty and al-rihtful, siþ no synne may be done, but 3if it be done aþens God. And evere þe more þe Lord is, aþens whom þis synne is done, evere þe more is þe synne to take reward^b to þis Lord. As it were a gret synne to do aþens þe kyngis bidding, but þe synne is more wiþouten mesure to do aþens Goddis bidding. But God bad bi oure bileve Adam to ete not of þat appil, but he brak Goddis heste, and was not excusid þerinne, neiþer bi his owne foly, ne bi Eve, ne bi þe serpent. And þus bi rihtwisnesse of God þis synne muste algatis be punishid. And it is a liht word

^a In the Prayer-book this passage of scripture appears as the first lesson at mattins on Christmas Day. In the Roman missal the chief por-

tions of it are embodied in two introits.

^b *i.e.*, to render satisfaction or compensation.

to seie þat God myzte of his power forgyve þis synne, wipouten aseep þat were maad for þis trespas; for God myzte do þis 3if he wolde, but his justice wolde not suffre þat ne ech trespas be punishid, ouper in erpe or in helle. And God mai not accepte a persone to forgyve synne wipouten aseep, for ellis he muste 3yve free leeve to man and angel for to synne, and þanne synne were no synne, and oure God were noo God. And þis is þe firste word þat we taken of bileve.

Þe secound word þat we taken is, þat a man þat shulde make aseep for synne of oure firste fadir, mut nedis be God and man. For as mannis kynde trespaside, so muste mannis kynde make aseep. And herfore it were to strange þat angel made aseep for man; for neiþer he myzte, ne he was þat persone þat synnede here. But siþ al men ben oo persone, þat persone makip aseep 3if ony membre of þis persone makip aseep for al þis persone. And bi þis may we see, þat 3if God made a man of nouzt, of newe to þe kynde of Adam,—3it he were holden to God as myche as he myzte for himsilf; and so he myzte not make aseep for him and Adams synne. And þus, siþ aseep muste be maad for Adams synne, as it is seid, sich a persone muste make þis aseep þat were boþe God and man; for worþinesse of þis persones dede were evene wip unworþinesse of þe synne.

Þe þridde word, þat nedis mut sue of þes two wordis of lore, is þat a child is born to man, to make aseep for mannis synne. And þis child mut nedis be God and man, 3oven to man; and he mut nedis bere his empire upon his shuldren, and suffre for man. And þis child is Jesus Crist, þat we supposen was born to-day. And we supposen þat þis child is oonli born to þo men þat suen him in maner of lyvyng, for he was born aþens oþer. Þes men þat ben unjust and proud, and rebel aþens God, han þer jugement in Crist, þat þei moten nedis be dampned of him, and al3atis 3if þei ben unkynde to þer deþ aþens his spirit. And þus, 3if we coveiten wel þat þis child be born to us, have we joie of þis childe, and sue we him in þes þre vertues,—in ri3twisnesse, and meeknesse, and pacience for oure God. For who ever contrarieþ Crist in þes unto his deþ, aþens þe spirit, mut nedis be dampned of þis childe, as alle oþer shulen be saved. And

and consequent
necessity of
Incarnation;

the fact of
which is cele-
brated on this
day.

þus þe joie of þis childe þat was þus meke and ful of vertues, shulde make man to be litil in malice,—and þan þei holden wel þis feeste. To hem þat wolen fiȝte or chide, Y seie þat þis child þat is born is prynce of pees, and loveþ pees, and dampned men contrarie to pees. Studie we how Crist cam in ful tyme whanne he shulde, and how he cam in mekenesse, as his birþe techiþ us; and how he cam in pacience, fro his birþe to his deþ. And sue we him in þes þre, for joie þat we have of him; for þis joie in þis pacience bringiþ to joie þat evere shal laste.

DE PISTLE ON ÞE SIXTE DAI FRO CRISTEMASSE.

[SERMON VI.]

*Quanto tempore haeres parvulis*¹.—GAL. iv. [I.]

POUL telliþ in þis epistle what fredom men shulden use, and leve service of þe olde lawe, þat ledde men whanne þei weren children. Þe first word of Poul here is seid to us in þis forme; *As longe tyme as an eir is litil, he dyversiþ not fro a servaunt bi sensible dyversite, alȝif he be lord of alle.* It semeþ þat Poul spekiþ here of service þat is bondage, and latiþ out þe longe tyme; and spekiþ now of o part and now of anoþer; and spekiþ here specialy of al mankynde þat shal be saved. Þis kynrede is an eir of þe blisse þat ever shal laste. And fro þe bigynnyng of þe world þer is noon diversite bitwene him and þe servaunt, siþ þe children of Israel weren in grete bondage in Moises tymes, siþ þei weren tretid bi Pharaoo in hard servise foure hundred ȝeer. And ȝit þis kynrede, þat is Cristis Chirche, is lord of al þingis of þis world; for Crist, Goddis sone and Lord of alle, puttide þis child over alle his goodis. And as ȝong eir of a man is for a tyme of his childhode, whanne he is wiþinne age, nouȝt tretid as a lord, *but undir tutours and governors,* boþe in werkes in foode and cloiþ tretid as anoþer servaunt, *til þe tyme þat his fadir wole* þat he be tretid as lord, so it was

¹ Should be *parvulus*; but this is only one of a great number of indications that the writer of this

text (Bodl. 788) had but small knowledge of Latin.

of þe Chirche, þe which is kynrede of Crist. Whan Crist was bicomē man þan þis kynrede was taken to worshiþe, and puttide fro þe service þat he kepte in þe olde lawe. And herfore seiþ Poul here, *þat we þat ben of þis kynrede weren undir þe elementis of þis world servyngē*, as oþer bonde men. And it semeþ þat Poul wole seiē, þat þes elementis of þis worlde weren worldly lawes þat þe Chirche kepte in tyme of þe olde lawe. For riȝt as a myche boke is maad of lettris as elementis, so þe lore of þe Chirche is made of customes þat it kepīþ. And þus þis eire lernede first his a bi ce, as a litil child, and was holden þanne in drede to lerne þe lore of Goddis lawe. *But whanne fulnesse of tyme cam*, þat þe Chirche shulde be treted þus no more, *God sente his sone, maad of womman, maad undir þis lawe, to bigge aȝen þis eir to fredom* þat he hadde in innocence, alȝif he were undir þe lawe for a tyme. Crist was maad as a creature, siþ Crist was þis manhede; and so Crist was maad of Marye, as Poul dredīþ not to graunt here. And siþ ech part þat Crist hadde was maad of God, as men witen wel, what shulde move men to drede to graunte þat Crist was al made? But siþ Crist is of two kyndis, fulli God and fulli man, bi his manhede was he maad, and bi his Godhede not maad. And for to knitte his two lawes, Crist made him silf undir hem boþe. But in tyme of þe olde lawe men kepten many partis of þe lawe þat men neden not now to kepe,—as serymonies and jugementis. But, for to shewe oonhede of þe lawe of God, o lawe of ten comandementis lastīþ on for ever more, þat men ben ever holden to kepe. And as ful man in his kynde is maad of bodi and of soule, so þe ful lawe of God is made of þe olde and of þe newe; and so men ben holden now to kepe þe witt of þe olde lawe, but as Goddis goostli children, to charge oonli þe moralte.

Þes wordis þat Poul spekiþ here ben hie in treuþe and in witt, and alle þe men in þis world cunnen not blame þat oon of þes. But wel I woot þat God grauntiþ to fewe men to knowe hem here, but ȝit we shulden trowe þes wordis, and worshiþe hem, and travele on hem, to wite what þes wordis menen, as men shulen wite aftir in hevene. And for to have mynde of þis seiēt, þat men passen not fro þis witt, sum men wolen go nyȝe his wordis, bi undirstonding þat God ȝyveþ hem. For ellis myȝten alle his

Difficulty of understanding the apostle's words.

Sonship by
nature and
by grace.

wordis be aliened, and al his witt, by Anticrist. But þer ben two maner of sones,—kyndely sones and sones of grace. Crist is kyndely sone of God, and his children ben sones of grace. And þus Crist, whan he made him man and made his Chirche to be his broþer, he ȝaf a title to his children, *to make hem alle Goddis sones bi grace. And for ȝe ben þus Goddis children, God sente þe spirit of his sone, þe which spirit criep in ȝoure hertes and in ȝoure persones, Abba, Fadir.* And of þes wordis þat God seiþ here bi Poul, whom God haþ made his whistil, it semeþ to many trewe men þat þer shulde be no sect but oon, þat shulde be Cristis religioun, wiþ oon abbot and oon reule; and þis wolde kynde le oonhede and love, and is ground in Goddis lawe.

The Church
brought again
into bondage
to human laws

And þus þis Chirche, þat is Goddis sone, *is nouȝt now seruaunt but sone; and ȝif he be þus Goddis sone, he is eir bi Crist, God and man.* Bi witt þat Poul spekiþ here it semeþ to many breþeren in God þat þe Chirche þat wandriþ here is maad þral by mannis lawe, siþ mo ben sprongen bi Anticrist þan weren in þe olde lawe[s], þat ben now left as God biddiþ. And so þe Chirche is þralle more þan in tyme of þe olde lawe, siþ þes mannis lawes ben worse þan weren Goddis lawes þat now ben lefte. And Anticrist is maad a tutour or a governor of þe Chirche, more fool þan þe children, þat shulden be governed by Goddis lawe. And of all synnes þat now ben, þis is moost perelouse and grevous, þat lesiþ þe fredom þat Crist haþ purchasid, and makip men þralle to synne and to þe fend. And þus it were a myche vertue to gete aȝen oure former fredom, and trowe no prelat in þis Chirche, but ȝif he grounde him in Goddis lawe. And þus men shulden shake away al þe lawe þat þe pope haþ maad, and alle reulis of þes newe ordri[s], but in as myche as þei ben groundid in þe lawe þat God haþ ȝovun. But loke þis grounding disseve þee not, for it may fallen þat Anticrist, bi his newe lawes and his biddingis, have moo bysy servantis to him þan haþ Crist by his lawe, to serve him for blisse of hevene. And þis moveþ many men to speke aȝen foure newe sectis. For ech man bi hope of blisse shulde holde þe fredom þat Crist haþ ȝovun, and so he shulde maynten þis reule, and dispise al oþer reulis.

framed by the
pope and the
friars.

ÞE SONDAY PISTLE WIÞINNE OCTAVE OF TWELFÞE DAL.

[SERMON VII.]

Surge illuminare, Jerusalem.—YSAIE IX. [I.]

MEN expownen comounly þis prophecie of oure Jesus, þat Ysay saw in spirit; how Crist shulde be loutid, soone aftir þat he was born, of þre kyngis of þe eest. And bileve þat Mathew telliþ techiþ wel of þis tixt, to what witt it is spoken of þe prophete Ysay. First he bigynneþ þus; *Ryse, and be þou liȝtned, Jerusalem, for þi liȝt is comen, and glorie of þe Lord is sprongen upon þee.* Here trewe men undirstonden bi Jerusalem, þat was heed citee in þe londe of Judee, holy Chirche þat wandriþ here. For Jerusalem in diverse placis bitokeneþ on diverse maners, now þe citee of þat cuntre, now þe chirche þat wandriþ here, and now þe chirche þat is above; and al ben figurid bi þis citee. And Jerusalem bi interpretacioun bitokeneþ a siȝt of pees^a; but here men seen afer, and in blis verre pees. Þis Jerusalem shulde ryse from synne, and be liȝtned wiþ witt and grace, siþ Crist þe first liȝt is maad man for þis eende. And Crist, þat is þe Fadris wisdom, and so glorie of þe Lord, is sprongen of þis kynrede and in it, siþ he is Maries sone. And þus þis is a greet synne to leve to ryse and open oure wyndowys; for þis spiritual liȝt is redy to shyne to alle men þat wolen open. Þat man reseyyveþ in veyn þe grace of God, as Poul seiþ, þat takip of God many ȝiftis boþe of fortune and of kynde, and wole not þanke God herfore. He is an unkynde man, wiþouten whom þe sunne shyneþ, and ȝit wole not opene his wyndowe, to take liȝt þat shulde save him. And here men seien comounly, þat first mannis foly is unkynde, and bi cause of þis unkyndenesse God ȝyveþ man no more his ȝiftis; siþ God approveþ nevere more þat unkynde man shulde þus synne. But ȝit God makip of synful man and unkynde a good man, and alle þe goodnesse

The prophecy of Isalah interpreted of the adoration of the wise men and of the Church.

^a The derivation is doubtful, but this is among those that have been widely received; see the article 'Je-

rusalem' in Smith's Dict. of the Bible.

Interpretation
continued

of þis comep of þe goodnesse of God. And bisie we not aboute ferþer cause, for God himsilf is þe first cause.

But þe prophete seiþ on þis,—For *lo, derknesse shal hile þe erþe, and þicke myst shal hile þe pupilis.* Here we mai knowe two maner of men bi þes wordis of Ysaye. Sum men ben everemore derke, and wanten grace to come to blisse; as þe erþe is ever derke and takip not lizt bi clerete. And þis derknesse haþ wiþ him Goddis witt þat þes men shulen be dampned. But sum men han for a tyme myst, but ȝit þei ben a puple, as ben men of holy Chirche, for tyme þat þei ben in synne. And þes men bi grace of God takip lizt þat persip hem and disposip hem to hevене, and avoidip þer synne fro hem. And sich two maner of men weren in Jude bifore Crist cam. And þus derknesse of synne hilide þe erþe til Crist cam, and þicke mystis of synne hiliden þe pupilis þat shulden be saved. But þis lizt þat cam to men persid þis myst and made it clere. And so þis lizt þat has maad man clerede þo men þat he wolde save. And for þis lizt spekip þe prophete, and for þes men þat shulen be saved, *But upon þee shal þe Lord spryng, and in þee shal his glorie be seen.* For of oo kynrede of Jacob, and in þat kynrede, was Crist born; and many of hem weren saved in Crist, and many opere of heþene men. *And folk shulen wandre in þi lizt, and kyngis in shynyng of þi birþe.* For aboute tyme of Cristis birþ þre kyngis camen out of þe eest, and boþe þei and many opere sawen þe lizt of þe sterre. And muse we not whan þis sterre apperide first in þe eest, and how longe tyme þese þre kyngis weren in comyng to Bethleem. For soone aftir þat Crist was born þei camen, and þus worshipiden Crist. For, as þe gospel berip witnesse, þei founden þe child wiþ his modir; and it is licly þat in þe same stable þat Crist was born inne in Bethleem; and so it mut nedis be sone after þe tyme þat Crist was born.

And aftirward þis prophete spekip to þe glorie and joie of Crist: *Lifte up al aboute þin eyen and see; al þes ben gederid, and ben comen to þee, to do þee worship as þei shulden; and al þes ben figure to þee þat þi sones shulden come fro ferr, and bi douȝtris shulen rise aside, and many cuntres shulen trowe in þee. Þanne shalt þou see and abounde, and þin herte shal*

woundre and be largid; whan þe multitude of þe see shal be turned to bileve of þee, and þe strengþe of heþene men shal come to þee, and trowe in þee. Þe flowinge of camels shal hile þee; men þat shulen ryde upon dromodes; men of Madian and of Effa; alle men of Saba shulen come, þat God haþ ordeyned for þis journey, bryngyng gold and encense, and tellinge heeryng to God.

Þis lettre semeþ sumwhat mysty, and þerfore men tellen diverse wittis of it. Sum men seien þat camelis watrynge hilide Crist in hise membris; for travele þat was done in camelis helpide to hile Cristene men,—as Joon Baptist and many oþere weren hilid bi helpe of camelis travele; and þei weren hastid to leve þer drynke, þat þei shulden take in þe water. But sum men undirstonden þes wordis to goostli undirstonding of hem. And so men douten here ofte of what contre þes þree kynges weren; and it is ynowþ here to wite þat þei weren of þe eest; wheþer þei weren of Arabi or of Saba, or of anoþer ile. And here men musen ideli, how þes weren but þre kyngis; siþ þe holy psalme seiþ þat kyngis of Tharsis and of þe ile shulen offre ʒiftis unto Crist; and þes men muten nedis be two kyngis; þe kyngis of Araby and of Saba shulen lede ʒiftis to þis child; and þes ben oþer two kyngis; and þus it semeþ þat foure kyngis camen to worshiþe þus þis child. But þis resoun is to feble; for ʒyve we men þat arguen þus, þat David spekeþ here of þes kyngis,—and þis were hard for to teche,—but ʒit þes þree kyngis myzten wel have many names bi many resouns; as þe Kyng of Yngelond is Kyng of Yngelond and more Bretayne. And so þes kyngis myzte have þes names, alʒif þei weren but þre or two. Or ellis it myzte have fallen þus; þat sum kyngis biside þes þree senten her offryngis wiþ hem, and so þes wordis ben algatis soþe. Or ellis it myzte have be þus; þat dyvers kyngis dwelten at hoom, and maden þer offringis to þis childe; and þei myzten have be tauzt þere þat he was boþe God and man.

Many siche wittis ben not nedeful to us for to cunne now. But do we worship to þis child wiþ gold, encense, and wiþ myrre. For we shulden byknowe his Godhede, as gold is more þan oþer metalis, and byknowe his wisdom, as gold shyneþ bifore oþer. Þe secounde tyme we shulen knoweliche þat Crist is þe first preest of alle, and offre to him devocioun,

Difficulties in parts of the prophecy.

Spiritual application.

sip he is boþe God and man. Þe þridde tyme we shulen knowe-liche þat Crist was deed for oure sake, and roos hool as he hadde ordeyned; and so shulen we alle do at þe last resurreccioun, oþer to blisse or to peyne. And lyve we alle just lyf, and love þis Lord upon oure power, and þanne he wole rewarde us in blisse aftir þes þree ȝiftis. And here many men þenken þat men shulden listly passe over þis, and speke of þingis þat ben certeyne, þat profiten to men þat heeren hem.

ÞE FIRSTE SONDAI PISTLE AFTIR OCTAVE OF TWELFÞE DAL.

[SERMON VIII.]

Obsecro vos per misericordiam Dei.—ROM. xii. [1.]

POUL telliþ here to gentile folk, how þat þei shulden serve God and kepe hemsilf in charite, and serve togidere as o persone. For whan many men acorden in oon, and done oo werk in Goddis name, þei done it more spedely, more strongly, and bi lasse blame. Poul bigynneþ to preye to Romaines to kepe þe lore þat he techiþ, for he prechide not for money, ne for wyunnyng of þis worlde. *F preye ȝou, seiþ Poul, bi Goddis mercy, þat ȝe ȝyve ȝoure bodies to God, a quyke oost and not dede, to serve God bi his lawe. Þe secounde tyme, þe lyf of ȝoure body shal be holy, aftir Crist. Þe þridde tyme shal ȝoure body plesse God bi devoute wille. And ȝif ȝoure bodi be þus ledd to licnesse of þe Trinite, þanne be ȝe wel disposid to serve God as ȝe shulden. And alȝif al Cristene men shulden marke þes wordis of Seint Poule, ȝit lordis of þis worlde shulden take more hede to hem, for þei camen of gentilite; and þer staat shulde þus serve to God, to defende Cristis lawe and his ordenaunce, and lat it not perishe for ydilnesse. And þus shulde þer servise to God be resonable, and kepe þer staat. And, for siche men synnen ofte in novelryes of þe worlde, þerfore biddiþ Poul after; *Nyle ȝe be conformed to þis world, but be ȝe reformed in newenesse þat shal be maad in ȝour witt.**

Þer nys no lord of þis worlde, neiþer in more state ne in lesse, þat he ne shulde take þis lore of Poule, ȝif he wole wele

The apostle exhorts the Roman converts to holiness and unanimity.

Great men should here take warning against luxury.

serve God. For costli metis and gay garmentis, whan þei ben taken over mesure, þei maken lordis bisi for hem, and spoilen wrongli þer pore tenauntis; and þis mut nedis displese to God, siþ he is welle of riztwisnesse. Þes men þat lyven þus ben conformed to þis world. But man, be he never so grete, shulde coveite to aray his soule wiþ Goddis lawe and wiþ vertues, for þat is more presciouse. And it falliþ ofte tymes, þat preestis and freris þat shulden here teche ben boþe fals and uncunnyng, and tellen but litil bi Goddis lore. And þis meneþ Poul here, whan he preieþ unto Romayns þat þei shulden be reformed in newnesse of þer wittis. And þus of alle þe heretikes þat Anticrist brouzt ever inne, þes þat blaboren unto lordis, and seien þat þei shulden not kunne ne heere þe gospel of Crist,—for clerkes shulden teche hem to lyve,—ben moost perelous in þe Chirche, and moost to fle as Anticrist. Wiþ sich lore of oure God shulden lordis sumwhat cloþe þer soulis, and be not to worldly, but þenke sumwhat on her soulis. For þis lyf þat we lyven here is boþe short and ful of payne, and it is ordeyned to be a mene to þe blisse þat ever shal laste.

And bi witt of Goddis lawe *shulden men knowe þis trinite, which were þe good wille of God, wel plesyng and perfit.* Þe wille of God mut nedis be good, licke to þe Fadir of heven; and so al þe ordenaunce of Crist mut nedis be good, siþ he is God. Þe wille of God to punishe men is good, siþ þat it is just; but þis wille comeþ not forþ but bi occasioun of synne. Þe wille of God is wel plesyng, as is þe secunde persone of God. For we reden þus of Crist, þat in him it plesid wel to þe Fadir. And þus men þat ben bisie to wite what is þe wille of God, ben wel payed of þis wille, and traveilen for to do þis wille. Þe þridde tyme, aftir þe Holy Goost, þis wille mut nedis be perfit, for it is not shewid to man for fleishly lustis or worldly wynnyng, but for worship of God and for profit of his puple.

And, for wittis of many men ben occupied for worldly þingis, and lores þat profiten not to þe soule, þerfore seiþ Poul aftir, *Y seie for soþe bi þe grace þat is ȝouun to me* of God, and not for to plesse ȝou, ne for coveitise of ȝoure goodis, *but þis Y seie to ȝou alle, to kunne no more þan is nede to kunne, but to kunne to*

*subrenesse*¹, and to lerne vertues of Crist. Sum men ben here bisie for to cunne worldli witt, as cautelis of mannis lawe, and craftis to wynne myche money. And clerkes traveilen many weies veynly to have cunnyngis, and alle þes letten men to gete hem knowyng of God. And so Poul seiþ *to ech man*, þat he shuld cunne his bileve *as God haþ partid bileve*, to sum more and to summe lesse. And alþif bileve of God be ground nedeful for Cristene men, 3it acord in charite mut nedis be joynd wiþ þis treuþe,—for fendis of helle have trouþe, but þei tremblen, for defaute of love.

Different offices
in the Church,
but all designed
for mutual
help.

And herfore seiþ Poul þus, *þat as we have many lymes in o bodi of dyverse kyndis, and not ech lyme haþ þe same dede*, but ech is dyverse from oþer, *so many men of oo bileve ben oo bodi in Crist*;—and þis body is holy Chirche, þat is weddid wiþ Crist. And so ech membre of Crist shulde have his propre dede; but alle þer dedis shulde come to þis, þat þei profiten to þe bodi of þe Chirche; and þanne þei profiten to ech membre, and to worshiþe Jesus Crist. And þus ech man shulde beware þat he be in sich a staat þat is approved bi Jesus Crist, and traveile treuly in þis staat. 3if þou be a preest of Crist, teche treuly Goddis lawe; 3if þou be a worldly lord, defende Goddis lawe bi strengþe; and 3if þou be a laborer, kepe þou treuþe and traveile fast. And þus ech man of Cristis Chirche shulde helpe his broþer after his myzt; and 3if he koude many helpis, *he shulde be many lymes to hym*. And þis lore biddiþ Poul þat is ful sotil and nedeful. And wolde God þat þis bileve þat Poul techiþ in þis epistle were wel koud and wel kepte of þes foure sectis of Anticrist, þat ben newe comen into þe Chirche for to charge it and harme it.

DE SECUNDE SONDAI PISTLE AFTIR OCTAVE OF TWELFÞE DAI.

[S E R M O N I X .]

Habentes donationes.—ROM. xii. [6.]

POUL in þis epistle telliþ unto Romayns, how spiritual preestis shulden passe seculeris, for preestis shulden be lyf to quyken þe

¹ *sobrenesse* in the Wycliffite Versions.

The privileges
of the Chris-
tian priesthood

comountees. First techiþ Poul how þe preestis of þe puple shulden passen in ȝiftis of God þe comouns bi þer good liif, and biddiþ Poule þat þei shulden *have ȝiftis dyverse fro oþer men, bi grace þat God ȝyveþ hem.*

Men may not grutche here for þes wordis of Poule, for God mut sowe his grace dyversly to men, and so men shulden not take þis state but ȝif þei passiden oþer in grace, and able þei hem in good werkes, and þer grace shal be more. Seven and twenti ȝiftis of God telliþ Poul in sich preestis. Sum of hem *have profecie bi resoun of þer bileve*, as þes þat tellen of þe day of dome, and hard ende of mennis dedis þat discorden fro Goddis lawe. As men witen bi bileve, þat dedis of men þat ben done aȝen þe bidding of God muten alȝatis have an yvel ende, ouþir suyng anoon or at þe day of dome, and þus many tellen prophecies boþe to good and to yvel. *Also þei have servyses dyverse in þer serving*, for preching and goostly werkes perteynen unto sich men, and whan þei done straunge werkes, þei passen to anoþer state. *As summe techen in þer lore*, as þes men þat prechen feiþ; and *summe stiren men to goode*, as conceillours bi Goddis lawe. And so þes men *þat ȝyven almes in symplenesse*, knowynge þat al is Goddis ȝifte ȝovun to hem to dele forþ, ben in þe fite degree. And þis ȝyvyng of double almes, þat is pertinent to preestis, shulde be done in symplenesse, and pryde fled, wiþ ypocrisie. Þe sixte servise takeþ he þat *is above in bysynesse*, as ben curatis of þe puple, or heyer or lowere. And alle þes prelati shulden be bisie to kepe þe sheepe þat God haþ ȝovun hem. And here þenken many men, þat fro þis state was turned to pryde, þei ben clepid prelati, and born above by wynde of pryde; and þei ben not above bi God, but more foolis þan þer sugettis, and þer bysynes is turned to pryde and to robbing of þer sheep. In þe sevenþe servyse is he, *þat haþ mercy in gladnes*. Poul spekiþ not of þis prelat þat traveiliþ for symony, and takþ money gladly for litil traveile þat he doiþ, for þis gladnesse is aboute his money, and not aboute servise of God. And in þis failen cardynalis, þat geten graces to many men, and absoluciouns, wiþ oþer feyned pryvelegies. Alȝif *love wiþouten feynyng* shulde be in al Cristene men, ȝit þe preest, nere Crist, shulde have clene love in God, and not love more mennis

abused by
modern pre-
lates.

goodis þan þe profit of þer soule; for þanne he feyned to love hem, and hatip hem, and loveþ þer goodis. And þus þei shulden *hale yvel*, boþe in hem and in oþir men, and speke wisely aȝen it for to make men clene þerfro; and in þis failen flaterers, þat waishen mennis heedis wiþ fals oile. Aftir Poule techip, algatis to preestis, þat þei *shulden cleve to good*. Whan þei seen sentence of wynnyng and sentence of Goddis lawe, þei shulden holde wiþ þe secounde, siþ it is good on Goddis side; and in þis failen ofte traveilours in mannis lawe. And so men shulden *love togidere charite of broþerhed*. Charite haþ two branchis,—love of God and love of man. Þat man þat loveþ a man loveþ charite of broþerhede. And for his propre or pryvy avauntage shulde not man lette to large þis love. And þus men shulden *come biforn*, in doynge worship ech to oþer. He þat is hyȝer in state shulde be more meke þan þe lower, and so in mekenesse of his herte go biforn þe toþir in worshipyng. And þis myȝte liztli be done after þe ȝiftis þat God haþ grauntid. Sensible honoures ben but litil, and lesse to charge þan honoures of soule. And þus Cristene men shulden be *not slowe in bisynesse*, to kepe oonhede in charite, but swift in þat þat sowneþ love. And in þis failen many men þat wolen have worship of þis world, and sugette oþer men to hem for þe pride þat þei have in þer hert. And þus men shulden bi charite be brennyng in þer spirit, havynge boþe desire and joie to kyndle love by mekenesse. And in þis failen many men in tretes and acordismakyng. And þus *men shulden serve to þe Lord*, and not to þe fadir of pride, ne to þer fleish, ne to þe world, and lette to serve þe Lord of hevene. And þus men *shulden have joie in hope* þat þei have of reward in blisse. And þerfore biddip Poul to men þat þei shulden joie ever in God. Poul biddip to Cristene men, *þat þei shulden be pacient in tribulacioun* þat fallip to hem. For þei ben fewe men or noone þat lyven here þer ful life þat ne þei have persecucioun, and þus pacience is nedeful.

And, for oure hope shulde be in God þat he helpe us in þis wey, þerfore Poul techip after, *to stonde bisili in preier*. And, for men shulden be merciful, þerfore biddip Poul after þat men shulden be *comynynge in nedis þat fallen to seintis here*, helpinge hem now wiþ goodis, now wiþ praier, and now wiþ conseile.

We should be prayerful, charitable, hospitable, placable, sympathetic, and humble.

And, as Poul biddiþ, no broþer shulde suffre but 3if oþer suffre wiþ him, and algatis men shulde do profit to þer broþer in medeful lyf. And þus men shulden *bisily sue herboryng* to þer neiþbore, boþe 3yve reste to bodi and soule, bi almes and bi pacience. And þus biddiþ Poul aftir, þat Cristene men shulden *blesse to oþer þat pursuen hem here*, for þat restiþ myche mennis soulis. And so men shulden *blesse þere breþeren and not curse hem*, to wake hem; for sich cursyng comonly is contrarie to hospitalite. And þus, siþ alle goode Cristene men shulden be of oon hert to God, *þei shulden joie wiþ clene joyers, and wipe wiþ men þat wepen* here. And so al good Cristene men shulden *fele oonhede among hemsilfe*. Wheþer þei have joie or peyne, þei shulden have joie or sorowe in herte, and þenke þat oo bodi of þe Chirche suffriþ bi diverse membris. And þus men þat lyven in þis liif shulden not *smatche hye þingis*, to caste hemsilf to be hye, and to harme þer evene Cristene. And in þis synnen many men, and algatis þes foure newe sectis, for þei done harm to þe Chirche for to hye þer novelrie. But alle men shulden *assente to meke statis* and meke lyves, and hold hem paied on þe statis þat ben groundid in Cristis lawe. For as a mete in a man, þat is not defied bifore, makij mannis bodi to gurle¹, so it is of þes newe statis þat Cristis lawe haþ not defied. Sum of þes wordis þat Poul seiþ here shulden trewe preestis declare more, as it is profit to þe puple, after þat God techiþ hem.

DE ÞRIDDE SONDAI PISTLE AFTIR OCTAVE OF TWELFÞE DAI.

[SERMON X.]

Nolite esse prudentes.—ROM. xii. [16.]

POUL telliþ in þis epistle how comountes and al men shulden shape weies for charite, and oonhede to kepe here. First Poul biddiþ his breþeren *to be not queynte² to hemsilf, and zelde to noo man yvel for yvel*. It is seid comounly þat þer ben þree lawes here;—lawe of God, lawe of þe world, and lawe of þe fend of helle. Lawe of God þat Poul techiþ is moost resonable and

The spirit of meekness and forgiveness is characteristic of Christianity.

¹ groule, I.

² queynt, G; queynte, I.

lizt, to ȝelde men good for yvel; for so doȝ God þat mai not faille. Þe secounde lawe, of þe world, is to ȝelde good for good and yvel for yvel; for, as men seien, þus techiþ kynde men to do. Þe þridde lawe, of þe fend, is to do yvel for good; as God seide ȝhe, and Eve doutide; but þe fend seide opynly nay. Poul forfendiþ here þe myddil lawe, þat men shulden ȝelde yvel for yvel; and þus queyntise to a man is here dispresid of Poul. For þat worldly man is queynt, boþe in werres and oþer lyfe, þat can ȝelde redely an yvel turne for anoþer. And þis lawe of þe world bringiþ in lawe of þe fend, for it is taken for a reule among worldly werrours¹ þat þei shulden anoye þer enemyes on what maner þat þei mai; and it is holden a riȝtwisnesse to do a wrong for anoþer; and ȝit Goddis lawe biddiþ to ȝelde not an yvel for an yvel. And it is certein of bileve þat þis yvel is wrong. For yvel of peyne shulde men ȝelde, bi þe reule of charite; siþ God ȝeldiþ peyne to men after þat þei have dis-served; and þis yvel of peyne is good, siþ riȝtwisnes doȝ þus. And þis, holdun comoun lawe of men, is turned into fendis lawe; for no lawe reversiþ Goddis lawe, but ȝif it be þe fendis lawe. And as anentis serpentis and oþer þingis þat bringiþ in peyne, þis bringing in of mannis peyne þat bi his foly mak iþ þis peyne, is noon yvel of injury, but riȝtwisnesse þat God mak iþ. But God forfendiþ here to do yvel of harme, for yvel of harme.

And þus love þat Poul biddiþ, *tech iþ to purvey good to men, not oonli bifore God*, to prey God to make hem good, *but bifore alle maner of men*, to forȝeve hem and disserve to hem. And þis reule þat Poul ȝyveþ is boþe lizt and resonable. For it is more lizt to men to forȝyve yvel þan to take veniaunce; and it is more resonable, for more good comeþ to men þerfore. And bi þis reule þat Poul ȝyveþ here batailis and stryvngis in-plee shulden be forsaken of Cristene men, as Goddis lawe telliþ here. And so biddiþ God bi Poul, *þat ȝif it may be, þat is of ȝou, ȝe shulden have pees wiþ al men*, doinge good and suffryng wrong. But certis custum and mannis lawe ben ful ferre fro þis lore. So it is þat many men have of her owne synne myche malis, and þes wolen fiȝte wiþ men and slee hem. But kepe þou pacience and mekenesse, and þan þer yvel turneþ þee to good, bi þe

The custom of the world is different.

The duty of forgiveness, further considered

¹ werrours, G, I.

vertue of Goddis lawe. But þis lawe þat Poul seip here, lettij not to chastise men, ne to take veniaunce of hem by þe reulis of charite; but þis shulde ever be for þer good, and for love þat men shulden have to hem. And þus men shulden bi Goddis lawe fleen to comune wiþ heretikes. And þus biddij Poul, *þat we shulde not defende us, as Goddis derrest children, but we shulden 3yve stede to ire, and reserve veniaunce to God oure fadir. For it is writun in Goddis lawe, how God seip, Y have reserved veniaunce to me, and I shal 3elde it, for it fallij to my mageste, and Y mut do it wiþouten defaute. But 3if þin enemy hungrij, 3yve þou hym mete; and 3if he þurste, 3yve þou him drynke.* Þis mandement is not of bodily foode, but of goostli foode of þe soule. Ffor many men have not bodili foode, and enemys wolen be worse herfore; but mekenesse and pacience shulde ech man have redely, and þes wolen ever do good, and þerfore enymys shulden be fed ever wiþ þes. *Ffor 3if þou do þus to þin enemy, þou shalt gedir coolis of fier upon þe heirest vertue of his soule; and þat fallij ofte to do him good, and evermore to do þee good. Nyle þou be overcome of yvel, but overcome þou yvel in good.* Þis yvel is synne of þin enemye, and þanne it vencusij þee bi it, whanne it foulij þee þerwiþ, and makij þee parcener þerof; but þou overcomest þis yvel in good, whan þou kepist þee þerfro, and bi vertue of pacience þou 3yvest mater to do men good.

And þis bileve þat Poul seip here is litil usid or trowid now; and þerfore many men in þe Chirche,—as boþe þe pope and cardinalis,—ben smyttid foule wiþ heresie, and out of Cristene mennis bileve. What charite or pacience shulde move hem to sende after men, and þan do hem to deþ, for þei mayntenen Goddis lawe? But Ysaye seip,—Woo be to hem þat seien þat good þing is yvel, and yvel þing is good to hem, for þei ben contrarye to God. And so he is vencushid of yvel þat doij yvel azens yvel, and he vencuschiþ in good yvel, þat doij good azens yvel. God 3yve grace to þe Chirche to lerne þis lessoun þat Poul techij! for þis short lore of Poul wolde turne al Cristyndom to Crist. And men shulden boþe be pacient whan mannis cause is touchid, and do qucyly wiþ þer lippis bi resoun of Goddis cause; for þus dide Crist Goddis word and tauzt his children to do þus.

with applica-
tion to modern
times.

ON FORÞE SONDAI AFTIR OCTAVE ON TWELFÞE DAL.

[SERMON XI.]

Nemini quidquam debe[atis].—ROM. xii. [xiii. 8.]

Love is the fulfilling of the law.

POUL techiþ here Romaynes, and so al Cristene men, how þei shulden kepe charite þat God 3yveþ. And 3if þis vertue be wel kepte of man til þat tyme þat he die, oure bileve techiþ þanne þat þis cloiþ bryngiþ hem to blis. Poul biddiþ at þe firste þis word of myche witt. *To no man owe 3e ony þing, but þat 3e love togidere.* Poul forfendiþ not dette of money, ne good werkes of oþer vertues, but Poul wole þat alle þes dettis drawe to þis ende, to love togidere. And so ech man bi þis lore is holden ay to love ech oþer. And so many men in þis world ben byhynde of dette of love, but God mut ever come bifore, to love men þat haten him.

Various classes of men hypocritically pretend to this love.

Take hede to okur¹ and oþer synnes þat sownen not in charite. Accounte not þis now for dette, by Poulis reule of bileve. And so þis oo word, wel undirstondun, dampneþ al errours in þe Chirche. And so þis o word of Poul axiþ myche special declaryng; and excusyng of ypocritis þat þei kepen þus charite, shal be dampned bi þe heirest juge whan no synne may asterte him. Men of werre seien comonly þat þei fiþten for charite, for so shulden þer enemyes love hem in sich a caas. And þus seien pleders and pursueris, þat þei done þus al for love. But þis excusacioun mut be jugid bi Crist him silf, and þis lord is charite, and knowiþ al resoun and al gabbyng. And so ech man here in erþe shulde lyve so justli to his broþer, boþe in hert in word and dede, þat it sownede al in charite. For if he passe þis reule of Poule, he renneþ in dette aþens his broþer. And Crist techiþ men to preie him þat he forþeve hem þis dette, but riht as þei forzyven her dettours. And þus men bidden aþens hem silf þat failen in mercy to her breþeren, for charite is justli knittid. Muse þou not how God biddiþ þat þou shuldist love ech man, siþ many men ben unknowun of þee, and noon

¹ *ocur. G; oker. I*

mai love but þat he knowiþ. God techiþ to knowe generally, and to love after þis knowyng. Do no wrong to þi breþeren, and þou fillist þis love of Poule. *Ffor whoever^a loveþ his neiþbore, haþ fulfillid þe lawe of God.* 3if þou seie þou lovest o man, and doist wrong to anoþer, þou gabbist to God upon þi silf, and hatest þi first frend. As, 3if many men bare a weiþte, and ech shulde helpe oþer þerto, he þat failiþ to helpe oon, mut nedis faile aþens hem alle.

And Poul telliþ aftirward how þis oo word of love comprehendþ al þe lawe, as he shewiþ bi fyve lawes. For þis mandement of God þat biddiþ, *þou shalt, first, not be a lecchour*; þe secounde mandement þat biddiþ þat, *þou shalt not slee þi broþer*; þe þridde mandement þat biddiþ, *þou shalt not stele his goodis*; þe fourþe mandement þat biddiþ þat, *þou shalt not sey fals witnesse*; þe fifþe mandement also, *þou shalt not coveite þi neiþboris good, and 3if þer ben ony oþer mandement, in þis word it is instorið^a, þou shalt love þi neiþbore as þi silf.* As many pens ben closid in oo tresoure comonly, so in þis o word of God ben comounly oþir undirstonden. He þat haþ þis o lawe, and kepþ it wel as he shulde, *haþ fulfillid al þe lawe*, as Poul seiþ and James boþe. And þis *love of þi neiþbore worchiþ no synne* aþens him; and *þerfore fulnese of þe lawe is love*, if it be wel taken.

Þis short tresoure of word of love shulde be taken out whanne it is nede. For þis tresoure may not faile 3if it be groundid in þe firste love, for þat love is wiþouten eende, and love is þe more^b, þat it be usid. Poul spekiþ not here of fleishli love, ne of worldly love, but of love in God. For þes two loves ben more hate, and shenden love þat men shulden have. For love of God is ful of resoun, and holdiþ no þing aþens resoun; for 3if it held aþen resoun, þanne it were aþens God. And þus clene love puttiþ out al synne, and in þis love shulden men studie. And þis charite shulde move men to speke stably herof. And among alle men þat synnen aþens charite, þes fourre sectis þat newe ben

and the 'four sects' sin against it in an especial manner.

^a This striking word, which both Wycliffite versions also employ here, is merely the English representative of the Latin 'instauratur,' the term

used in the Vulgate version of this passage.

^b Probably the words 'þe more' have dropped out.

comen wiþouten autorite of Crist, semen more stifly to synne aȝen þe lawe of charite. And here is sumwhat to speke aȝens þe firste of þes foure^a. Þe first hede of þis secte is þe pope wiþ his clerkes, and þer maner of lordly lyf aȝens þe lore þat Crist tauȝte Petre. Þis agregat of þes alle ben þe first sect, newe comen in. And al þes foure sectis ben armed wiþ armes of ypocrisie. And sum men clepen þis first hede Anticrist for his lyf. Ȝif he sue his patron as he feyneþ he sueþ Crist, he sueþ more þe emperour þan eiper Crist or Seint Petre; for þe world is his patroun, and þe fadir of pryde also. First, it semeþ þat he synneþ in charite þat Poul spekiþ of, for he disseyveþ mennis witt bi þis foule ypocrisie. If Petre in his lyf was passyng oþer apostlis þat weren his felowes, in povert and mekenesse, and in traveile for þe Chirche, þan he mut have a successour contrary to him in al þes þre. Certis a fend of helle shulde shame to disseyve men bi sich a skile. And whan men ben þus blyndid, he disseyveþ hem aftirward of fredom þat Crist haþ ȝovun, and makij hem þralle bi his lawes. Petre, ne ony oþer apostle, durst not seie þat he was so nedeful, þat wiþouten his governaile mut þe Chirche nedis perishe, and bi þis blasfeme gabbing slee many þousend men. He is not on Cristis side, þat puttid his soule for his sheepe, but on Anticristis side, þat puttij many soulis for his pryde. Þis man fedij not Cristis sheepe, as Crist bade þries Petre, but spuylij hem, and sleep hem, and ledij hem in many wrong weyes. Ȝif he lovede Cristis sheepe, he shulde lede hem bi Cristis lawe, and watere hem, and make hem rest bi þe lewes, and bi þes watris þat Crist haþ ordeyned for his sheep. Þis man þat þus hatij God mut after nedis hate himsilf, and al his breperen, þat he seiþ ben his sheep, for his riȝt cure. It semeþ þat no man here in erþe reversij more þis lore of Poul.

^a By the 'four sects' appear to be meant,—(1) the higher clergy, with the pope and cardinals at their

head, (2) the monks, (3) the Canons Regular, (4) the Friars.

ÞE FYFÞE SONDAI PISTLE AFTIR OCTAVE OF TWELFÞE DAI.

[SERMON XII.]

Induite vos sicut electi.—COLOS. iii. [12.]

FFOR charite is þe mooste vertue, and moost nedeful to Cristene men, þerfore Poule and oþer apostlis lerneden of Crist to stire þis moost, and teche þis moost to Cristis sheepe, for it conteyneþ al good. Poul biddiþ first, *þat men shulden cloþe hem, as chosen of God, holy and loved of God, entrailis of mercy* to þer breþeren. Ofte holy writt clepiþ mercy þe entrailis of mercy: for as entrailis ben wiþinne, and clensen mete fro mannis bodi, so þe abite of mercy shulde be stable wiþinne man, and algatis clense þe goostli mete, for þe bodi of holy Chirche. And þus spekiþ Lukes gospel by Zakary þe holy prophete, þat oure God haþ entrailis of mercy, bi which he visitid his puple. And siþ we shulden be Cristis children, and Cristis champions to fiþt for him, we shulden first cloþe us in his suyt, and take his armes for to fiþte. And þus seiþ Poul þe first word, þat we cloþe us as Goddis chosen. No man mai putte from him, þat ne he shulde be chosen of God, to fiþte wiþ her goostli enemyes, and bi victorie to gete blisse. And holynesse stondiþ in þis; for wiþ holynesse shulden men fiþte; and al þis is a stronde of love, þat stronger may no love be. For where is welle of more love, þan chesyng of God bifore þe world for to brynge men to blisse, and to alle menes nedeful þerfore? Or where is more charite, þan God himsilf to make us holy, and droppe to us of his owne grace wiþouten oure disseruving bifore? Or where myzte be shewid more love, þan God to chese for his bataile siche men þat he makip seintis, and loveþ hem for his owne dedis? And þes þree knottis of love ben figurid in þe Trinite. What men þat þus ben loved of God shulden not be merciful to oþir?

And of þis mercy of men shulden sprynge many oþer goode branchis. First, men shulden be *benyngne*, for þei shulden brenne

God's love to us should make us merciful to our brethren.

Twelve fruits springing from a merciful spirit.

in charite. Aftir men shulden *be meke*, for þis fier axij mekenesse, siþ it mai not kyndle ne growe but 3if mekenesse be berwiþ. Þe þridde vertue þat spryngiþ hereof *is temperoure* in oure dede, þat men travaile stabli for good ende whanne þei shulden. Þe fourþ vertue of þis mercy *is pacience*, þat men shulden have, siþ alle men moten taken of God al goodis þat þei have, and so þei shulden lerne pacience bi suffryng of þe Lord above. Þe fifþe vertue of þis mercy *is þat men supporte togidere*; for what man is wiþouten defaute and feblenese in þis lyf? And þus God haþ neded us, ech man to supporte his broþer, for ech man nedij to oþers helpe, and holde him up þat he falle not. Þe sixte vertue of þis ground *is to freely 3yve togider*, ffor3yvyng of oure trespas, for þus biddiþ our alþer maistir. *3if ony have playnt azens anoþer, as Crist haþ for3ouun 3ou, so shulde 3e for3even 3oure breþeren*. And þis lore biddiþ Crist in techinge of oure Pater Noster. *And over þes sixe biddiþ Poul þat men shulden have charite, for þat is bond of perfeccioun*, þat knyttiþ togidere al oþir vertues. Þe eiztþe tyme biddiþ Poul, *þat Cristis pees spryng in mennis hertis*, for þis pees bryngiþ gladnesse and joie *in o bodi* of þe Chirche, and þus ech man shulde *be kynde*, and helpe his broþer as he doiþ him, as ech part of a bodi helpiþ anoþir to make þat body. Þe tenþe tyme biddiþ Poul, *þat Cristis word dwelle in us plentouseli*, for it haþ vertue to kepe from yvel and bryng in good. And here many men ben to blame þat usen wordis of mannis lawe, and oþere þat ben not nedeful, and wordis of strif wiþ oþire japis. For word of Crist shulde putte þis out, as Petre techiþ in his boke,—3if ony man speke ou3t, speke he Goddis wordis; and certis þan Cristis word dwelliþ in us habundantly. But a fool my3t seie here, þat siþ Crist is God and man, ech word is Cristis word; and so veyn jangelers speken þis lore. Þerfore Poul knittiþ after, *þat Cristis word dwelle in us in al maner of wisdom*, and þan it is not superflue. Þe enlevenþe tyme Poule biddiþ, *þat Cristis word be not ydil in us*, for ever þe more þat it be usid ay þe more betere it is, and more likiþ him. And so men shulden *teche þer breþeren, and moneste hem silfe*, to kepe hem *holy, in psalmis and in ymþnis and spiritual songis, synging in þer hertis to God*, for grace þat he haþ 3ouun

to men. Þe twelfþe tyme biddiþ Poul þat, *al þing þat we done, in word or in dede, shulden we do it in Cristis name.* For we shulden ever serve to him, and he mut nedis be oure Lord, and þerfore we shulden do noȝt but þat we dore avowe to þis Lord.

And so we shulden ay do þankingis to God þe fadir, in þe name of Jesus Crist, þat is Lord of us alle, and heed of hooly Chirche. And so no man shulde speke ne do in þe name of Jesus Crist, but treuþe þat is skilful, and beden bi þe lawe of God. And here Cristene men mai see how þe secounde sect newe brouȝt in failiþ in mercy, and in charite of oure Lord Jesus Crist. Marke þei þe lordship þat þei have by titil of þer holynesse, and how lordis and þer pore tenauntis myȝten be releved bi þis lordship, and so myche ben þei ferþer fro mercy and charite. Þei shulden, bi bidding of þer patroun, be not þus seculer lordis; but þei dispisen þe bidding of God, and drawun to a worldly patroun. And þis is wanting of love to Jesus Crist and al his seintis, and wanting of mercy to pore men þat dwellen in rewmes þat þei inhabiten. God schilde us fro sich preier as þes munkes bidden for men; for rootyng in þer heresie techiþ þat þer bidding is turned in to synne. And þes þat loven not þus þer soulis, loven litil þe bodies of þer pore neiȝboris, but loven yvel þer owene bely, þat þei feden as þer God. How shulden rewmes have pees of God þat nurishen sich double traytours? For he is ferre fro charite þat loveþ þus more his bely þan he loveþ Goddis lawe, or þe Chirche þat he dwelliþ inne.

The 'second sect,' the monks, have no true mercy or charity.

SEPTUAGESME SONDAI.

[SERMON XIII.]

Nescitis quod ii qui in stadio.—I COR. ix. [24.]

Þis epistle of Poul telliþ how þat men shulden lyve here, and be Goddis laborers for to wynne þe blisse of hevene. Poul bigynneþ on þis maner;—*Witen ȝe not þat þei þat rennen in þe*

All may obtain the heavenly prize

ferlong for þe pris, certis þei rennen all, but oon of hem takip þe gleyve? Renne ȝe on anoþer maner, þat ȝe all take þe victorie. It is knowun þing in cuntreis, þat men usen ofte þis gamen, þat two men, holden moost swift, rennen a space for a priis, and he þat comeþ first to his ende shal have þe gamen þat is sett, wheþer it be spere, or gloves¹, or oþir þing þat is putt. And so, ȝif many rennen bi tymes, ȝit oon takip for oones þe prys. But oure rennyng in wey to hevene diversip myche fro þis rennyng, for many þousynd rennen togidere, and ech of hem comeþ to þe ende, and getip þe gamen þat is sett; for þat is þe large blisse of hevene.

by preparing
themselves for
the strife,

Þe secounde ensaumple of champiouns is seid of Poul in þes wordis;—*Ech þat stryveþ in fiztyng absteyneþ him from al excesse; for he chargip not his bodi wip mete ne drynke ne oþir þingis.* And so shulden Cristene men do, þat fizten here for Goddis cause. But þer is diversite in þes fiztingis and Goddis fizt, for þer ende is algatis worse, and þer traveil more uncerteyn. *For þei traveilen for þis ende, to take britul crowne here, but men traveilen in Goddis cause to take a crown þat never may faile.* And Poul tellip after to Cristene men how he traveillip in þis journey;—*Certis Y renne, not as in uncerteyne; Y fizt so not as betinge þe eir; but Y chastise my body bi resoun, and brynge it into servyse to my soule, lest þat, whanne Y preche to oþer, Y mysilf be maad reprovabul.* And so þis rennyng and þis fizting is hastely going of mannis soule to hevene bi þe wey of vertues, and fiztyng wip enemys þat letten þis.

with the aid of
sacraments.

And so God of blis haþ ordeyned, in tyme of his boþe lawes, how men shulden have sacramentis to make hem able for þis traveile. And þerfore seiþ Poul here;—*Breþeren, Y wole not þat ȝe unknowun, þat alle oure fadris þat wenten out of Egipt weren coverd in day under þe cloude, and alle þei passiden þe Reed see, and alle þes weren waishen bi Moyses in þe cloude and in þe see.* Bileve techip Cristene men þat signes of þe olde lawe weren toknes of oure signes now, as þei ben tokenes of þe blisse of hevene. Þe cloude þat ledde hem in desert upon daies, as Goddis lawe tellip, figuride þe water of Cristis side,

¹ gleyves. I.

bi whiche we ben baptisid now. Þe passing þourz þe Reed see and stondinge stable as a walle, figuride þe passioun of Crist, bi whiche we weren waishen fro synne. And, as þe gospel of Joon tellip, Crist was deed bifore þat water cam of þe cloude of his bodi to baptise men, as Poul spekij of. Reednesse of þis see figuride blood of Cristis bodi. Þe stable standing of þis see figuride þe stablenes of Cristis godhede; and alle þingis þat felliden to hem figuriden þingis in tyme of grace. And þus seip Poul soþely, *þat alle þei eeten þe same mete, and alle þei drunken þe same drynke*, þat fedde *spiritually* þer soule. Þer mete was þer bileve þat þei hadden of sadde þingis, and þer drynke was þer bileve þat þei hadden of moist þingis; as Cristis bodi and his blood was mete and drinke to hem in figure, as ȝit þei ben oure mete and drynke, to fede oure soule in bileve of hem. And þus in þis place, and in oþer, þe figure haþ þe same name þat haþ þe þing þat is figuride; and þis speche is sutil and trewe. And þus Poul spekij after, *þat þei drunken of þe spiritual, whan þe stoon suede hem*^a; and þis stoone was Crist in figure. Goddis lawe tellip wel how þe children of Israel grutchiden, whanne þei failiden water to drynke, and Moyses smote þe stone wiþ his ȝerde, and water came out of þe stone, so þat þei and þer bestis dranken. Þis dede tolde in figure how þe puple in tyme of Crist wantide goostli water to drynke. And Moyses was in double figure; he figurede boþe good men and Jewis; and in figure of wickide men he smoot þis stone wiþ his ȝerde, and þer cam out water of lyf, þat fillide men þat weren þursty. And þus seip Poul here soþely to good entent þat þe stone was Crist, for it figuride in þis Crist. And wolde God þat heretikes in mater of þe sacrid oost kouden understonden þes sutil wordis and soþe, to þe entent of þe Holy Goost; þanne shulde þei not have drede to graunte þat þis breed is Goddis bodi.

It fallip to telle a short word how þe þridde newe sect, þat is þe ordre of chanouns^b, failip now in charite. Trewe men

^a Not an unnatural rendering of the passage as it stands in the Vulgate:—'bibebant de spiritali consequente eos petra.'

^b Besides the Austin or Black

canons, who according to Tanner were introduced into England about the year 1100, and had one hundred and seventy-five houses shortly before the dissolution, there were

The 'third sect,' the canons, are also wanting in

charity, and are most unlike to St. Augustine himself, their founder.

witen wel þat in þe rennyng þat Poul telliþ, whan oo man contrarieþ anoþer in þe rennyng to his ende, ofte þe toon lettliþ þe toþer to come sikerly to þis ende. And so it is of þes newe ordris, þat rennen bisides Cristis ordre;—þei letten in lyf and bileve Cristis sect to come to blis. And þefore men shulden preye for hem to God, bi helpe of Seint Austyn, þat þei holden þe playn weye by evenesse of Goddis lawe. Seint Austin was a seculer bishop, and hadde preestis as his felowes, and hadde good bi title of almes; and he dredde of hem ful sore, and wolde have ʒovun hem to þe puple, as Possidoyne¹ telliþ of him^a. He was not weddid wiþ sich signes, neiþer wiþ abit ne wiþ cloistre, ne wiþ sich veyn ceremonyes as newe ordres kēpen to day; but ʒif ony wolde wende fro him, he ʒaf hem leve, for betir lif; and men þat weren of wickid lif, he nedide to go fro him; he puttide hem not in prisoun, as heþene men putten þeves. God graunte alle þes foure sectis to holde þus fredom þat Crist ʒaf;—þanne shal þei not harme his Chirche, boþe bodili and goostli.

ON SEXAGESME SONDAI.

[SERMON XIV.]

*Libenter suffertis insipientes*¹.—2 COR. xi. [19.] and xii.

POUL techiþ in þis epistle, sum tyme bi maner of scorneful speche, how þat sum fals apostlis disseyven þe puple þat þei

¹ *Possidoyne*, G.

² So G and I; A has *incipientes*.

several minor branches of that great order existing under particular institutions; also the Premonstratensian, or White canons, living under the rule of St. Austin as reformed by St. Norbert in the 12th century; fourthly, the Gilbertine canons, founded in 1148 by St. Gilbert of Sempringham; lastly, the Canons Regular of the Holy Sepulchre, founded about 1110.

^a The biographer of St. Austin (whose name was Possidius, not

Posidonius) relates, ch. xxiii., that the saint supported himself and his household, and his 'compauperes,' from the revenues derived from the property of the see; but that he disliked possessions of this kind, and used to declare to his flock that he would prefer to give back to them all such endowments, and trust to their alms and oblations; which however the laity would never consent to.

The tolerance of the Corinthians towards the false apo-

speken to; and he medliþ þe grace of God and condicioun of trewe apostlis. He blameþ first þis peple of Grece for þei nurishiden siche fals apostlis, and seiþ bi a witty scorn, *3e beren up wilfulli unwise men whan þat 3e ben wise men*; as who seiþ, in þis 3e ben foolis. *For 3e suffren, 3if ony man dryve 3ou to bondship, 3if ony man devoure 3oure goodis, 3if ony man take 3oure goodis, as 3if þei weren grauntid to him by God, 3if ony man hye his staat over þat Crist hiede his apostlis, 3if ony man smyte 3ou in visage ouper of bodi or of soule.* And þus it falliþ bi men to day þat ben disseyved bi þes newe ordris; for þei suffren hem gladly as þei weren wise men and holy, and as it were a wisdom to sussteyne hem in þer folie; as þe puple boþe more and lesse suffren þe folie of þes freris, þat bryngen in þer newe customes, as 3if þei weren gospelis of Crist. And þis is þe moste bondage þat may falle to men in erþe, siþ for sich ceremonyes men weren bonde in þe olde lawe; and certis þes ceremonyes of þes newe ordris comen not to þe ceremonies of God. And þus þes ordris devouren þer goodis, and preisen þer ordres over Cristis ordre, and whan þei taken þer children and þer goods as þei weren herne. And þei smyten ofte seculer men in faces of þer soulis, for þei taken bileve fro men, and putten heresies þerfore, as 3if þei smyten men in þer face and made hem bollun unkyndly.

And þus spekiþ Poul aftirward, *By unnobley Y speke, as we weren siike* in þis part, þat have take fredom of Crist;—but neþeles, as Poul seiþ,—*Who þat dar preise him* of good, *Y dar preyse me*, seiþ Poul; but *þis is foly* and noo wisdom. Þei preisen hem þat þei *ben Hebreus*, ordeyned of God to blisse; and Poul seiþ þat he is ordeyned þus, and an *Ebreu* to þis entent. Þei bosten þat þei *ben Jacobis sones*, þat was a man þat saw God; and 3it Poul seiþ sopeli þat, *he is sone of Israel*. Þei seien þat þei *ben Abrahams kyn*, to whom heven is bihiȝt; but Poul seiþ þat he is oon to whom blisse is bihiȝt. Þei seien at þe fourþe tyme þat, *þei ben Cristis mynystris*; but Poul, þat kepte þe sect of Crist, seiþ þat *he is Cristis servaunt* as þei. And þus Poul *preisþ him over hem, as lasse wise*, to confounden hem; and seiþ he passiþ a point over hem in travellinge for Cristis lawe, *for he was in many travellis*, to teche Cristis lawe

stiles compared to that shown to the friars at the present day.

The labours and sufferings of the apostle.

to þe puple, not for his owne wynnyng, but to preche Crist to men. Poul was at þe secounde tyme, *often in prisoun for Crist*. Poul was at þe þridde tyme, *in woundis over mesure for Crist*. Poul was at þe fourþe tyme, *ofte tyme in many deþis*; for he was by fyve tymes beten bi ipocrisie of Jewis ones lasse þan forty tymes, as ȝif þei hadden do mercy to him; he was þries beten wiþ ȝerdis, and he was efte onys stoned. He was þries in perel of þe see, for he was niȝt and day in þe deep see; he was ofte in perel of weies, in perel of floodis, in perel of þeves, in perel of his owne kynrede, in perelis of heþene men, in perelis in citee, in perelis in wildirnes, in perelis in þe see, in perelis of fals freris. And þis peril of al þes eiȝt is þe moste, as Austyn seiþ^a. And so ȝif freris kepen hem clene, and taken þis peril for Cristis sake, þei ben in þe mooste peril, boþe for prisonyng and sleying of freris. Biside al þes eiȝt perelis, *Poul was in traveil and myshef, in many fastingis, in coold and nakidnesse, biside þo þat ben wiþouten, þat is his ech day instaunce, bisynesse of alle chirches*. For Poul seiþ *þat noon is syke, but ȝif he be syke wiþ him in sorwe. Who is sclaudrid wiþ synne, seiþ Poul, and Y am not brent wiþ him in shame? ȝif it nedib to have glorie, Y shal have glorie in þes peynes of my sykenesse*. And in al þis speche seiþ Poul *þat God woot þat he lieþ not. Þe styward of Damaske of þe folk of þe kyng, Areth, kepte þe citee of Damascenes to take and punishe. And by a wyndowe in a leepe was he laten down bi þe walle, and so he scapide þis mannis hondis*.

His visions and revelations.

And ȝif it be nede to glorie, certis it spedib not for himsilf. For freris and þeves ben often peyned, but þat is for þer owne folie. Poul seiþ þat, *he shal come to þe siztis and tellingis of þe Lord*. For oure bileve techiþ us þat fro þe tyme of þe day of dome men shulen se in Goddis Sone þingis þat bifore weren hidde, and God shal þanne tellen men resoun whi he ordeynede þes þingis. And in tokene of calendis^b of þis, Poul telliþ of himsilf, *þat he knowiþ a man in Crist, þat fourtene ȝeer bifore was ravishid, wheþer in bodi or out of bodi he woot nevere, but God woot*. For Poul knewe þat fourtene ȝeer bifore he was

^a The reference is perhaps to St. Augustine's fifteenth Sermon, ch. vi.

^b 'Calendis' seems to be used here, and a few lines below, in the sense of 'first fruits' or 'initiation.'

turned to Cristis sect, and in his fastyng of þre daies he saw many pryvytees of God; and þis is clepid þe þridde hevene, as Seint Austyn declarij^a. Þe first hevene is bi bodili siȝt, as men seen here in lyf. Þe secounde is by ymagynacioun, as men seen whan þei slepen. Þe þridde hevene is by undir-
 standing, as seintis seen þat ben in blisse; and kalendis of þis siȝt hadde Poul whan he was ravyshid. But Poul and Joon namen here hem not, to teche us to flee vein glorie; but Poul confessij his ignoraunce þat he not wheþer he was ravishid in bodi or out of bodi, bi his spirit taken fro his bodi. And here men seen opynli þat mannis spirit is þe man himsilf; for Poul wiste þat he was ravishid, but he wiste not wheþer in soule aloone. And Poul tellij after of himsilf, *þat he knowij siche a man, wheþer in bodi or out of bodi he woot nevere, but God woot, þat he was ravishid in to paradis of God, and þere he herde privy wordis þat ben not leveful to speke here.* Many musen what wordis weren þes; and summe seien þat þei witen wel, but it is not leveful for man to speke hem, and þus þei ben stille. But sum men wenen þat þes wordis weren ordenaunce of men to blis; and þes wordis shulden not be spoken, for peril þat myȝt come þerof. *For siche siȝtis shulde Poul have glorie, and noþing for himsilf but in his peynes þat he haþ here, and in hope to come to blisse for hem.* And ȝit, *ȝif man wole þus glorie, him nedij to be not unwise.* And two þingis ben nedeful here, *þat a man holde treuþe, and gabbe not, and also þat he be not proud of himsilf, but shewe here heynesse of God.* And þerfore seiþ Poul, *þat he shal sei treuþe, and þat he spariþ to speke here, þat no man gesse of him over þis þat he seþ in me, or heerij ony þing of me.* Poul wolde not þat men gessiden þat he were holi over þe soþe, for þis is maner of ypocritis, þat hyen falsly þer owne state.

^a S. Aug. De Genesi ad Litt. cap. xxxiv. By the first heaven, St. Austin understood the visible heavens over-arching the earth; by the second, the region where things are spiritually apprehended, but under the forms of sense; by the third, the region of intellectual intuition,

where truth 'mente concipitur ita secreta et remota et omnino abrepta a sensibus carnis atque mundata, ut ea quae in illo coelo sunt, et ipsam Dei substantiam, Verbumque Deum per quem facta sunt omnia, in caritate Spiritus Sancti ineffabiliter valeat videre et audire.'

The thorn in
his flesh.

*And leste þat gretenesse of Goddis telling hye Poul above him-
silf, God gaf him a prikke of his fleish, an angel of þe fend to
temple him. And herbi Poul wiste his owne freelte, and held
þe bondis of mekenesses, siþ an angel of Sathanas myzt so liztli
buffet his soule. But zit he preiede God þries þat þis angel shulde
wende away from him; but God seide to him azen,—My grace
is ynowz to þee, for vertu growiþ in sykenesses. And herfore seiþ
Poul þat he wolde gladly have glorie in his syknesse, þat Cristis
vertue dwelle in him.*

The pride and
hypocrisy of
the friars;
their deviation
from the law
and way of
Christ.

Here it is pertinent to speke of pride of þis ferþe sect¹; for
freris, alþif þei ben ungroundid, hyen hem above apostlis, and
seien þer ordre is moost holy of alle þe ordres þat ever God
ordeynede. And þus þei feynen blasfeme gabbingis, þat Crist
beggid as þei done, and on falsheed of sich blasfemes is holy-
nes of þes ordres feyned. But Crist slepte or knewe hem not,
but for to ordeyne peyne for hem. And þus Poul telliþ a good
medecine, to rest in ordenaunce of Crist, and take no part in
þis newenesse þat þes ordres have brouzt inne. Wel we witen
þat þes habitis and þes cloistris, wiþ oþer signes, ben brouzt inne
to blynde mennis iþen in holynesse of þes ipocritis. Wel we
witen þat Crist ordeynede fewe apostlis, to dwelle wiþ þe puple,
and boþe in liif and in word to teche hem bi his lawe; and
bade not lumpis of ypocritis lyve as þes newe ordris. And þus,
bi lore þat Joon 3yveþ, trewe men shulden not dele wiþ hem,
but 3if þei hadden hope to turne hem to Cristis sect fro þer
vanite. For wel we witen þei bynden hem more to holynes
bi þer signes, and wel we witen þei myzten as myche holden
holynes wiþ comoun signes. And þus þes ypocritis bynden
hem, wiþouten cause, over þer power. And siþ þei putten abak
Cristis ordenance, and perfourmyng of his lawe, and wiþ þis
falshede spuylen 3e puple boþe of vertues and worldly goodis,
many þenken þei ben heretikes, and foulen men þat mayn-
teynen hem.

¹ So in G; A and I read *þes fourre sectis*.

ON QUINQUAGESME SONDAI PISTLE^a.

[SERMON XV.]

Si linguis hominum loquar.—I COR. xiii. [I.]

POUL telliþ in þis epistle¹ how men shulden knowe charite, and how men shulden kepe charite, and þis lore is ful nedeful to ech membre of holy Chirche. First Poul telliþ how nedeful is charite bifore oþer, and bigynneþ at þe heirest² werk þat man haþ in holy Chirche. Poul seiþ, *þif he speke wiþ mannis tongis and angel tunges, and he haþ not charite, he is made as bras sounnyng and a cymbal tynkyng.* It is knowun bi bileve þat preching and oþer speche is þe heirest dede of man, whan þat it is wel done; but however a man speke in dyvers tungis of men, ouper English or Frenshe, Latyn or oþer langage, his vois is like a sound of bras þat distrieþ himsilf, but þif he have charite, bi which he deserveþ blisse. For sich men by longe tyme wasten hemsilf, and largen þer peyne. And on þe same maner, þif man speke in angel tunge, wiþ clere vois or florishid wordis, speke he nevere so sutilly, þif he wante charite wiþ þis, he is as a tynkyng cymbale; for he profitiþ not to disserve blis, but wastiþ him to his dampnyng.

Aftir seiþ Poul, *þat þif he have profecie, and knowe al pryvytees, and have al maner of science; and þif he have al bileve, so myche þat he translate hilles, and he have not charite, he is nozt to holy Chirche.* Þes foure, clepid vertues of þe undirstonding of man, may be wiþouten charite, and þan þei seruen not to blis. Many men mai kunne myche and lyve yvel, not þereafter, as a man mai worche woundris bi þe worching of a fend. And so it is to nakyd prof³ to preise men for siche worching. And þus men mai have bileve unformed bi charite, and sich bileve

The apostle on charity; without it preaching is empty.

and the gift of prophecy

¹ *chapitle*, E.

² *byeste*, E.

³ *prove*, E.

* From this point to the end of the sermon on the Epistle for Trinity Sunday, we have again the assistance of the excellent manuscript E, (Douce 321).

profitiþ not, siþ þe fend haþ siche bileve. And þus men mai have prophecie, and al þes habitis in þer soule, and be schrewid wirchirs¹, wiþ yvel wille of þer soule. And þus seiþ Crist in þe gospel, Sire, propheciede we not in þi name, and castiden out fendis in þi name from men? and 3it he knowiþ hem not to blisse. Þe þridde tyme seiþ God in Poul, *þat 3if he dele al his goodis into metis of pore men, and 3yve his bodi so þat he brenne*, as sum men done in heresie, *and he have not charite wiþ þis, he profitiþ not to blis.*

and almsgiving.

The apostle names sixteen conditions as essential to true charity; most of these broken by the friars.

1. Patience.

And siþ þes werkes and þes groundis semen to make holy men, and ech man wolde by kynde be blessid, it were aftir to wite how men shulden knowe charite, siþ it is so nedeful to men to come to þe blisse of hevene. And þefore in þis secound parte of þis epistle telliþ Poul sixtene condiciouns by which men may knowe þis love. Þe firste is þat, *charite is pacient*, and so meke þat it² conformeþ his wille mekely to Goddis wille; and þus he gnawiþ him not to deþ for noþing þat falliþ in þe world, but for good þing þat falliþ he haþ a brennyng love to God. And þis is clepid *benignite*, bi speche þat Poul spekiþ here.

2. Kindness.

3. Absence of envy,

Þe þridde tyme telliþ Poul þat, *charite haþ noon envie*, and he spekiþ of charite in his name þat holdiþ it. And þus men may wante envie, and reprove men in Cristis name, for love þat þei have to God and for profit to his Chirche; for þus dide Crist ful sharply, and he myzte not wante þis love. Þe fourþe condicioun of þis love is, þat it *doiþ not amys*; for what þing þat he doiþ, his last entent is to do Goddis wille, and so to profit of his Chirche aftir þe lawe þat he haþ 3ovun. And þus al þes foure sectis semen to faile in charite, for þei leven Goddis lawe and worchen by þer feyned fyndingis; and so þei leven Goddis worship, and traveilen moost for þer owne wynnyng. Þe fifþe condicioun of þis love is þat, *it bolneþ not bi pride*. For he þenkeþ mekely how he is a lowe servaunt of God, and so ypocrisie makਿþ not þat he hye him over resoun.

4. and of perverseness,

5. and of self-complacency.

6. Generosity.

Þe sixte maner of charite is, *þat it is not covetous*. Ech man shulde coveite blis, and vertuous dedis to do þefore; but Poul spekiþ of coveitise þat is contrarious to þis ende, as many men languishen for pryde, to have a stat þat God wole not. And

¹ *worcheris*, E.

² So E; A reads *be*.

þus al þes foure sectis semen to faile in þis point, for þei coveiten þat mannis wille go forþ, and Goddis wille be put abac. And so þei have algatis envie, and done amys as proude men, for þei coveiten þer owun worship, and leven þe worship of God. Þe sevenþe condicioun of þis love is þat, *it sekib not his owne þingis*, but to worship of God and to profit of his Chirche it¹ entendip to do his dedes after þe lawe þat God haþ ʒouun. And here it semep þat þes foure sectis failen foule in þis point, for ech on sekib þat his ordre and his reule be meyntened more þan þe comoun ordre of Crist, or þe lawe þat he haþ ʒouun.

Þe eiztiþe condicioun of þis love is, þat *it is not stired to wrapþe*. For siþ he is pacient, and trowip þat God mut have his wille, he holdip him paid wiþ what þat fallip, in þat þat it is Goddis wille. And þis failip in þes foure sectis, for þei taken þer owun veniaunce, beside þe lawe þat God haþ ʒouun, as ʒif þei weren more hey þan Crist. Þe nynþe condicioun of þis love is þat, *it castib not yvel*, for it castip to worshiþe God, and menes þat leden herto. Lord, where þes foure sectis casten to have þer owun wille more bisili þan þe wille of God! and þan þei ben al yvel. Þe tenþe condicioun of þis love is þat, *it joieþ not on wickednesse*, but haþ sorwe þat ony man doiþ aʒens Goddis wille. But ʒit of þe same þing haþ he boþe joie and sorwe. He haþ sorwe of þe synne, bi resoun þat it unlikip God, and he haþ joy of þe same synne, by resoun þat God puniship it wel. And here it semep þat þes foure sectis have joie of þer owun þing, and seien þat God forbede þat Cristis ordenance were fulfillid; and þus þei reversen in dede þe wille of God in many maners.

Þe enlevenþe condicioun of þis love is þat, *it joieþ to treuþe*. Treuþe is God and his lawe, and whan þis lawe is wel kept, þanne þis charite haþ joie. And here þes foure ordres semen to grutche myche aʒens þis treuþe, for þei magnefien þer lawes, and executen hem bisili; but how þat Goddis lawe is broken þei rekken to litil, so þer state stonde. Þe twelfþe condicioun of þis love is þat, *it suffriþ al þingis*, for it joieþ of ech treuþe in as myche as it likip God. Lord, whi wolen not þes foure sectis

7. Disinterestedness.

8. Gentleness.

9. Charitable judgment.

10. Delight in goodness.

11. Love of truth.

12. Endurance.

¹ So E; A has *be*.

suffre þat Goddis word renne, and þat Cristis ordenaunce stood hool? siþ it were best, as þei graunten. But certis þanne alle þes foure sectis shulden leve þer patrouns and þer reulis, and come clenly to Cristis sect; and who shulde grutche aȝens þis?

13. Trustful-
ness.

þe þrittenþe condicioun of þis love is þat *it trowiþ alle þingis*; ffor þing and treuþe is al oon, and so al treuþis ben trowid of it. And þus it trowiþ and assentiþ to al maner of treuþe and reþoun. But how failiþ he not here, þat lettiþ þus Cristis ordenance, and doiþ harm to many men, boþe to þer bodi and to þer soule? þe fourtenþe condicioun of þis love is þat, *it hopiþ alle þingis*; for it hopiþ þat ordeyned treuþe helpiþ to alle good men, and þis charite hopiþ to have parte of þis helpe. Here failen þes newe sectis, þat dreden hem þat þei shulen faile from worldli favour and worldly wynnyng, and þat Goddis lawe shal be kepte clene; and þus þei dispeiren in lyf of þe fruyt of Goddis lawe. þe fiftenþe condicioun of þis love is þat, *it susteyneþ al þingis*; for it helpiþ to holde al treuþe, and abidiþ þe ende þerof. For after þe day of dome shal be fruyt of al treuþe; and þes þat ben unpacient þat Goddis lawe riȝtid hem, failen in þis condicioun, siþ þei trustyn to mennis lawes.

14. Hopeful-
ness.

15. Persever-
ance.

þe sixtenþe condicioun and þe laste þat folwiþ þis charite, is þat *it falliþ never away*, neiþer in þis world ne in þe toþer. For Goddis love may not faile, siþ God mai not ceese to ordeyne þes men to come to blis, þe which he wole ever have blis. And þis love þat is in God mut have sich charite in man. Loke þou þes condiciouns, wheþer þou have hem al in þee; and ȝif þou hast not, be aboute for to have hem al hool, and þan þou hast wiþouten doute þis love þat mut bringe to blis. And of þis techiþ Poul þe excellence of charite; and þis is þe þridde part of þis epistle, and makip ende of þis glorios lore. Charite is woundirful good, as men mai se of wordis bifore. And charite mut ever last, eþir in lyf or in half lyf, for it is not ful clene bifore þat men comen to blisse. *But wheþer þat prophecies shulen be voidid, or þat þingis shulen ceese, or þat þis science shal be distroyed*¹,—and alle þes þree mut nedis faile,—þis charite shal nevere faile. *For sumwhat we knowun* in certeyn, as is

16. Perma-
nence.

¹ distroyde, E.

beyng of oure God; and *sumwhat we prophecien*, as þingis of þe laste day; *but whan þat shal come þat is perfit, þis þat is unperfit shal be avoidid.* And so siþen¹ at þe day of dome men shulen have ful knowyng and blis, þe grees of cunnyng and joie here mut nedis passe, and þe ending mut come. And þus seiþ Poul of himsilf, and so it is of al þis Chirche; *Whan Y was litil, Y spake as ʒong, I undirstood as ʒong, I þouʒte as ʒong; but whanne I was maad man, I avoidide þes werkes of a ʒong child.* And so it is of alle men þat shulen come after to blis. *We seen now bi a myror, in fer siʒt, and unpropre, but we shulen se after in blis þe firste troupe face to face.* Poul seiþ, *he knowiþ now by a parte, and not fulli; and þanne he shal knowe in blisse, as he is knowun fulli of God.* And of þes wordis may men gedre þat, *now dwellen þes þree vertues, bileve, hope, and charite, but moost of þes is charite.*

And ʒif þis epistle of Poule were fulli executid as it shulde, þe rewme of Yngelond shulde be dischargid of þes foure sectis þat ben spoken of; and þan myzte þe rewme dispende many hundrid þousand marke more þan it dispendiþ now, alʒif² þes sectis weren avoidid. Marke what alle þes sectis dispenden in oure rewme for a ʒeer, and ʒyve alle þes to men in charite. For ʒif þes foure failen in charite, oure rewme shulde drawe from hem þis parte. But rekene how myche þis comeþ to, and bigynne þou to wite of hem what þing is þe sacrid oost, wiþ resoun of Goddis bileve; and þat þei tellen not here to þe kyng but þing þat þei wolen stonde by, to suffre martirdome of men, and losse of al þat þei have of oure rewme; and þan myzte þe kyng wite how he shulde put out al þes foure. And over þis he myzt more dispende bi many hundrid þousend marke, and þe rewme were more plentenous to bryng forþ men to þe blis of hevene. And þus it falliþ kyngis to do, by þe office þat God haþ ʒouun hem.

¹ siþ, E.

² ʒif, E.

It would be an immense saving to the realm if the four sects were suppressed.

FIRST SONDAI PISTLE IN LENTE.

[SERMON XVI.]

Hortamur vos ne in vacuum.—2 COR. vi. [I.]

The apostle exhorts the Corinthians to correspond to the grace of God;

POUL telliþ in þis epistle how alle Cristene men shulden flee to take in veyn Goddis grace, and how þei shulden worche of þis. We supposen of bileve þat ech good þing þat we have,— be it staat, be it cunningg,—ech sich þing is Goddis grace; for God 3yveþ it graciously, for man shulde serve to him bi it. And þus he takiþ Goddis grace in veyne þat takiþ his grace and leveþ his servyce. And herfore bygynneþ Poul þus; *We moneste 3ou þat 3e take not þus in veyn þe grace of God.* And þis word myzt be seid to ech man in þis lyf. And siþ defaute is not in God, but al defaute is in his servantis, Poul moveþ over þis word anoþer word of greete witt. *Certis God seiþ to þes men, In covenable tyme Y have herd þee, and in day of helpe Y have helpid þee.* First, men bidden to God þer preier, þat he helpe hem in tyme of nede; and 3if þis be resounable, God helpiþ hem in covenable tyme; and whanne tyme comeþ þat God 3yveþ helpe, he helpiþ men as he haþ bihizt. And þes wordis of Ysaye ben general and in good ordre. For first God hireþ men and 3yveþ menes, and siþ, whan nede is, he helpiþ. As first God bryngiþ man by 3ongþe, and siþ he 3yveþ helpe to man as in tyme of mannis deep; and after, whan he 3yveþ hem blisse, þanne God helpiþ man at þe fulle, and helpiþ bifore to þis ende. And þus, in age of holy Chirche, God herde þis maiden in many seintis, and aftirward in tyme of grace he helpiþ þis Chirche to come to hevене. And þerfore seiþ Poul þus; *Lo, now is tyme acceptable; lo, now is þe daie of helpe,* fro tyme þat Crist styede up to hevене. And so 3e shulden lyve in þis tyme, *þat 3e 3eve noon offence to ony, þat 3oure servyse be not blamed,* and þat God heere not 3our preier. *But in alle þingis 3yve we us as mynystris of God* in tyme of grace þat he haþ 3ovun. Now, whan holy Chirche is

older, and haþ taken more grace of God, she shulde bisilier serve to him, and more perfilty bi resoun.

And þus telliþ Poul eizt and twenti condiciouns þat she shulde kepe now. First, she shulde *have myche pacience*, for she haþ lerid þis of Crist, and of many of his membris; and þus þis lore shulde be knowun beter. Aftir þe Chirche shulde more stably suffre *tribulaciouns*, ffor assaiyng of a þing shulde teche for to knowe þat þing. And so men shulden now be *in nede*, boþe suffrynge and helpynge. And so servantis of Crist shulden be now *in anguishe, in woundis, and in prisouns; in stryves, in traveilis, and in wakingis; in fastingis, and in chastite; in science and in long abiding; in swetnesse, in þe Holy Goost, in charite not falsly feyned; in word of treupe, and in Goddis vertu; bi armes of rixtwisnes on boþe sides*, in doynge good and suffryng wrong. *And so bi glorye and unnobley*, as done seintis þat have lerned to take gladly þer reproves, *by yvel los and good loos*, to þe world and to seintis in heven;—for comunly men þat serven God ben foolis to þe world and wyse to seintis; *as disseyveres and trewe men*; for Goddis servauntis shulen have a name of þe world þat þei disseyven men, and zit þei shulen holde treuly þe sentence of Goddis lawe. *And þus þei shulden be as knowun and unknowun men*, to God and seintis, for þei shulen not accepte persones, but telle treuly Goddis word, as þei weren not knowun of men, but as aungels þat camen fro hevene; *as men þat weren diyng and zit lyvyng* in grace of God. Poul and oþer apostlis of Crist weren diyng as anentis þer bodi, and zit þei weren growinge and lyvyng as anentis þe vertues of þer soule. Þei shulden serve, *as chastisid men and not as men þat weren deed*, siþ þei shulden be quyk in soule, and take gladly tormentinge, and wite wel þat þer spirit bi þis is strengpid in God; *as sorewful* to worldly gamen¹, *but ever more joiynge* in God; and here shulden many men lerned to be sadde as angels ben. *And men shulden be as nedy*, for, as pore men of worldly goodis, *but þei shulden make many men riche*, in vertues and in medeful dedis; *as havynng not*² on worldly maner, *and havynng alle þingis* bi title of grace. Ech of

and lays down twenty-eight conditions as necessary to be observed in the divine service.

¹ So E; A includes these three words in the quotation.

² nouzt, E.

þes pointis þat Poul telliþ mai be alargid to þe puple, and declared diffusely ¹ after þat God moveþ þe speker.

ÞE SECUNDE SONDAI IN LENTE.

[SERMON XVII.]

Rogamus vos et obsecramus.—I TESSAL. [THESS.] iv. [1.]

POUL techiþ in þis epistle how Cristene men shulden lyve togidere, and holde hem ever in Cristis lawe, þat is tauzt bi his apostlis. And Poul bigynneþ wiþ þis praier, for non þar ² kepe þis but 3if he wole; and þus holdinge of Goddis lawe shulde be willeful and medeful. *We praien 3ou and bisechen 3ou in þe Lord Jesus, seiþ Poul, þat as 3e have taken of us how 3e moten wandre and plese to God, so wandre 3e in þis lyf, þat 3e abounden more in vertues, as 3e ben growynge in eelde.* Poul preieþ on two maners, as Crist is of two kyndis. His manheed is signefied bi comoun preier maad to man, his biseching telliþ his Godhede, þat is special praier of man. As 3if men praieden namyng holy þing, as who seiþ, Y biseche God bi vertue of his passioun þat he helpe me in my nede. And þus is love of Crist axid, boþe bi his manheed and bi his Godhed. And nede is knittid bi Poul herto, whan he seiþ þat 3e moten wandre þus 3if 3e wolen be saved.

And to þis taken men litil hede of þes foure sectis þat we have told; for þei leven Poulis lore, and feynen hem a newe reule, þat is oþir biside Goddis lawe or contrarye þerto. For Crist seiþ, Who is not wiþ me, he is even aȝens me. And þus, siþen þes newe reulis letten þe reule þat Crist haþ 3ovun, þei ben riȝt contrarye þerto and devyden fro Cristis ordre. And þis devysioun was sum tyme clepid heresie of wise men. And so noon of þes wandriþ as Cristen men moten wandre. For siþ bifore þes foure camen inne, men wandriden þicke and streiȝt to hevене, but for þe tyme siþen þei camen in, haþ ben here hate and wey to helle.

¹ So E; A has *defusely*.

² none þar, E.

The apostle entreats the Thessalonians to walk worthily of Christ;

but his teaching is despised by the four sects.

But Poul seiþ to Cristene men, *þat þei witen what coman-
mentis he haþ ȝouun hem, bi oure Lord Jesus Crist.* And þei
shulden be not suspect, for þei sounnen not to propre wyn-
nyng, but to worship of God, and to savyng of mannis soule.
And þefore seiþ Poul here þat, *þis is þe wille of God, ȝoure
holynesse;* and þat stondiþ in service of God as he biddiþ. And
blessid be sich a Lord þat biddiþ but profit of his seruaunt, not
profit of himsilf, but honest and liȝt þing to do. And so, *men
shulden absteyne hem fro lecherie,* for þat is foule. And so ech
Cristene man *shulde kunne kepe his vessel in holynesse.* Þe vessel
of a mannis soule is his body þat holdiþ it; and whan þis vessel
is holy, þe soule þerinne mut nedis be hooly. Sum men undir-
stonden here þat Poul spekiþ to weddid men, þat moten nedis
have wyves to kepe hem fro lecherie, so þat ech sich man kunne
kepe his vessel in hoolynesse, gendre and ȝyve dette whann it
is tyme, and trete his wyf as his felowe. We reproven not þis
witt, for God is large in his lore. And þanne, men kepen þis
vessel *in honour and not in passioun of fleishli desire, as heþen men
þat knowen not God,* ne how he wolde be served in clenness.
And clerkes speken þus of passiouns þat ben lustis biside resoun.

And beside þis lecherie is a synne among þe puple, þat is
pryde and worldly coveitise, þat foulþ here many men. Þer ben
ful many here on lyve, þat ben not paied wiþ her staat, but gone
bi pryde above þer breþeren, and of þis comen fitȝyng and stryf.
And many men ben coveitouse, and bigilen þer breþeren in
chaffaryng and comen about hem many weies, to bigile hem of
þer goodis. And boþe þes two forfendiþ Poul; and biddiþ, *þat
noon go aboven bi pryde, ne þus go aboute his broþer, for God
wole venge al þes.* For þes ben pryde and coveitise, þat quenchen
mekenesse and charite, *as Poul haþ seid ofte bifore, and wit-
nessid bi Goddis lawe.* And þes two synnes ben ful comoun,
and nedeful to warne folk of. For who wolde bi good resoun
þat ony man seruede hym þus? And so God mut nedis venge
him of men þat breken þus his heste. And, for *God haþ not
clepid us to unclennesse but to hoolynesse,* men þat seruen him þus
falsly mote nedis be punishid for þer falsnes. It is foule to be
a lecchoure, and foule to dispise þi broþer, and foule to bigile
him in worldly goodis, þat ben dritt.

He further
exhorts them
to purity.

and warns
them against
pride and
covetousness.

Those that despise this teaching are guilty,

as are they, who at the present day reject the writer's doctrine of the Eucharist.

And þus, *he þat dispiseþ his lore, he dispiseþ not al oonly man, but God, þat ȝaf his holy spirit in his apostlis*, for his goodnesse and for love of his Chirche. And þus, whan men heeren Goddis word, þei shulde not loke to þer broþer but to God and his wordis, and worshipe hem for Goddis sake. And wolde God þat men token hede to speche of Poul in þis place, to holde vertues and flee herešies, for boþe ben nedeful to men. Panne men shulden heere Goddis word gladly, and dispise fablis, and erre not in þis sacrid oost, but graunte þat it is two þingis, boþe breed and Goddis body,—but principaly Goddis bodi. And certis he þat dispisiþ þe prechoure whan he prechiþ Goddis wordis, dispisiþ boþe God and man, but moost to charge þe Godhede. And þus men þat dispisiþ¹ þis lore of þis holy sacrament, dispisen God and seien þat he is fals; and þis is a foul blasfemye.

DE ÞRIDDE SONDAI PISTLE IN LENTE.

[SERMON XVIII.]

Estote imitatores Dei.—EFFEC. [EPHES.] v. [I.]

The apostle desires that Christians should walk as God's dear children,

POUL biddiþ in þis epistle þat men shulden be Goddis children, and sue Crist in maner of lyf as dereworþe² children of him. And here men shulden take as bileve, þat ech man here on lyve is holden to sue Crist upon peyne of dampnyng in helle. For ȝif a man wole be saved, he mut nedis be Goddis child, and ȝif a man be Goddis child þan he sueþ God in maners, and þis childhode is þe derrest þat may falle here to men. Sum men ben here mennis children, þat þei loven for þer þewes; and þis childhode is dere ȝif it be groundid in vertues. Sum men ben mennis children, for þei camen of þer kynde; and þis childhode is betere ȝif vertues be castid þerto. But sum men ben children of God, for þei lyven perfitli in vertues, and loven Goddis lawe to þer ende; and þes ben þe derrest children. And herfore biddiþ Poul here, þat we *shulden be*

¹ dispisen, E.

² derworþe, E.

folowers of God, as moost dere worþe children. And blynde men stonden here aȝen, whanne men aleggen Cristis dedis and his lyf and his wordis, and seien, Lo, þis heretike wolde be even wiþ Crist, but no man may be so. Here þes foolis shulden wite, þat it is al dyvers to folowe Crist in maner of lyyng, and to be even wiþ him. Ech man shulde desire þe first, but no Cristene man þe secound. And so ech Cristene man shulde take skile of lyf, of wordis, and werkes, of Crist, and þerafter sue him, ouþer nerrer or ferrer; for ȝif he reverse Crist in þis, he goiþ streiȝt þe weye to helle. And men may see bi þis skile þat þis is excusyng in synne.

And þefore seiþ Poul aftir, *þat we shulden wandren in love, but as Crist haþ loved us.* Þer ben þre loves of man, fleishli love, and worldly love, and þe þridde is hevenly love; and bi þis love Crist lovede us, and bi ensauple of þis love ech man shulde love his broþer. And þefore seiþ Crist bi Joon, A new mandement Y ȝyve ȝou, þat ȝe love ȝou togider riȝt as Y have loved ȝou. Crist ȝaf himsilf for us, *boþe offryng and oost unto God, þat is his Fadir, into smellyng of swetesse*¹. It is knowun by bileve how mankynde trespasside to God, and how bi Goddis riȝtwisnesse þat trespas mut nedis be punishid, and how it myȝt not be punishid to savyng of mannys kynde, but ȝif Crist, boþe God and man, hadde offrid himsilf upon þe tree. And þis offryng was sacrifice made to God for oure good. And herfore seiþ Crist bi Joon, þat no man haþ more love þan þis, to putte his lif for his breþeren; and þus Crist is of moost love. We shulden sue Crist aferre in þis love by oure power, and offre oure body to þe Fadir of heven, for love and profite of oure neiȝbore. And siþ ech man shulde serve God boþe bi bodi and bi soule, eche man shulde sue here Crist bi trewe servise to God. And siþ þis martirdoom of Crist was so swete bifore God, Poul clepiþ it witylliche an offryng bifore God into smelling of swetnesse, for dedis þat plesen to God moten smelle wel bifore God. And here seien many men, þat men slayn in worldly cause ben but stynkyng martires, and offringis to þe fend.

And herof concludiþ Poul, þat six synnes shulde be fled, as is

loving each other as Christ has loved them,

Who gave Himself up as a sacrifice for man :

that they should abstain

¹ *swetnesse, E.*

especially from
six great sins,

*fornicioun, and al unclennesse of man, or avarice*¹, synne of þe world, *be not nemyd in ȝou, as it semep in holy men, or filþe or foli speche, or harlotrie þat perteynep not to þing of blis; but more,* use ȝe ȝoure speche clenly in þankyngis of God; *for wite ȝe þis and undirstonde, as bileve of Cristene men, þat ech lechour, or unclene man, or averous man þat serveþ to mawmetis, hap noon heritage in þe rewme of Crist, þat is boþe God and man. Siþ ech man makip þat his God þat he loveþ moost of alle, and an averous man loveþ more worldly goodis þan he loveþ God, siþ he leveþ riȝtwisnes for love of siche worldly goodis, it is knowun þat he is fals and out of riȝt bileve of God, for he makip siche goodis his mawmetis, which muten nedis be fals goddis. And þus it is of oper synnes, þat men fallen ofte inne. In þe first fleishly synne ben many spesces, as men knowun; and Poul understandip hem alle bi unclennesse, as sum men seyen². Opir men seyen² wel ynow³, þat Poul tellip þes þree synnes, fleishli synne, and synne of þe fend, and synne of þe world, as alle synnes. For alȝif alle synnes ben unclene, ȝit þes þre synnes of þe fend—pryde, envie, and ire þer sister,—maken man more like to þe fend, and bi þis prynte of þe fend þei ben more foule bifore God.*

nd not be
begulled by
those who
confound good
and evil.

Poul biddip here to trewe men, *þat no man bigile hem in bileve bi veyn wordis* which þei speken, þat þes ben no synnes or list; as lecherie is kyndeli, as þei seien, and mankynde kyndely hap love of his owne excellence, siþ þat God hap ȝovun it him, and God hap ȝovun þis world to man, to serve him bi helpe þerof. Siche veyn wordis þat excusen synne done myche harme among men, as Adam and Eve weren bigilid bi veyn speche of þe serpent, and so weren many oper after, *unbilevyngre treuþe of Goddis lawe*. For if we taken hede to ire of God, or in old lawe or in þe newe, it cam bi synne þat was brouȝt in bi siche fals and gilyngre wordis. *And þerfore schulde ȝe not wille to be maad perceyneris³ of hem,* neiþer spekyng þus, ne trowinge, ne nurishinge sich fals speche. *For ȝe weren sum tyme derknessis, but now ȝe ben list in þe Lord.* Men þat ben encombrid in

¹ So E; A includes *as is* in the quotation.

² So in E; A has *seen*.

³ *perceneris*, E.

synne ben made derke and blind wiþ synne; but men þat ben in liȝt of grace knowun synne as motis in þe sunnebemes. And þerfore, *wandre ȝe as children of liȝt*, in clenness. *Þe fruyt of liȝt stondiþ* in þes þre, *in al maner of goodnesse, and riȝtwisnesse, and treuþe*. Þes þre wordis, þat ben according to þe holy Trinite, wolen make a man vertuous, and fleyng þree maners of synnes.

FORÞE SONDAI IN LENTE.

[SERMON XIX.]

Scriptum est enim quia Abraham.—GAL. iv. [22.]

POUL telliþ in þis epistle of fredom of Cristene men, how þei have þer ernes here, and fully fredom in hevene. And þus wole Poul in tyme of grace þat Cristene men ben more free þan fadris weren in þe olde lawe, by fredom þat Crist haþ ȝouun. Poul seiþ þat, *it is writun* in þe first boke of Goddis lawe, *þat Abraham hadde two sones*, Ysmael and Ysaac; Ismael was of þe hond-maiden, þe which was clepid Agar, *and Ysaac of his weddide wyfe*, þe which was clepid Sara. *But þe first, þat was born of þe seruaunt, was born bi þe fleishe; þe toþer, born of þe free wyfe, was born bi þe heest of God*. Þe first boke of Goddis lawe telliþ how Abraham in his myddil age gate Ismael his sone, whanne he hadde kyndely strengþe; but whanne boþe he and his wyf weren passid þe tyme of child-getyng, God behiȝt¹ hem Isaac, and tolde what shulde worþe of him. And þes two children of Abraham bitokenen two lawes of God, and two children þat God haþ. Þe first child shal be dampned, þe secounde shal be saved. And so men seien comounly, þat holy writ haþ foure wittis. Þe first witt is of þe storȝe, or even as þe wordis shulden tokne. Þe secounde witt is allegoryke, þat figurिþ þing þat men shulden trowe; as þes two sones of Abraham figuren þes two þingis. Þe þridde witt is tropologik²,

The two Testaments; the freedom of the new law.

¹ *bibyzte*, E.

² So E; *troplogyke*, A.

þat bitokeneþ witt of vertues. Þe fourþ witt is anagogyke, þat bitokeneþ þing to hope in blisse. Poul seiþ here þe secound witt, and he hadde autorite þerto. *Þes two sones ben two testamentis* in figure, as God spekiþ ofte. Þe first sone is þe olde lawe; *þe first lawe was in þe hill of Synay, and gedride men into servage, and þis is Agar* in figure. *Synay is an hill in Arabye, þat is joyned to Jerusalem* here, and þe Chirche þat is here *serveþ* in þraldom, *wiþ hir children*; but þat Jerusalem þat is *above*, þat is þe Chirche þat haþ overcome, *she is free, and she is oure modir*, for Crist oure heed is þer wiþ hir.

which would
that men would
live by, and
refuse, in spite
of persecution,
to obey any
other!

Poul as a good doctour feyneþ no fable by mannys witt, but he seiþ þat it is writun in þe lawe of oure bileve. And wolde God þat þes prechours wolde do so in oure daies, til men cowden Goddis lawe, and lyveden aftir þis bileve. And sum men have myche confort in þis treuþe þat is þus writun; for þei witen it mai not be fals but mut nedis be fulfillid of God; and herfore þei ben pacient, and joyful in þer turmentyng. And þus seiþ Poul to þe Romainys, Al þingis þat ben writun, and algatis in Goddis lawe, þei ben writun to oure lore, and specialy for þes two endis, þat we kepe pacience, and be in confort of holy writ. And þis bileve, þat we trowun þat Goddis ordenaunce mut nedis stonde, and al oþir ordenaunce mut nedis be quenched at þe laste, confortiþ many Cristene men to stonde bi Goddis ordenaunce, for nedis þis ordenaunce mut be holy, and at þe last overcome al oþir. And he þat stondiþ for Goddis lawe þus in clene charite here, mai be exposid and pursued in worldli goodis and in his bodi, but he may not wante meede þat passiþ al þis harm and peyne. Siþ worldly good is but litil, and þis lyf is short and peyneful, it were a wyse change to man to suffre þus for þe betere. And þus he is traitour and coward, þat dar not telle Goddis riht for drede of losse of worldli goodis, or for losse of his bodi.

Christians are
the children of
promise, and
need not fear
the children of
the bond-
woman.

And for þis þraldom þat falliþ, boþe to men of þe olde lawe and to men þat shulen be dampned, *it is writun þus* in Ysay; *Be glade þou chirche of heþene men þat now art barayne* of goostly children, and bryngist but fewe children to hevene, for þe spouse of holy Chirche is not ȝit joyned to þee, bi þe grace þat Crist shal ȝyve whan he shal clepe heþene men. For tyme

shal come þat þis chirche þat is now bareyne of children of God, shal have moo goostli children þan þe *chirche* of Jewes *þat now haþ spouse*. And for joie of þis bileve *pou shuldirst brest out and crye*. And þus Poul aleggiþ to Romaynes many prophecies of þis. But Poul discendiþ to þis figure, and seip in þis tyme of grace, *We ben children of biheste, as Ysaac was, Abrahams sone*; and so we ben children of þe free modir, and shulde be tretid now as free. *But riȝt as þe sone of Abraham þat was first born, and fleishli, þursuede his goostli sone, þat was born spirituali, so it falliþ now-a-daies of men þat God haþ ordeyned to peyne, and men þat he haþ ordeyned to blisse, and men of þe olde lawe and þe newe. But what seiþ holy writt? Cast out þe hand-mayden and hir sone*. So we shulden caste out now cerymonies of þe olde lawe. For as þe child of þe hond-maiden was not eyr wiþ þe child of þe fre wyf, so kepyng of þes cerymonyes shulde not laste wiþ þe blisse of hevene. And in tyme of þis fredom þat is nyȝ to þat ful fredom, shulde not þe Chirche be bounden wiþ þat þraldom as it was first,—and specialy siþ it lettijþ to renne swiftly to blis of heven, as kyndely movyng is swift azens his ende, by helpe þerof^a. And so, breþeren, we shulden þenke þat *we ben not children of Agar, but children of þe free wife, by which fredom Crist haþ maad us free*.

For fredom¹ is myche coveytid, as men witen kyndely; but more shulde þis betere fredom be covetid of Cristen men. But it is knowun þat Anticrist haþ more þralid now þe Chirche þan it was in þe olde lawe, whan þei myȝten not bere þat service. And Anticrist makijþ now newe lawes, and groundijþ hem² not on God and man. For mo cerymonyes ben now brouȝt in þan weren in þe olde lawe, and more tarien men to come to hevene, þan diden in þe olde lawe tradiciouns þat weren founden of scribis and Pharisees. And o rote of þis þraldom is lordship þat Anticrist haþ; for he chalengiþ to be ful lord, boþe goostli

¹ So E; A has *Lord, siþ fredom*.

² So E; A has *bim*.

^a Especially since it—the thraldom of ceremonies—hinders the Christian from running swiftly to the bliss of heaven (in the same way as natural

motion proceeds swiftly towards its own end), by help of the freedom which is his right.

The Church enthralled now by Anticrist; encumbered by ceremonies, and over-governed.

and temporal; and so he tariēþ Cristene men to serve Crist in his fredom. So þat Cristene men may seye, as þe poete seiþ in proverbe,—þe frogge seide to þe harwe, cursid be so many lordis. Now Cristene men ben chullid, now wiþ popis, and now wiþ bishopis, now wiþ cardinalis of popis, now wiþ prelati under bishopis; and now þei clouten þer shone wiþ censuris, as who shulde chulle a foot-balle. But certis Baptist was not worþi to loose þe thwong of Cristis shoo; and more, Anticrist haþ no power to lette þe fredom þat Crist haþ brouȝt. Crist ȝaf þis fredom to men to come listli to blis of hevene, but Anticrist chullip men, to ȝelde hem to ȝyve hym moneye. And so þis servage is foule, boþe for þis lord and his lawes; for it is foule to bere dritt bi þe servise made to fend. But ever þes ypocritis dreden þat Goddis lawe shulde be shewid, and þei convict of falshede, for God and his lawe ben more strong. Þes ypocritis may for a tyme holde men in þe fendis þradom, and feynen þat þei ȝyven leve to synne, or gabbe on God, þat is worse, þat it is nedeful to obeishe þus.

ON PASSIOUN SONDAI PISTLE.

[SERMON XX.]

Christus assistens pontifex.—EBR. [HEBR.] ix. [11.]

POUL techip in þis epistle þe excellence þat Crist hadde over bishopis of þe olde lawe, al ȝif þei alle figuriden Crist; and þis was pertynent to speke to Jewis, þat knewen þe olde lawe. Poul bigynneþ and seiþ to hem þat, *Crist was bishop*, and nyȝe to God, siþ he was boþe God and man, and so was noon of þe olde lawe. And þus he passide in þre pointis bishopis of þe olde lawe. First *he was bishop of goodis of blis*, þe which goodis ben hopid to come. And þus seiþ Petre, þat Crist is bishop of soulis, for he is Lord of hem. Bishopis of þe olde lawe kilden beestis, and diden sum good in þat þat þei figuriden Crist, and his passioun þat bouȝt mankynde. Þe toþer excellence of Crist is, þat his tabernacle is betere þan weren al þes

Christ's pre-eminence over the priests of the old law,

1. as the treasurer of future bliss;

2. as ministering in a better tabernacle;

tabernaclis þat weren in þe olde lawe; for Cristis tabernacle is þe world; and Poul seiþ þat, *þis tabernacle is more large and more perfit þan was þe tabernacle of Moyses, for þis was not maad by man, but maad of nozt by God almyzty.* But Moises tabernacle was maad and born, to grete traveile of preestis. Þe þridde excellence of Crist is þat his sacrifice is beter, and made more perfitli þan sacrifice of olde bishopis. Bishopis of þe olde lawe sacrificeden kidis blood, or blood of geet¹, or of calvys. But Crist passide al þes figuris,—*for Crist bi his owun blood entrid oonys in to heven,* and þere he foond ever lastyng byging² þat noon oþer bishop myzt come to. And so he entride oonys for ever to hevene, þe ynner part of þis temple. But bishopis of þe olde lawe weren nedid to entre 3eer bi 3eer, and 3it þei entriden not in to hevene, but in to a litil holet þat was þe west part of þe tabernacle; and al3if þis figuride hevene, 3it mannis blis was not þereinne. But entring of Crist to heven, in to a place more holy and large, was in to þe same place where is blisse wiþouten ende. And þus, siþ Crist is God of hevene, and his manheed is so nyze God, oure bishop Crist in al þes þingis mut nedis passe al oþer bishopis. For as þis Lord may teche ferþer, so he is nerrer and graciouser, and but bi vertu of þis bishop myzte nevere bishop do good to man. And þus dignities and pryvelegies þat ben now grauntid bi þe pope, but 3if Crist conferme hem first, ben not worþ a flye foot. And so it semeþ to sum men þat bishopis of þe olde lawe weren betere and more worþi þan ben þes emperour bishopis; for þei serveden and figuriden Crist by auctorite of God, but þes emperoure bishopis now serven and figuren Anticrist. And þer auctorite is taken of þe moost fend azens Crist, and þus þei seien þat þe pope is heed viker of þis fend. But al þe fendis and al þe bishopis muten have þer beyng of Crist, and muten serven to him, ouþer wel or yvel, azen þer wille. For ouþer þei ben dampned in helle wiþ þe heirest³ Anticrist, or ellis þei ben blessid in hevene bi oure bishop Jesus Crist.

And aftirward proveþ Poul bi a principle of bileve þe sufficiency of Cristis byggyng, bi þat þat he is God and man. For

3. as offering a real, not a typical, victim.

The sufficiency of Christ's redemption.

¹ *gele*, E.

² *biggyng*, E.

³ *byest*, E.

3if Crist be verre¹ man, he is a part of al mankynde, and so þis grete man haþ maad aseþ bi Crist for þat þat he synnede in Adam. And þus seiþ Poul to his breþeren, þat *3if blood of boolis or kidis, and poudir of a calfe þat is scaterid, makij men holy þat weren foulid, as anentis fleishli clensyng,—how myche more Cristis blood, þat offride himsilf bi þe holy goost wipouten wemme to God þe fadir, shal clense out oure conscience fro dede werkes to serve lvyng God.* Þis resoun þat Poul makij is nyþe bileve þat men moten have. Þer ben þre clensynges, bodili and goostli, and oo clensyng of þes two, as was clensyng of þe olde lawe. For þis bodily clensyng of þes figures of þe olde lawe clensid not goostli but in figure, for oþer clensyng were betere bi water; and so it figured Cristis blood, and his herte þat was brent bi love. And þis halowyng þat last was figurid mut nedis be betir þan his figure, as fier is betir þan is smoke, and man is betir þan is his ymage. And so, siþ Crist is God and man, satisfaccioun for þis synne þat he made þus freli is better þan oþer þat man or angel myzt make. Þe same² in noumbre þat synnede by Adam oure first fadir, þe same man in noumbre made aseþ by þe secound Adam, Crist. And siþ he is more of vertue þan þe first Adam myzt be, and his peyne was myche more þan synful lust of þe first Adam, who shulde have conscience here þat ne þis synne is clensid al out? And siþ oure Jesus is verre God, þat nevere may forþete þis mede, he is sufficient medecine for al synners þat be contrite, for Crist is ever and everywhere, and in al siche soulis bi grace; and so he clensij more clenly þan ony bodi or figure mai clense. And herfore, as Poul seiþ, *Crist is mediator of þe newe lawe.* For Crist haþ of boþe þes two, for he is God, autour³ of þes boþe, and knyttij þe toon wip þe toþir; *þat bi his deþ falling bitwixe, in biggyng of þe first trespas⁴ þat weren done in þe olde lawe, þes men taken biheest azen, þat ben clepid, of ay-lastyng herytage.* And al þis marchandize was done in *Crist Jesus oure alþer Lord.* We taken here as bileve þat Jesus Crist þat chaffarid þus is eche God þat may be, and so þe same God þat made man, and after bouzt man to blis þat he ordeynede bifore to man.

¹ very, E.² þe same man, E.³ God and auctour, E.⁴ trespas, E.

But muse we not where al þes men and oonli þes shulden be savyd, þat God wole have maad here standing in innocens wiþ-
outen synne. It is ynowȝ to us to trowe þat as many of þe same
kynde shulde now comen to heven, as shulde have come if no
synne hadde be. And more medicine, wiþ more blis, falliþ now
to man bi occasioun of synne þan shulde have fallen to man
ȝif never synne were done of man. And þus it is beter to
mankynde, and to profit of þe world, þat man synned and þus
were bouȝt, þan ȝif man hadde nevere synned. And so men
taken as bileve þat al þing þat God haþ ordeyned mut nedis
come in his tyme, after þe forme þat God haþ shapun.

More salvation
has come
through man's
sin than if he
had never
sinned.

ON PALM SONDAI.

[S E R M O N X X I .]

Hoc sentite in vobis.—PHIL. ii. [5.]

POUL telliþ how þat men shulden sue Crist, and algatis in
mekenesse þat is ground of opir vertues. He biddiþ þat, ȝe
shulden fele þat in ȝou, þat is and was *in Jesus Crist*. Not oonly
þe kynde of mekenesse, but al þe flood by sum part, þe spryng
of þis mekenesse, and þe welle, was in Crist Jesus, and bi takyng
part þerof al Cristis children moten be meke. And so þis
shewiþ here more specialy þan kynde of mekenesse, for it
shewiþ alle mekenesse of men, wiþ ground þat was in Crist.
And so put þou away fals mekenes, as is in ypocritis, and con-
streyned mekenes, as is in þeves and prisoneris, and take þe
vertu of mekenesse þat haþ ground in Jesus Crist. And have
þou never so litil þerof, þou mayste fele¹ þat þat was in Jesus.
And it helpiþ myche to men to þenke how *Crist was in forme
of God*, for he is verre God in godhede. And þis godhede
is forme of godhede, for þat is a forme of þing of whom þat
þing haþ a name; as of manhede man is man, and of whiteness

The apostle
bids us take
pattern from
the meekness
of Christ.

¹ So in E; A om. the words *þou mayste fele*, though a much later hand has supplied them in the margin.

a þing is whit. And so, siþ godhede may not falle to a þing bifore in kynde, þis godhede mut nedis be God, and so o persone, þat haþ þis forme. And þus Poul seiþ in a manere, þat Jesus is verre God. And so, *Crist feynede not bi harbitracion of raveyn þat he was even wiþ God*, siþ he was þe sãme God. Þe first angel Lucifer feyned bi fals harbitracioun þat he was licke to God; and so done men þat synnen here, for þei ben inobedient as þei hadden no God above hem.

Who humbled himself by becoming incarnate.

But, for Crist myzte not bigge man oonly bi his godhede,—for he muste make him þat kynde þat synned in oure first fadir, so þat same þing make aseep which þing synned of man,—þefore seiþ Poul here þat, *Crist lesside himsilf*. For whan he made himsilf man, he made him a creature wiþoute, whiche creature is but vein to regard of þe godhede. And þus seiþ Poul¹, *þat he toke a special forme of seruaunt*; and þis forme was þis manheed, þat is oonli in Jesus Crist. And so þis godhed and þis manhede ben dyvers kyndis but o persone. For as þer is oo godhede þat is comoun to þre persones, so þer is o persone þat is comoun to þes two kyndis. And riht as o persone is dyvers from anoþer, alþif þei ben þis oo kynde, so þei two kyndis ben dyvers, but ech of hem is þis persone. And so men speken now of Crist bi þe toon kynde and now by þe toþer, and graunten of þis same persone dyvers formes bi þes two kyndis. But Poul grauntij not here þat þis persone avyntisshide² him, but he made him lasse, and comoun seruaunt, whan he made him þus man. Þus Crist is servant of servyng, but not servant of synnyng, ne servant of bondage, alþif his kyn was sich a servant foure hundrid þeer in Egipt, as Goddis lawe witnessij.

Many popes have falsely claimed an equality with Peter.

And here þenken many men, þat many popis after Petir presumen falsely of hemsilf þat þei ben even wiþ Petir. And alþatis þif þei feynen þat þei ben even wiþ Cristis manheed, Crist myzte not bi his manhede feyne þat he were even wiþ þe godhede. And so many popis feynen hem þat þei ben Cristis vikers in erþe, and siþ þei ben proud blasfemes, no man is ferþer fro þis state, for Crist myzte not be God and man but þif he hadde

¹ So in E; A includes the words *For—Poul* in the quotation.

² *aventschide*, E.

take þis mekenesse. How sueþ he Crist in vertues þat þus is a proud blasfeme?

And for to shewe þat Crist was no giloure, Poul seiþ þes two wordis of Crist, þat *he was maad into likenesse of men, and in abite founden as man.* Crist came into þis comoun liknes, for he was of þe same kynde þat is ech man his broþer, and þis liknesse is in substancial¹ kynde; and he is founden in abite as man, for he toke þis singular manhede. Habite is taken on many maners, as Austin declariþ wel; but here it is taken for þis mankynde þat Crist toke when he was man. And, for noo þing in þe worlde is founden but ȝif it have verre beyng, þefore þis habite of Crist is verre man as oþer ben. But for as myche as Crist was bifore þat he hadde þis habite, and in sixe and þritty houres he wantid þis bodili habite, Poul spekþ sutilly here, þat he was founden in habite as man. But men trowen here as bileve, þat Crist lefte nevere þis made spirit, and so he ceesside nevere to be man, alȝif he ceesside to be a bodi. Al þis saveriþ more to clerkis þan to comounte of men, and þefore men muten passe over þis, spekyng to þe comoun puple.

Crist mekide himsilf, made obedient to þe deþ, and not to ech peyneful deþ, but to deþ of þe cros, and þat is moost abhominable deþ, and moost peynful of al oþir. And herfore boþe God hyede him, and ȝaf him a name þat is over ech oþir maner name, þat in þe name of Jesus ech knee be foldid, of hevenly, of erþely, and of hellis; for ech wille of þes þree spiritis is obeishant to Crist; and so ech tunge mut nedis confesse, þat oure Lord Jesus Crist is in glorie of God þe fadir. For as he is þe same God, so he haþ þe same glory wiþ hym.

¹ So E; A has *substance al.*

The habit, or fashion, of Christ is His humanity.

The exaltation of Christ.



PISTLE ON EESTIR DAY.

[SERMON XXII.]

Expurgate vetus fermentum.—I COR. V. [7.]

The apostle,
under the
figure of lea-
ven, bids us
purge away
our old sins

POUL biddiþ in þis epistle þat men shulden clene forsake synne, and algatis in þe fest of Pask, whan þei have mynd of Cristis quykenyng. Poul bigynneþ, and biddiþ Cristen men, *þat þei clense out þe olde sour-dow.* Poul telliþ to þe witt of allegori, what þe wending of þe folk of Israel, whanne þei wenten out of Egipt, figuride to witt of vertues. And so þre mysty wittis ben tokened in þe same story. It is knowun to trewe men bi þe secound bok of Goddis lawe how children of Israel wenten out of Egipt, after ten miraclis þat God dide hem upon Pharao and Egiptians, þat maden þes children to serve to hem¹. Þei wenten out in greet hast, and flour and salt þei token wiþ hem, and maden þer breed wiþouten sour-dow; and þus þei eten þer Pask lombe. And þis maner þei kepten longe after, to have mynde of Goddis delyveryng. Poul seiþ to þis spiritual witt; clense 3e out þe olde sour-dow³. Sour-dow is undirstonden here old synne þat men ben defoulid wiþ. And sour-dow, whan it is old, rotiþ, and fouliþ oþer past²; and so undirstonde we bi Poul by þis sour-dow, old synne, þat men clensen out þis synne whan þei maken clene þer soulis, þat no synne leve in hem to foule men aftirward. Synne stondiþ in many þingis; in levyng of þing þat man shulde do; in wrong doing of þingis þat he shulde do to God; and shrewid custom in þes dwelliþ longe aftir his werk. Of þes þre shulde man clense him, as men clensen lond of weedes; þei plucken hem up bi þe rootis, þat þei growun not aftir in corn. Þus shulden men clense out synne bi lore and figure of Goddis lawe, and no disposicioun dwelle to drawe men to do synne.

And þerfore seiþ Poul aftir þat men shulden be in þer soule,

by true con-
trition.

¹ So in E; A reads, *and maden þes children serve him.*

² *paast*, E.

as þei weren newe spryng¹, as þei ben now þerfe². Contricion is tokened bi flour for propirte þat folewip³ it, and propirte of sorwe of herte, þat folewip man þat is contrite. Spreng⁴ of salt on þis flour is wisdom þat man haþ to serve God in clenness, fro þat he be delyverid of synne. Poul seiþ þat men shulden be newe spryngyng and not newe spreynd, for þei shulden be lastyng in clenness and of þer good liif; as spryng⁴ may not be but spryngyng, but spreynd þing may be unspreynd. Þe þridde word þat Poul seiþ 3yveþ cause of þe two bifore, and seiþ for certeyn, þat oure Pask, Crist, is now sacrificid. For riht as fadris maden þerfe brede for to ete þer Pask lomb, so men eeten þe sacrid oost to ete Crist goostli, þat is, have mynde of him, how kyndely he suffride for man. And sich a fructuose mynd of Crist is goostli mete to þe soule, and goostli eetyng of Cristis bodi, þat þe gospel of Joon spekiþ of.

And here þenken many by greet studye, þat al þes foure newe sectis, 3if þei wolen clense hem of synne, muten leve al þes custumes þat þei have weddid biside Cristis lawe, for alle þes customes ben disposingis to synne⁵ aþens Cristis wille. And as we have seid bifore, of alle þes shulde a man purge him. Man shulde be freishe in þat fredoom þat Crist hadde ordeyned for his Chirche, and not turne to more þraldome þan Jacobis sones hadden in Egipte. 3if þou love kyndenes of Crist, and ordenaunce þat he haþ 3ovun, þou shuldist holde þat ordenaunce, and leve sour ordenaunce of men. For we seen⁶ þat clerkis loven 3ong men þat holden þer weies; how shulde not Crist love trewe men þat holden his weye? But alle þes newe sectis brouht in have newe opynyouns biside Crist, and no drede þei ben contrarie to Cristis wey þat he tauht, for he þat is not wip Crist mut nedis be aþens him. And þis crokyng bi litil and litil is now copen ferre fro Cristis lawe, so þat men may knowe it openly; and þis is cause of myche malice.

Man may se by þre synnes how þes ordres failen in oþere. Þe first synne of þe fend is pryde, and herto helpen þes newe sectis, as men may se in hem al, by ypocrisie and bost, and þus

The four new sects must abandon their customs if they would be delivered from their old sins,

which are mainly three, — pride, covetousness, and sensuality ;

¹ spryngyng, E.

² þerf, E.

³ sueþ, E.

⁴ spryngyng, E.

⁵ So E; A has synge.

⁶ So E; sene, A.

moven þes newe statis to boþe þes two prides. For þei þenken bi þes ritis þat þei ben holier þan oþere, and holier þan þei shulden be to leve hem, as diden apostlis; and certis ellis þei ben foolis to traveile so myche aboute hem. Þe secounde synne of þe worlde is synne of covetise of men. But wheþer þat þes newe ordris bryngen not in þis covetise? Traveil of monkes and chanouns, and of foure ordris of freris, techiþ pleynty þer covetise þat þei han to strengþe þer ordris. Þe fend argueþ þus to hem. Þis is a faire multitude, þat serveþ God wele in þis ordre; and þus it were a greet almes to gete hem goodis to mayntene hem, and to kepe hem in faire state, and make hem strong to þus serve God. Also þe fend moveþ bi þer housis, and by oþer goodis þat þei have, to stire hem to covetise aȝens þe ordenaunce of Crist. As if þe fend argued þus; O! þis were a faire chirche, a faire house and an honest to men to serve God inne; who shulde not traveile herfore? But certis bileve techiþ us þat boþe Crist and his apostlis weren not moved bi þese sophymes þat þe fend now haþ brouȝt in; but bileve techiþ us þat we have not here a dwellinge citee, but þe citee þat is above we seken, bi ordre of Crist. And so, what þat moveþ men to seke blisse, and leve þis world, þat is a resoun of Crist, þat it falliþ to his ordre; and so hard fare and poverte here was covetid of Crist and his apostlis. And ȝit þe fend disseyveþ þes ordres bi fleishly synnes many maners. He stireþ hem togider, hepis of men of dyvers complexiouns, and oon of hem moveþ anoþer to ete and drynke more þan is good; and, for þe fend may move a man to þe foule synne of Sodome, he may bryng in bi litil and litil þe synne of Sodom among þes hepis. And sich knyttyng of enemyes gendriþ boþe envie and ire. So¹ þat many, ȝif þei myȝten avente hem, and do freely þat Crist biddiþ, and flee occasioun of synne, as diden apostlis and oþer men þat weren out of þes religiouse, shulden synne lesse and profiten more. And þis is cause, as sum men trowen, whi Crist and hise foundun not þes ordres.

Poul seiþ in þis epistle, *On þis maner ete we not in oure old synne, ne in synne of malis and wickidnesse, but in spiritual swetnesse of clenness and of treuþe.* Þis swetnesse shulde be groundid

¹ So in E; *And so, A.*

so that it is hard for them to eat the unleavened bread of sincerity and truth.

in vertuous lyf þat Crist tauȝte; for in al oure ordenaunce, is sum sournesse of synne. And þus al þes new ordres, þat croken fro ordenaunce of Crist, ȝyven occasioun to synne, ouþer pryvy or apert. And riȝt as a tre þat is first crokid, and hardiþ bi long tyme in his crokidnesse, so þes foure ordres bi long tyme ben hardid more in þer malis. And þus God ȝyve grace to hem to knowe þe fredom of Goddis lawe, and turne freishli to Cristis ordre, for þanne weren many synnes quenchild.

DE FIRST SONDAI AFTIR EESTIR.

[SERMON XXIII.]

Omne quod natum est ex deo.—1 JOHN v. [4.]

JOON stireþ here Cristene men to flee synne þat comeþ of þe world, and þis synne is ful comoun in al þree partis of þe Chirche. First, Cristene men shulden wite þat alle men þat shulen have blisse of hevene ben goostli born of God, and maad men of his ordre, siþ þat Crist mut be þer fadir, and holy Chirche be þer modir. And þis condicioun settiþ Joon þat mut nedis be fulfillid. *Ech þing þat is born of God overcomeþ þe world*, in al his tyme. For ȝif he be overcomen of þe world, for a litil tyme þat he synneþ, neþeles he mut cover¹ and overcome þe world at þe last. For ellis he was nevere born of Crist, ne sueþ his fadir in þis fiȝt, and Crist wole have no siche children, but þat ben kynde and suen him. And þerfore Joon telliþ a mene to men to overcome þe world. *And þis, he seiþ, is þe victorie þat overcomeþ þe world, our bileve.* So þat noon overcomeþ þe world, ne þe fend, ne his fleish, but ȝif bileve be þat armour by which he overcomeþ þus. And herfore declariþ Poul to Ebreus, þat seintis overcamen rewmes bi bileve þat þei hadden, and maden many oþer victories. And shortli, þer is no man overcomen of his goostli enemy, but ȝif he be out of bileve ouþer in oo maner or in oþer. And þus bi sum maner of

The world is overcome by faith.

¹ *cover*, E.

speche bileve is boþe sheld of man, and swerd bi which man fȓtȓþ, and victory þat he makȓþ. And Joon axȓþ bi ensauple, *Who is he, breþeren, þat overcomeþ þe world, but þat man þat bileveþ þat Jesus is Goddis sone?* ȓif þou have ful bileve of Crist, how he lyvede here in erþe, and how he overcame þe world, þou overcomest it as a kynde sone. For ȓif þou take hede how Crist dispiside it, and sue him here as þou shuldȓst, þou most nede¹ overcome it bi bileve of þi fadir.

which is wanting in many men, and especially in the new orders.

And here mai men wite opynli, þat many men ben in þis world þat ben not born of God, ne bileven here in Crist. For ȓif þis bileve were in hem, þei shulden sue Crist in maner of lyf; but þei ben out of bileve, as many men of þe day of dome. What man shulde bileve fullȓ þat þe day of dome is anoon, and þat God jugȓþ men aftir þei have fouȓten in his cause, þat ne he wolde bisili enforse him to sue Crist, for mede þerfore? Oþer bileve of þes men slepiþ, or hem wantȓ riȓt bileve; as men þat loven þis world, and resten in lustis þerof, lyven as ȓif God saw not þis, and shulde not juge for þis dede. Þus oure bileve of Cristis lyf is nedeful to alle Cristen men; and herfore men shulden knowe þe gospel, for it tellȓ þe bileve of Crist. And þus it semeþ þat newe ordȓis overcomen not þis worlde bi bileve þat þei have in Crist, for Crist lyvede not as þei lyven now. Crist purchaside not to his apostlis rentis, ne housis, ne worldli goodis, but tauȓt hem boþe in comoun and privy, to flee siche havyngis of þe worlde. And þus þe falshede of þe fend disseveþ men of siche ordȓis, þat þei have þe world in comoun, but noon of hem to himsilf. Whanne þei have þus þe world in comoun, ech of hem assentiþ þerto, and þei ben algatis more strong to lette men þat don þer-aȓen, oþir in word or in dede; and þus þe fendis champioun is strengere. Siche sophymes serven not bifore Crist þe laste juge. And þus þes sophistȓis, þat gabben þat þei have not neiþer in propre ne in comoun, and ȓit men seen þat þei have boþe placis, and housis, and oþir goodis, myche more plentiously þan oþer pore men þat þei robben,—þes false men muten nedis be dampned of Crist, þat is þe first treuþe. For þei diversen not fro þeves, but þat þei

¹ *moste nedis*, E.

robben more sinfulli, to þis grete man of hem þat is more strong in his malice.

Þis is he þat came bi water and bi blood, Jesus Crist. He cam not to þe blis of heven bi ypocrisie ne falsheed, but bi tribulacioun and bi sheding of his blood. And þus he was also made Jesus, þat is, savyour of þis world; and he was also made Crist, to anointe men bi welle of his grace, bi vertue of his passioun, and not bi worldli lyf here. For he was heed of martirs, and suffride best moost peyne. On þis shulden his sones þenke, and sue þer fadir in þis maner. For 3if þei suen a newe fadir, and leven þe maner þat Crist tauzt, þei leven Crist and suen Anticrist, as false men done þat shulen be dampned. *And þus Crist cam not oonli in water, but in water and in blood.* For he suffride not oonli tribulacioun, as many men done, but tribulacion and passioun, bi moost fervoure of charite. And bi þis cause seiþ Poul, þat God hied Crist, and 3af him a name þat is over al opir names, and moost of worship in þis worlde. And witnes of þis sentence is sufficient, boþe in hevене and in erþe.

Þe holy goost is he þat witnessiþ, in hey heven, þat Crist is treupe. For þer ben þre þat 3yven witnesse in heven, þe fadir, þe word, and þe holi goost; and þes þre ben al oon. *And þer ben þree þat 3yven witnes in erþe, þe soule, watir, and blood;* and þes þre ben al oon, for þei maken Cristis manheed. And so, as þis special substance þat is godheed of Crist is þree persones and oo God, so þis comoun substaunce is o persone of Crist. And þus whan Crist cried on hye¹ and þus sente out þis mannis spirit, and aftir he shed watir and blood fro þe tyme þat he was deed, þes þree þingis bitokeneþ² wel þat Crist was verre³ man and God. And in tyme þat Crist was baptisid, þe Fadir witnesside in vois, þe Sone was shewid in manheed, and þe Holy Goost in a dowfe; and þes þre ben sufficient witnesse to teche oure bileve of Crist. *For 3if we taken witnesse of men, to prove treupe in cause of men, witnes of God, þat is þree persones, is more to prove þis bileve; and þis is more witnesse of God þat he witnesside þus of his sone.* And so siþ God is everywhere, *whoso trowiþ in Goddis sone, he haþ witnesse of God in him, siþ he haþ þe Trinite.*

Christ came by water and blood, that is, by tribulation and passion.

The heavenly and the earthly witnesses.

¹ So E; *an bey*, A.

² *tokenen*, E.

³ *very*, E.

PE SECUNDE SONDAI PISTLE AFTIR EESTIR.

[SERMON XXIV.]

Christus passus semel est pro nobis.—I PET. ii. [21.]St. Peter on
the passion of
Christ.

PETRE telliþ in þis epistle of þe passioun of Crist, how myche it was in himsilf, and ʒouun to ensauple of Cristene men. Crist, he seiþ, *haþ suffrid for us, levyng ensauple to ʒou þat ʒe folewe þe steppis of him.* And so his passioun doiþ good to men þat weren, and men þat ben, and to men þat shulen come aftir. But men moten dispose hem to take profit of his passioun, as men þat weren bifore þis passioun token þis profit bi þer bileve, and men þat weren wiþ þis passioun, as weren Petre and oþire apostlis, addiden to feiþ love and sorowe. And þes men meneþ Petre here whan he seiþ, Crist suffride for us. Þe þridde men þat camen aftir, ben þo þat trowun þat Crist suffride, and adden love to þis bileve, and suen for Cristis sake his steppis. It is ofte seid in Goddis lawe þat ʒif a man wole come to hevene, he mut nedis sue Crist in feiþ, hope, and charite. And þerfore haþ God ordeyned to men, þat noon mai be excusid here; for ech man mai suffre for God, as ech man mai trowe and love. What man is so feble of power þat he ne mut nedis suffre deþ? And so þis suffryng shulde be sette in charite for Goddis sake. And ech man haþ a spirit, wiþ wille and undirstonding þerinne; and so God ʒyveþ ech man power to come to blis of heven; for God chargiþ nevere man to do more þan he mai do. For þis large Lord axiþ of man to be served of his owen; but pride lettith man to suffre, and moveþ him to figt and stryve; and þerfore suffriþ¹ Crist contrariouesly to þis doying. For man doiþ as Adam dide by pride and inobedience; but Crist suffriþ bi mekenesse and obedience to God. And here mai men see now how þe fadir of pride moveþ hem to leve þis meke pacience, and to sue Crist in þis point;

¹ *suffride*, E.

but he moveþ to do proudly aʒens Goddis wille, as Adam dide. And þus it is now to drede þat men þat suen not here Cristis steppis, maken þat Crist suffride not for hem. For þei taken not of Cristis merit, siþ a man mut dispose himsilf to have wilfulli part þerof. But no man mai suffre even wiþ Crist, and þefore biddiþ Petre sue his steppis.

þe gretnesse of Cristis suffryng is tauzt bi Petre on þis maner. *Crist, he seiþ, dide no synne, ne gile was foundun in his mouþ.* And so his suffryng was more medeful, siþ he suffride not for his owne synne; as þevys whan þat þei ben hongid, or opir traitours whan þat þei ben killid, suffren not so medefulli as men þat serveden not þis deþ. Crist was wiþouten synne, and so not gilty to suffre peyne, but of his grace and his wille to bigge men þat weren coupable. Petre declarip more þis suffryng, bi þat þat Crist was so meke, *þat whan he was cursid of þe Jewis, he curside not aʒen,* but suffride mekeli þer yvel wordis. *And Crist whan he suffride in dede, he manasside not aʒen,* but suffride mekeli his passioun; and bi þis cause myche more þat he myzt, ʒif he hadde wolde, have take greet veniaunce of hem.

Petir telliþ aftir of þe wilful peyne þat Crist suffride for mankynde, by þat þat, *Crist offride himsilf to Pilat, þat jugide him unriʒtfulli.* For Mathew telliþ how Crist bifore told al his passioun, and how he cam to Jerusalem to suffre fulli as he suffride. And so his suffrynge was medeful, for it was so myche wilful; for no man hadde more desire to die þus þan Crist hadde; ne Adam hadde no more desire to synne, þan Crist hadde to suffre. And þus he spekiþ in þe gospel, bi his godhede and his manhede, Bi desire have Y desirid to ete þus þis Paske wiþ ʒou. For etyng of þe Paske lombe, and sleying þat was bifore of it, was figure to þis lombe of God; and þus it came of greet desire, and Adam myzt not wille to synne bi so gret desire of lust. And Petre telliþ more of þis passioun, þat *Crist ʒaf himsilf to þe man þat jugide him unjustli; þe which Crist, for we myzte not, bare oure synnes in his bodi, and he bare hem upon þe tree,* as Adam synnede in a tree; *so þat we be deed fro synne, and lyve after to riʒtwisnesse.* Petir spekiþ here bi comoun speche, þat þat man beriþ a þing þat beriþ þe

Whose suffering was more fruitful because of His sinlessness,

and was foreseen and voluntarily borne;

fruyt of þe þing; as a man in beryng money berip þe þing þat is bouzt þerwip. So Crist bare oure synne on þe cros, for his passioun was prys þerof. And þus, as Crist was deed on þe cros, so shulde we be deed fro synne, þe whiche sprong of þe tree þat Adam synnede first inne. And deep of Crist in þis tree shulde teche us to die þus; but we shulden lyve spiritualy to rihtwisnesse, þat is God. As Crist roos bi goostli miracle, and wente to þe same rihtwisnes, and *bi love þat Crist hadde here, we ben helid* of oure synne.

And, for Crist is þe beste heerde, þat þus can quyken and heele his sheep, þerfore seiþ Petre aftir, *þat mankynde was sum tyme as erryng sheep wipouten heerde, but þei ben turned now bi love to þe herde and bishop of þer soulis*. Crist for his excellence tellip but litil bi mannis bodi; but for to fede mannis soule, and have goostli care þerof, þat fallip to þis bishop. But bishopis now done even þe contrarie, for þei tenten neiþer to bodi ne to soule, but to drit þat man haþ. For 3if þei have money and oþer goodis, þei recken but litil of þes two.

ÞE ÞRIDDE SONDAI PISTLE AFTIR EESTIR.

[SERMON XXV.]

Obsecro vos tanquam.—I PET. ii. [I I.]

PETRE specifeþ here mekenes, þat men shulde have bi ensaumple of Crist, and how þei shulden be suget and obedient to alle men. *Petre preieþ to Cristen men to kepe hem first fro fleishli lustis, as gestis and pilgrimes*; for þes synnes fiȝten azens þe soule. Fleishli desires moven men to fiȝt and stryve wip þer breþeren, for men desiren not þus money but to maynteyne þer bodi in lust; for if þei loveden more þer soule, þei shulden more travaile þerfore. And here mai men see þat men, and algatis grete prelati and lordis, failen foule in charite, and first in love of hem silfe. For siþ þat charite bygynneþ at þe love of mannis spirit, man shulde love first his spirit, more þan goodis þat ben wipouten. And þes goodis done myche harm,

to Him man-kind resort as to their true shepherd.

Christians are to keep themselves from fleshly lusts,

and litil good to men þat have hem. Lord, what shulde reverse mannis love, to love hem þus more þan his soule! Þe bisynes þat man haþ, and traveil to gete him siche goodis, techen þe gretnesse of his love overe þe love of his soule. For necligence þat man haþ to gete him siche food of his soule, and to do vertuous dedis bi which his soule shulde be nurishid, techiþ how man recchiþ to litil of himsilfe, for he forzetip his soule. And neþeles Petre seiþ here, þat we ben gestis and pilgrimes to þis worldly lyf here, for we shulden be traveilinge to heven. And þus to make oure restyng here, in goodis þat ben so litil worþ, is an open foli to us, and lettip us of þis pilgrimage. And it is knowun of bileve, þat temporal goodis þat we have done noo good but a litil while þat we wandren in þis pilgrimage. And þus men reversen God as disciplis of Anticrist, for goodis þat he ʒaf for an eende þei disusen to þe contrarye. He lente þes goodis to spede þer wey to go to þe blisse of hevne; and foule love of þes goodis lettip hem to go þis weye; and þis fallip in religieuse and in oþir men of þe worlde.

And astir þis biddip Petre, *þat men lyve a good lyf among men þat þei lyven wiþ*, and ʒyve good ensauple to hem, as Crist ʒaf to his Chirche. *And so, in þat þat þei speken yvel bihynde ʒou, as who spekip of yvel doeris*, þei have no mater to speke þus but good werkes to gnawe upon, and þus shulen þei glorifie God in day of þe last dome, and have sorewe þat þei diden þus, and preise God in his servauntis. And þus, whan men þenken on Crist, and of short tyme þat þei have here, *þei shulden be suget to al maner of men*, not for money but for God. And þus ech man mai be suget to oþer, siþ he is two kyndis; ʒhe, man is suget to himsilf, siþ his bodi serveþ to his spirit. But prelati clepen now no subjeccioun, but in ʒyvynge of worldly goodis; but men þenken not to speke here to siche rude and worldly prelati.

But ʒit men shulden kepe manere in þer¹ subieccioun, after mannis staat. *As, men shulen be suget to kyng, as passyng bifore oþer men*, for þus biddip Petre by dede of Crist; and so þei wolden þat lordis weren. *And men shulden be suget to dukes,*

and to edify others by their example,

and yield due submission to temporal rulers.

¹ So E; om. A.

Popes should
be subject to
kings.

as to men sent fro þe kyng, to veniaunce of yvel doeris and to preisynge of good men. For þis shulde kyngis and þer mynystris do here for Cristis love, for þe heynes of þer staat was ʒovun of God for þis eende. And þus shulden popis be suget to kyngis, for þus weren boþe Crist and Petre. *For þis is þe wille of God, þat men do wel in subjeccion, and make domb þe foli of men þat ben foolis in Goddis lawe.* And þis þing men shulden do freely, and not bi constreynynge of mannis lawe; but as þei hadden not *an hilyng of fredom of malis* of þis world, for siche fredom is litil worþ, but fredom fro synne to serve God. And þis kepyng of siche werkes wole make men *free servauntis of God.* Do ʒe honoure to alle men, and specialy to mannis spirit. *And drede ʒe God in his¹ prynte,* and do ʒe alle ʒoure werkes for God; *and love þe breþerheed,* bi þe fourme þat Crist haþ tauʒt. And þus, siþ kyng is Goddis viker, *drede ʒe God in þis viker, and do ʒe worshiþe to þe kyng,* for love of God whos viker he is.

and servants to
their masters,
even when op-
pressive.

Servauntis, be ʒe sugette in al drede, boþe goostli drede and bodili, to lordis þat ʒe have here. For as Poul techiþ, servauntis shulden serve to þes lordis as to God; and so, bi service goostli and bodili, shulden þei serve, *not oonly to good lordis and resonable to þer servauntis, but also unto tirauntis,* þat distrien Cristis scole, as diden boþe Heroud and Pilat; *for certeyne þis is grace in Jesus Crist þat is oure Lord.* For Crist was suget to þes tirantis, as God obeishiþ to mannis vois. Þis subjeccioun is no synne, alȝif tirantis synnen in takinge it. For as suffring is sum tyme good, and doynge yvel bringiþ it in, so subjeccioun sum tyme is good, and men ben yvel in takynge of it. And þus, ʒif men þenken sutilli, kyngis and lordis shulden serve to men, alȝif þei ben þer boonde men. For þer bodies shulden serve þer spiritis, and siþ bodies ben worse in kynde þan ony spirit þat man haþ, and al þe personalite of man stondiþ in þe spirit of him, whi shulden not men graunte þes wordis, þat ech man shulde serve to ech man? And wolde God þat þe pope knewe þis, and opir emperour² prelati! þanne shulden þei be ensample of mekenesse, as was Crist oure alþer Lord.

¹ þis, E.

² emperours, G.

DE FORÞE SONDAI PISTLE AFTIR EESTIR.

[SERMON XXVI.]

Omne datum optimum.—JAC. i. [17.]

JAMES 3yveþ here a lore of Cristene mennis religion, and 3yveþ as a wise man a greet principle to þis lore. *Ech þing 3ovun best*, seiþ James, *and ech 3ifte þat is þerfit, is fro above, comyng down* fro God, þat is *fadir of lizt*. Þer ben þree þingis 3ovun to man; as worldli goodis, and goodis of kynde; þe þridde þing is goodis of grace, þat ben best of al þes þree. And þus seiþ James wittily, þat al best þing þat is 3ovun is fro above, comyng fro God, as ben vertues and grace. And so it is of al oþer which ben þerfit 3iftis. And here þenken many men, þat 3yvyngis of popis ben no 3iftis¹. Þei seien þei graunten privylegis and indulgencis, wiþ oþer feynnynges; but siþ þei smatchen wynnyng of moneye, and þat is hevvy and drawiþ down, and þei sonnen not to charite and oþer resoun þat is in God, it semeþ þat þes ben falsly feyned of þe prince of derknesse, and þus þei spryngen fro bineþe, fro þe fadir of lesyngis. And þus it semeþ to many men, þat þes foure sectis þat ofte be spoken, siþ Goddis lawe groundiþ hem not, ben not þus fro above, but fro bineþe of þe fend². And þus men may knowe wele Cristis religioun fro þes³ newe. For Cristis religioun desirer hevenly þing, and helpe of soule, but þes religiouse stondiþ⁴ moost in pryde, falshede, and coveitise. Þe fadir of lizt is unmovable fro treuþe and goodnes of alle maners, but fadir of derknesse chaungiþ ofte, after þat he hopiþ more to noie men.

And þus seiþ James, *þat at God is not transmutacioun⁵, ne shadewyng of whilnesse⁶*, ffor he is ever more in oon. Þe fend varieþ in synful willis, and castiþ his shadewis bi many weies,

¹ So in E; A reads, *3yvyng of popis ben no þerfit*.
fend, E.

³ þis, E.

⁴ stonden, E.

² byneþe fro þe
⁵ transmutacoun, G.

⁶ wbylnesse, G; wilynesse, I; wbylenesse, E.

Every good
gift is from
above;

the gifts of
popes are bad
gifts.

and are from
below.

and chaungip his wille bi many wilis, but non of þes is in God. But, for good religioun mut be groundid in good persones, þefore tellip James after how þes persones weren brouzt forþ. He seiþ þat, *God gendriþ us wilfulli*, and bi his grace, *wiþ his owne word of treuþe*, boþe makyng us and biggyng us. And þes goodis of mannis kynde moten nedis come of God fro above. And þus God gendride his apostlis *to be bigynnyng of his chirche*. For his Chirche is a womman, a virgyn, and Cristis spouse, and a passinge creature among al þo þat God haþ maad. *þe witen, my moost dere breþeren*, how Crist haþ loved mankynde, and how he lyvede in þis lyf, by cause þat þe shulden lyve so. And herfore, be *ech man swifte for to heere Goddis lawe, but he shal be slowe to speke*, but þat þat he knowip is Goddis word. *And þus he shal be slowe to ire, for mannis ire doiþ not riȝt of God*, but worchip¹ in þe fendis werkes. Wil² of God is bigynnyng of al þe good werkes of man; and ȝif he passe beside þis wille, he doiþ þe wille of þe fend.

If God gave the new orders to the Church, he gave them in his wrath.

And herfore castip³ ȝe away al unclennesse and haboundance of malice, and take ȝe in mekenes þe word of God printed in ȝou, þe which word may save ȝoure soulis. And þus dilavynesse⁴ of tunge in spekinge wordis oþer þan Goddis is passyng fro good religioun þat God haþ ȝovun bi himsilf; and þus þes newe ordris ech on, which ben so lef⁵ to lye, muten nedis be groundid in þe fend, þe which is fadir of lesingis. For ȝif God hadde þouzt on hem to make hem partis of his Chirche, he wolde swiftele have brouzt hem forþ bi Crist swifterest⁶ of alle þingis. But ȝif God ȝaf þes sectis, he ȝaf hem alle in his woodnesse; as Goddis lawe seiþ þat he ȝaf Saul þe kyng in his woodnes; þus he ȝaf þes foure sectis for to turmente his Chirche, for it failide bifore in sleuþe, to do þe office þat God bade. And sum men hopen þat bi þis cause al þes sectis ben so wraþful whan men speken ouzt azens hem, for þei dreden of þer ground.

¹ *worschip*, E. ² *wille*, E. ³ *caste*, E. ⁴ *delavynesse*, E.
⁵ *leeff*, E. ⁶ *swiftest*, E.

FYFȚE SONDAI AFTIR EESTIR.

[SERMON XXVII.]

Estote factores verbi.—JAMES i. [22.]

JAMES techiþ in þis epistle how þe religioun of Crist shulde be clene kept of men, wiþouten ordre of mannis fynding; and he bigynneþ on þis maner. *Be ȝe doeris of Goddis word, and not oonli herers, for þanne ȝe disseyve ȝou silf,* by medlyng of mannis ordre. For alle þes foure newe ordres moten be lernynge of al þer liif, of þe reule þat þei have founden, biside þe reule þat Crist ȝaf; and bi þer reulis þei ben tied, as a bole bi a staake, to dwelle at hoom in cloistre, or to love yvel þer owen ordre. Aȝens þis spekiþ James here, wiþ opir auctours of holy writt. And Poul seiþ to Tymothe of þes vein newe ordris, þat þei ben evermore lernynge, and nevere comynge to fruyte þerof. It is knowun bi Goddis lawe þat heering of Goddis word is shapen of God for þis ende, to teche it and do it in dede. So, ȝif a man hadde ful knowyng of þis word, as Crist hadde, it were but foly and vein to heere and lerne more of þis word; as, ȝif a lond wolde here good corn wiþouten tilyng and dongynge þerof, it were but ydil to traveile þerfore whan it encresiþ not þe fruyt. And herfore seiþ James here, þat þes men disseyven hem silf, as done many traveilers in scole.

For if a man be heerer of Goddis word and not doer, his man shal be licned¹ to man þat biholdiþ þe face of his ȝongþe in a myroure. And no drede þes wordis of James ben sutil and ful of witt. And bi teching of God speken sum men þus of þes wordis, as tellen men of perspectif. Þer ben þree maner of bodili siȝt; þe first siȝt is even siȝt, as man seeþ þing þat is bifore him; þe secounde siȝt is reflectid whan it is turned aȝen bi myroure; þe þridde siȝt is reflexid whan it comeþ bi dyvers meenes, and þei ben on divers kyndis, as þe moone is seen aȝens

We are to be doers of the word, and not,—like the new orders,—hearers only.

What is meant by a man's 'beholding his natural face in a glass.'

¹ lickenyd, E.

nizt. And þus men seen a peny in a dishe by helding in of water, and ellis not; and bi þis sizt may men see ful litil þing bi ferre space. Þe first of þes þree siztis is moost clere, and moost certeyn. We shulen wite over þis, for James wordis, þat þis man þat ever lerneþ, and doiþ not in dede Goddis word, stondiþ ever more in þe meene, and never comeþ to þe fruyt þerof. And þus he fariþ as a man þat myzt wel betir se a þing wiþouten mirour þan wiþ meroure, and zit he takiþ in vein a merour; and þus he falliþ in many errours of place and quantite of þat þing. And þus þes men þat evere lernen, and leven to do aftir þis lore, ben as lokers in a merour of visage þat þei hadden in zongþe. For þis lore of Goddis word shulde be a newe lore and unperfit sizt, for þe ende in dede shulde come after, þat shulde be even as þe first sizt. And þus þis man þat lokiþ him þus þouzte on his soule for a tyme, but wente forþ bi curiouste, and forzate soone to worche þerfore. Þus done men þat stonden in science, and worche not after bi þis science. And þes ben men of veyn religioun, as James techiþ opynli. For wirche we here in good liif, as ende of lore of Goddis word, and þan we shulen se in heven myche betir us silf and al oþir þingis on þe þridde maner of sizt, wiþ curiouste þat liþ þerinne. For we shulen se in Goddis word al þe þingis þat God haþ maad, in a more clere kynde þan is þe kynde þat þei have wiþouten. And clerkis clepen þis, intuicioun and¹ clere sizt in God and blisse. And þis þing þat we seen þere is in substance God himsilf, and in a maner þe same þing þat God haþ maad wiþoute-forþ. And þus seiþ Joon in his gospel, þat þing þat is maad of God was lyf in him wiþouten ende, for it was Goddis kynde.

And þus seiþ James of Cristis religioun, *þat he þat lokiþ in Goddis lawe, þat is lawe of perfit fredom, and dwelliþ perfitli in þis lawe* bi al his lyf, wiþouten medlyng of mannis lawe, þat is derke, *and is not made forzifful heerer, but maker of þe dede þat he haþ herd, þis man shal be blessid in his dede.* And þis is þe best fruyte þat mai folowe mannis lyf here. God þouzte not oonli on þingis, but made hem wiþouten in þer kynde; and so he wole not þat men cunne oonli, but þat men done in dede

To look into God's law of liberty, and do good works, is what brings a blessing to man.

¹ So E; in, A.

þrafter. And þus þe þridde gospel, of Joon, myzt be toold on 3ool day^{1 a}. And of þis declarþ James, *þat certis, 3if ony man gesse þat he is a religiouse man, and 3it refreyneþ not his tunge, but disseveþ his hert, his is a vein religioun.* On many maners oure religiouse disseveþ² hem-silf in vanite. First þei refreyneþ³ not þer mouþ in prayeris, but forzitten to wirche, as 3if prayeris weren þe best þing bi which men serven and plesen to God. On þe toþer maner, religiouse ben vein whan þei lernen þer owen reulis, and leven þe reule þat God 3af, and occupien hem in þis lore, to sey and synge wiþouten book, as 3if þis plesid moost to God. On þe þridde maner þes ordris ben veyne, þat prechen japis to begge beter, and to susteyne hem cloistris and housis and oþir goodis þat þei coveiten. And certis þes lumpis failen here, as mowen gras þat were unteddid, for þat gras mut nedis rote, and fade in colour and swetnesse.

The religion of the new orders a vain religion,

But James telliþ, *þat clene religioun, and religioun wiþouten wemm anentis God þe fadir of al, is religioun þat lyveþ þus; it visitiþ modirles children and wydewis in þer tribulacioun, and kepþ it wiþouten wemm fro coveitise of þis world.* Lord, siþ James and oþer apostlis knewe not þes newe ordris, and þes cloistrers wiþ newe housis, and oþer ritis þat þei have foundun, what shulde move to love hem þus, and leve religion þat God haþ 3ovun? It is a blasfeme unbileve, however þat men speken here. Þe apostlis weren tauzt of þe Holy Goost for to wandre in þe world, and teche men boþe bi word and dede; for lore is best to men, and not to gedere in wete lumpes, as done oure newe ordres now. We shulden þenke as diden apostlis, how men ben now wiþouten helpe of þer modir holy Chirche. For prelatis and preestis ben turned amys fro þe ordre þat Crist 3af; and siþ men ben þus wiþouten helpe of oure modir holy Chirche, þei shulden visite more bisili bi þe fourme þat Crist haþ 3ovun. And for þis foly of novelrye God mut nedis forsaken men; and so þis Chirche is a widowe, forsaken of her spouse for her unkyndnes. To conforte men in þis tribulacioun were a greet almesdede.

unlike the pure religion described by the apostle.

¹ *Cristenmasse day, E.*

² *disseyven, E.*

³ *refreynen, E.*

^a The gospel for the third mass first chapter of St. John's gospel, on Christmas day is taken from the vv. 1—14.

SONDAI PISTLE AFTIR ASSENCIOUN.

[SERMON XXVIII.]

Estote prudentes.—I PET. iv. [7.]

PETRE 3yveþ here anoþer forme to lerne þe lore of Cristis religioun, but it is not contrarye to James, siþ God reversiþ never himsilf. *Moost dere breþren*, seiþ Petre, *be 3e ware, and wake 3e in praiseris*. Petre puttþ bifore prudence, and after stireþ men to preieris. For many religiouse may be blyndid in þer maner of preiynge, as sum men tellen more bi newe preier, þat þe pope¹ or oþere men haþ maad, þan þei done bi þe Pater-Noster, made speciali of þe holy Trinite. And to conferme þis novelrie, þei aleggen of þe pope þat he made now late a praier þat he clepiþ 'Domine Jesu Christe,' and he grauntide to þis praier, at þe bidding of þe Kyng of Fraunce, to ech man þat is contrit, for oo sei yng of þis preier two þousend 3eer of indulgencis fro þe peyne of purgatorie^a. And so men neden not to go to Rome to gete hem plein indulgence, siþ a man mai gete here indulgence for many þousand 3eer after domesday, siþ he may geten in half a day an hundrid þousend 3eer and more. But who wolde travail þan so folily to þe Courte of Rome in perel, for to gete hem indulgences? For siche errours in þis mater biddiþ Petre first to men, þat þei shulden be ware and wise, and flee error spoken here. For it is no drede to men, þat ne Crist al myȝti and al witty made

¹ So in E, and there can be hardly a doubt that this is the true reading; A has *peple*.

^a See Sermon XLVII, vol. i. p. 137, where the same indulgence is referred to. That sermon is on the gospel for the first Sunday after Easter; this present sermon is on the epistle of a Sunday only five weeks later. The two passages taken together go far to prove that Wyclif wrote the gospel and epistle sermons simultaneously. For in both places the publication of the indulgence is spoken of as a recent event, which could not have been

the case had the epistle sermon been composed in a different year from the gospel sermon. The pope in question must have been Clement the antipope, to whose cause the king of France adhered. Froissart mentions the issue of political indulgences of this kind by Clement, but without going into details; nor have I been able to find in any writer an explicit mention of this particular indulgence.

The apostle bids us first to be prudent, and then to be instant in prayer.

Concerning the prayer lately indulgenced by Pope Clement.

a praier betir þan þis þat he wolde sunner¹ heere. Lord, what movede þe pope of Rome to þus accepte mennes persones, þat he shulde for kyngis biddiŋg, or for love of his owne werk, graunte so myche pardone here, and not o day to þe Pater-Noster? and algatis for God biddiþ here bi Petre after in þis epistle, þat ʒif ony man speke ouʒt he shal speke as Goddis wordis. But Lord, where grauntid God bi his word so myche pardone for þis praier? And certis men shulden ellis^a trowe þat, ʒif þe pope swore on a book þat he grauntiþ so myche pardone, for his graunt neiþer more ne lesse; for even so as Crist grauntiþ is pardone or mede for mennis praier. And wolde God þe pope wolde ceese of siche grauntis, to þat tyme þat he hadde tauʒt sufficientli þat God grantiþ þis þat he grauntiþ! Þefore shulden men be wise here, and do good after Cristis lawe, and bi þis dede shulde þei prey beter þan to wawe þer lippis; for werkes preien ofte betir to God þan mannis praier made by mouþ.

But neþeles men graunten here þat preier of mouþ is good in mesure, as oþer þan þe Pater-Noster, whan þei ben wisely taken. And þus seiþ Petre þat men shulden wake whan þei bidden þer praieris, and not slepe in synne þanne whanne þei preien to God, but have a wakyng devocioun; for preier of soule is moche worþ. And þefore seiþ Petre aftir, *þat bifore alle oþer þingis men shulden have contynuel charite, for charite hiliþ multitude of synnes*. Ful charite doiþ away synnes, alʒif man shryve him nevere bi mouþe; and charite deferrith peyne, as ʒif God saw not þis synne. And þus seiþ David þat þei ben blessid whos synnes ben þus hid. Petre biddiþ after to hise disciplis, *þat þei shulden herborwe² ech oþir wiþouten ony grutchiŋg*, siþ for þis eende God ʒyveþ houses. And here failen þes newe ordres; for þei have large houses and faire, and ʒit unneþe þei wolen herborwe breþeren of þer owne ordre; and algatis þei grutchen here, ʒif þer gestis be costly, and axen fode or oþir þing more þan men hemsilf have. And hereon þenken freris to litil, for ʒif þei ben never so yvel, ʒit þei chalengen to

Our devotion should be active, and accompanied by charity

and hospitality;

in which virtue the friars are found wanting, while exacting it strictly from poor men.

¹ *sounere*, I; *souner*, E.

² *berborowe*, E.

^a That is,—unless it can be shown that God has granted it by His word.

be herborwid and fare as lordis wiþ pore men, more þan ever Crist chalengide. Þei shulden þenke to flee wisely boþe multitude and spensis, þat þei charge not þe Chirche more þan God wole þat þei do. And keping of þis reule of Crist shulde make freris to were away.

For ech man, as seiþ Petre here, as he haþ take grace of God, for to profite to his broþir, so shulde he mynyster þis lent þing, or ellis he is fals traitour to God. And þus men shulden dispende Goddis goodis aftir grace þat God ȝyveþ hem, for man haþ not þis for himsilfe, but to departe hem wiþ his neiþbore. And, for charite of man is shewid boþe in dede and word, þefore Petre spekiþ of word, and biddiþ, if þat ony man speke, loke þat his wordis be Goddis wordis. And wolde God þat þe pope knewe þis lore of Petre, and kepte it wele! for þanne he shulde not þus send bullis of wordis, þat he woot¹ not ben Goddis.

And here maken men þes newe ordris to shame, and axen grounding of þer dedis. And certis þei may not prove bi resoun þat þei shulden lyve on þis maner, and so þei ben nedid to seie þat þei ben groundid bi þe popis autorite, or bi reulis of charite, or bi dremes of men, or fablis. Hem shameþ for to seie þe firste, siþ popis speken many wordis, þe which ben not Goddis wordis; but who shulde trowe to hem in þis? And siþ charite techiþ men to not comoun þus wiþ tyrauntis, but to flee hem in word and foode, reulis of charite techen not herfore for to maynteyne þus þes men, whos staat is not groundid bi God. ȝif men seien þe þridde tyme, þat dremes moven to maynteyne þes ordris,—certis men shulden not trowe þes dremes, for þei have brouȝt in myche synne. And þefore þe wise man biddiþ þat men shulden not recke of dremes. Þe fourþe tyme, þes ordris blynden men wiþ talis biside holy writ, þat so many myraclis have þei done, and so many seintis of hem ben canonysid. But þis speche þar² no man trowe, but ȝif þei teche it is Goddis word; for it is ynowȝ to men to trowe Goddis lawe, and oþir þingis þat þei perceyven wiþ þer wittis, alȝif þei ben not giled wiþ fablis.

And Petre biddiþ after to his disciplis, *þat ȝif ony man mynystre, þat he mynystre as of þe vertue þat God mynystriþ in*

¹ knoweþ, E.

² dar, E.

Each is bound to minister to his neighbour according as he has himself received of God.

Several pleas on which the new orders justify their existence examined and refuted.

Ecc. v. 3, 7.

him; and prove he þis in good maner, beter þan ben þes four fallacis¹. And þus *in al* lyves and werkes of men, *shulde God be worshipid* bi þis meene, þat *Jesus Crist*, þat is *oure Lord*, move men to worche þus. For ȝif þis meene faile to men, þei shulden not trowe wordis þat ben told; for Crist moveþ sum bi his lawe, and sum bi resoun, for he is resoun, and sum bi loore of þer wittis, for he moveþ al good mennis wittis. And siþ Crist is boþe bodi and soule, and over þes two þingis þe Godhede, what þing þat Crist techiþ not þus shulde be left as suspect.

ON WIT SONDAL.

[S E R M O N X X I X .]

Dum complerentur dies.—ACTS ii. [1.]

ÞIS storrye of apostlis dedis telliþ how þei weren disposid of God to receyve þe Holy Goost, and medliþ many notable wordis. Luke bigynneþ on þis maner,—*Whanne þe daies of Pentecost weren fillid*, þat maden fifty daies in noumbre, *alle þes enleven disciplis weren togidere in þe same place*. And þis place was in Jerusalem, as it is licly bi þe storrye. No drede þes enleven apostlis, aftir þe resurreccion of Crist, ledden devout lif and holy, and algatis after his ascencioun. Bi þes ten daies men seyn þe apostlis fastiden and preieden. And þus þei camen into an hous on Witsonday in Jerusalem. *And þer was made hastely fro heven a sound as of a greet wynd comyng, and þis sound fillid al þe hous where þe apostlis weren sittinge. And þer apperide to hem diversly partid tungis as fier, and þis fier sate upon hem alle*, in forme of a tunge. *And þei weren al fillid of þe Hooly Goost, and þei bigunnen to speke in langagis þat weren dyvers in hemsilf, riȝt as þe Holy Goost ȝaf hem for to speke out*. And so þree þingis weren seyn² here, þe which al bitokeneden þis miracle. Þe firste was, soun³ þat cam fro hevene þat fulfillid al þe hous, and þat bitokeneþ þat apostlis hadden grace of

The descent of the Holy Ghost on the apostles.

¹ *falacis*, E.

² *seen*, E.

³ *sounde*, E.

God to speke his wordis. Þe secounde signe of þis miracle was of þe substaunce of fier, þat bitokned þat þes apostlis weren ful of charite to speke. Þe þridde signe of þis miracle was of þis forme of fyry tungis; and þat bitokeneþ þat þes apostlis hadden knowyng of many langagis.

The amazement of the Hellenist Jews.

And þus seiþ Luke, *þat in þe cite weren Jewis dwellinge of al naciouns, men of religioun,* and þes Jewis couden dyvers langagis, of cuntreis þat þei hadden dwelte inne. For after Cristis resurreccioun, and bifore his deep also, Jewis weren scatrid in many londis, and lerneden langages of þes londis; and þus þei ben clepid of þes naciouns, and camen to þe temple at þis fest. *And whanne þis vois was maad to þe apostlis, þe multitude of þes Jewis camen, and þei weren confusid in þer þouzt, for ech of hem herde apostlis spekyng in þer strange tunge, þat is spokun in þer contre.* And þis was a greet woundre; and herfore *þei alle abaishiden¹ and woundriden, and seiden togidere, Lo, ne ben not al þes þat speken of þe cuntre of Galile? And how have we herd ech on his owne tunge, in which tunge we weren born, ferre away fro þis contre?* And Luk rehersiþ sixtene langagis þat þes pilgrimes hadden at hoom, and þei woundriden how þes Galilees kouden speke þus al þes langagis. And þe miracle was more, þat þei spaken Goddis merveilis þus in so dyvers tungis.

Questions relating to the gift of tongues examined.

And here men douten comounli, where þes apostlis spaken aloone, or ech of hem al spake dyvers langagis fro oþir, so þat on of hem koude oo langage, and anoþer koude anoþer, but not þei alle knewen ech langage. But here men þenken bi þe story, þat ech of hem knewe al þes langagis, and þus þei undirstooden þes men þat weren of so dyvers contreis. But difficulte is moved over,—wher ech of hem blabride al þes langagis²; and it wolde seme a greet woundir þat o man spake at o tyme þus dyvers langagis of men, siþ þat dyvers langagis axen dyvers formyngis of voicis, þe which myzten not be togidere. But here men þenken bi þe storye, þat þis miracle myzt be þus; þes apostlis knewen dyvers langagis whanne þei weren spoken unto hem, but þei spaken al o maner of vois to þes aliens þat þei spaken to; and þis was þer owen langage, þat hadde kyndly his forme;

¹ *abayschiden*, E.

² So E; A has *langatis*.

but bi þe same langage boþ þei and oþer conseyveden diverseli; as þe same sound of bellis moveþ men diverseli, oon þat þei speken þus, an oþer þat þei speken dyvers. And it is liȝt to God to move men to diverse conseitis, alȝif þe langage be þe same. And þus þe miracle was þe more, þat God movede þus þes inwittis, alȝif þe voicis weren oon þat þei herden of þe apostlis. And it is licy þat þes pilgrimes conseyveden þe same langage þat þei knewen moost of alle, and þe witt of þis langage; and so ech man hadde his owne miracle, and God movede apostlis as he wolde. And þis figuride oonesse of herte, as þes men þat maden þe toure weren tokened, þat þei hadden by pride dyverse hertis, bi dyvers langagis; and so þis God made þer langage change.

Here men mai telle þe puple how men shulden disposen hem to receyve þe Holy Goost bi þe graciouse ȝifte of God. Þei shulen faste and be devoute, as weren þe apostlis at þis tyme, and þanne þei shulden fele sound fro hevene, þat shal move hem to goostli werkes; and algatis þat þei have fier of charite to make hem clere; for fumes of temporal goodis letten many to take þis spirit. And no men ben more undisposid to take þis spirit þan ben sich men, for þer envie and þer fumes disturblen þer eire to take þis goost. And it is nedeful to men to have tungis; as God biddiþ, ȝif þat ony of hem speke, þei speke Goddis wordis, and not falsheed, and not worldly ne veyn wordis, þat ben fer fro Goddis likyng. And þus þree condicions þat weren in apostlis disposen men to resseyve þe Holy Goost, and contraries letten men þerfro. For no drede defaute is in man and not in God, whi God liȝtneþ him not.

On the necessary preparation for receiving the gifts of the Holy Spirit.



ÞE PISTLE ON TRINITE SONDAI.

[SERMON XXX.]

Vidi hostium apertum in Coelo.—APOC. iv. [1.]

Sight of three
kinds,—actual,
imaginary, and
intuitive.—
St. John at
Patmos had the
second kind.

Þis epistle of Joon¹ telliþ many statis of þe Chirche, and medliþ lore of þe Trinite; wherfore þe Chirche rediþ it to day. Þre siȝtis fallen to man; þe first is bodili siȝt, þat falliþ to mannis eien, þe while he wakiþ; and þis is knowun. Þe toþir is ymagynary siȝt, þat falliþ to a man whan he slepiþ, and in þis siȝt ben many degrees, sum hyer and sum lower. Þe þridde and þe heirest, is siȝt of mynde of mannis soule; as spiritis seen wel in heven in Goddis word þingis þat shulen be. Þe secound siȝt hadde þis Joon, and þe undirstonding þerof, for þe Trinite tolde him in hyding and privyly alle þe greet statis of þe Chirche þat shulen come til þe day of dome. *Joon seiþ, he saw a dore open in heven, and þe first vois of angel þat spake to him, as a trumpe, bad him þat he shulde come þidir, and he shulde shewe him þingis þat moten be after þis in þe Chirche.* Þe dore in heven þat was opyn bitokeneþ þe staat of holi Chirche, for o staat þat comeþ bifore bryngiþ in anoþer staat, as reste of man in þe nyȝt disposiþ him to traveile amorewe². And so þe first staat of holy Chirche disposiþ it to þe toþir; and so þe last rest in blis mut nedis come of oþer bifore; as prechinge þat apostlis prechiden brouȝt in martirdom, and staat of martirs whanne it was opyn was an opin dore in heven. But now synne of slowe cowardis haþ closid þis dore, for children drede. For not oonli for bodili peyne, but for worldli goodis and favoure of men, men dreden to mayntene treuþe of God and telle it boldli; and þus bodili hardynesse haþ quenched hardynesse of soule. Þis siȝt of Joon and þis vois weren ordeyned of þe Trinite. And so Joon dremede not siche dremes as done drunken men and lecchours, but God pryntid figuris in Joon,

¹ *Seynt Jon, E.*² *on þe morowe, E.*

and tauzt hem eft bi angelis lore, and God medliþ wordis of confort þat Joon shulde not faile in þis, siþ þis lore þat Joon hadde here is needful to þis fiztinge Chirche. Speche of þe angel as a trumpe, is greet autorite of his word, þat it mut nedlingis be so, siþ grete God haþ ordeyned it. And so þis angel confortiþ Joon to come to him, and lerne þis lore.

And Joon was anoon in spirit, and saw on þe second maner. A man is teld þan in spirit, whan his spirit seep of God, and his bodily werkes ceessen and his out-wittis ben closid. *Joon saw how a seete was put in hevne,* as it were a trone, and a lord sitting þeron, as it were Jesus Crist; *and he þat sat upon þis seete was liche in colour to þes two stones; jaspis* is þe first stone, þe whiche stoon is greene of colour,—and *sardyns* þe secound stone, of red colour, as he brenned. And þes two tellen to men þat Crist oure Lord is ful of confort; as greene colour makij men glade, and bryngij confort to þer eien; þe rede colour techij men how Crist confortiþ mennis charite, and makij hem bold to be martirs, and shede þer blood for his love. *And þe reynbowe was aboute þe seete, liche to þe sizt of a smaragdyn ston.* Þis reynbowe telliþ¹ to Joon þat þe godhede aboute Crist temperiþ graciously þe veniaunce þat men done aþens his Chirche, þat it faile not for hard tourment. And þis confort, wiþ charite, makij pursued men to laste. And *in cumpas aboute þis seete weren foure and twente lesse setis*²; and þes lesse seetis weren litil trones, and on hem saten foure and twenti eldir men. Þis þing bitokeneþ to Joon, þat in þe Chirche above in heven is a noubre of greete seintis þat preien God for þis Chirche. *White clobis* of þes eldir men bitokeneþ clennessen þat þei ben inne, and crownes of gold þat þei have is goostli victori þat þei have don. And þus, siþ Crist is in boþe his chirchis, he haþ seintis here byneþe, þat doen in sum maner of figure as doen seintis in hevne. So þes foure and twenti seetis ben foure and twenti placis here; and þes eldir men ben þo þat holden wisely Goddis lawe. For riht as foure tymes sixe maken þis noubre, so foure wittis of holy writt, þat is perfit, maken þes eldir men. But þer cunnyng is here ful þinne, as þis is clepid

The vision of Him that sat on the throne,

and that of the four and twenty elders, interpreted.

¹ *teelde*, E.

² So in E; A has *ceetis*.

a thynne noumbre; but þei have clenness of lyf, and þer victory on sum maner. *Of þis troone comen forþ liztyngis, and voicis, and þundris boþe.* Þis troone is Goddis sete¹, þat ordeyned þes þre þingis to come here. Liztyngis ben myraclis of holy lyf, þat lastiþ² here for a while. Voicis ben preching of Goddis wille, of mede þat his knyztis shulen have. Þundryngis ben tellingis of greet peyne, þat men shulen have þat shulen be dampned. And þes þree comen of God, and bi boþe his chirchis under him; as mannis vois comeþ fro his herte, bi his þrote, and bi his mouþ.

Interpretation
of the seven
lamps

Seven lampis brennyng bifore þe troone ben seven spiritis of God, as Joon telliþ. Boþe Cristis chirchis have seven lampis þat ben brennyng bifore God. Þe first seven ben alle þes seintis þat ben in hevene and done Goddis wille, and helpen mennis charite in erþe, and techen hem as lampis brennyng. Þe secounde seven ben al þes seintis þat done in erþe þis office of laumpis,—as shulden be bishopis and greet prelatis,—but þer laumpis ben quenched now. But God faillip not in nouþer of his chirchis to ordeyne þes two universitees, to hete and to liztne comouns, boþe bi charite and witt. And so þer wille and undirstonding ben fillid bi þes two sevenes.

and of the sea
of glass,

Jon saw also, in compas of þis sete³, as it were a see of glas, þat were like to cristal. And þis bitokeneþ þe Chirche here, for it is in tribulacion, as men ben ofte in þe see. But þei ben bi craft of God sad to sizt as þe glas, and þei ben of clene lyf, as cristal is clene wiþouten motis. For þe everlastinge orde-nance of God kepip his Chirche here in erþe, þat it may be pursued wiþ floodis, but it mai not perishe ne synke. But popis, and oþers þat seien þes wordis, shulden so lyve and sue Crist þat þei ben partis of holy Chirche, or ellis þes wordis ben not to hem.

and of the four
beasts.

Aftir saw Joon foure beestis in þe myddil and compas⁴ of þis sete⁵; and þes beestis weren ful of eien boþe bifore and bihinde. Þe first best was like to a lioun, and þe secound like to a calf, þe þridde hadde a face as a mannis, and þe fourþe best was lyke to a fleyng egle. As þes foure beestis weren sum tyme Mark

¹ So E; A has *ceete*.

² *lasten*, E.

³ So E; A has *ceete*.

⁴ *of þe compas*, E.

⁵ So E; *ceete* in A.

and Luke, Matthew and Joon, so þer ben now oþir in þe Chirche like to hem. As Mark telliþ of Cristis rysyng, so þer ben now wise men þat tellen of þe laste risyng. And as Luke told of sacrifice and of presthode of Crist, so þer ben now sum men þat tellen how folk shulden do þer sacrifice, and how þat preestis shulden lyve, to come to presthode in hevene. And as Mathew tolde wel of þe manhed of Crist, so sum men tellen now to folk what lyf þat Crist lyvede here. And as Joon fleiþ heie above, and tolde þe godhede of Crist, so sum men tellen now þe hie divinite of Crist. And þei ben ful of iþen boþe bifore and bihinde, for þei seen confortis and perilis of tyme to come and tyme passid. *And ech on of þes foure beestis hadde¹ sixe wynges*, as Joon seiþ, *and in viroun and wipinne þei weren ful of iþen*. Þe first wyng was lawe of kynde, þe toþir was lawe of Moises, þe þridde was lore of prophetis, þe fourþe was lawe of þe gospel, þe fifþe was lore of oþer apostlis, and þe sixte² was prophecie of Joon and story of Luke. By þes sixe partis of holy writt fleen al þes foure beestis, boþe bifore and bihinde, and now on þe riht side and now on þe left, now up and now down, after þat þe spirit moveþ hem. For þei tellen now of þingis to come, and now Goddis werkes þat ben passid, now of blisse of seintis in hevene, and now of peyne of fendis in helle, now of heynesse of God above, and now of sorwe of men in erþe. And þes foure ben ful of iþen, for þei have boþe out-witt and inner.

with their six wings,

And Joon seiþ, þat þes foure beestis *hadden not reste day ne niht, but seiden, Holy, holy, holy, þe Lord þat is God almyhti, þat was, and is, and is to come*. Þes foure beestis traveiliden fast to worshipe of þe Trinite. For al þe traveil of þes seintis was for worship of God; and þei seiden in word and dede þat God is o kynde and þree persones; and so þei seiden þat þe same God is, and was, and ay shal be. And as he made al þis world, so he shal ende þis worlde. And as God haþ power wipinne, and resoun even wiþ to his³ power, so he haþ even likyng of hem; and al þes þre þingis ben God. And þus, aftir þis Trinite, man þinkþ on power þat God haþ ʒovun him, and after

and their continual praise of Almighty God,

¹ So E; A has *badden*.

² So E; *sixe*, A.

³ þis, E.

þe witt and resoun of God he worchþ aftir þis power, and aftir he haþ devocioun of þes two þingis, of þe Fadir and þe Sone. And zif al his werkis ben þus ensaumplid, þan he sueþ wel þe Trinite. But many men failen in resoun, as þes þat synne azens þe Sone; and many men in contynue devocioun, as þes þat synne azens þe Goost; for þes ben þo þat God shittþ out at domesday for defaute of oile.

And whan þes foure beestis hadden zovun glory and honour and blessing to him þat sittþ upon þe trone, lyvyng in worldis wipouten ende, ffoure and twenti eldir men felden down bifore him þat sittþ in trone, and loutiden him þat is lyvyng bi al tymes wipouten ende. Ffor as ordre is of seintis in blis, so shulde be of seintis here. For God biddþ Moises worche¹ by ensaumple shewid in þe hill; and as seintis ben in blis boþe wipouten pryde and strife, so men shulden be in erþe acordinge to treuþe of God².

followed by
the adoration
of the elders.

FIRSTE SONDAI AFTIR TRINITE^a.

[SERMON XXXI.]

Deus caritas est ^b.—I Jo. iv. [8.]

Joon tellþ in þis epistle how men shulden love togidir, for he þat wantþ þis love wantþ lyf, as a fend. First Joon takþ þis maxym as a principle of bileve;—*Moost dere, God is charite*; and þus of God comeþ al oure love. Soþ it is þat God and man have sum names comoun to heem, as ben þes comoun names þe whiche tellen noon unperfit þing. And siþ love is sich a name, love mut nedis acorde to God, and he is nedis welle of love, and loveþ alle þingis in þis world. But as he

The precept,
that we love
one another,
grounded on
the principle
that God is
love.

¹ So E; *which*, A.

² *of o God*, E.

^a For the next fourteen sermons the guidance of the MS. Douce 321 is unfortunately wanting.

^b In the Roman missal the same epistles occur on the first twenty-four Sundays after *Pentecost* that occur in the Sarum missal on the

first twenty-four Sundays after *Trinity*; that is, each epistle is read a week earlier in one case than in the other. The English Prayer-book, it is needless to observe, adheres, with a few trifling deviations, to the Sarum use.

loveþ himsilf moost, for he mut nedis be best þing, so he loveþ oþir men aftir þat þei ben good. And þus aftir charite of God shulden men shapen þer charite.

And Joon declarip þis sentence þus; *In þis þing apperide Goddis charite in us, þat he sente his oon born sone in to þe world, and made him man, þat we lyve bi his sone.* Ffor as al þing is made by hym so he makip þingis perfit. And so no man mai come to blis bi vertues, lut bi his Sone, as no man may be savyd but bi suyng of his lyfe; for it mut nedis be a reule to ech man þat goip to heven. And, for ech oþer man is a membre þat hongip on Crist, Crist seiþ bi Jon in his gospel þat no man stiep in to hevене, but mannis sone þat is in hevене. Knytte þou þee bi love to Crist, or ellis þou comest never to heven. Siþ þe Fadir ʒaf Crist his Sone for us, to bigge us and save us, we mut nedis shewe him sum love bi his ʒiftis þat he ʒyveþ us; and þus, to clepen oure werkes oure sone, we shulden ʒyve þis sone to him; for alle oure werkes shulden we do in name of God, and to his worship. But as þis Lord is more þan we, so muten his ʒiftes passen oure. *And þus is charite of God shewid, not as we hadden first loved God, but þat he lovede first us, and sente his sone helpe for oure synnes.* We shulen undirstonde here, þat God mut love kyndely, and each creature of God haþ kyndely an appetite to savyng of himsilf, and to helpyng of oþir þingis. And so þe synne of a fend, þat is not Goddis creature, deformip him and contrarieþ him fro þe first ordenaunce of God. And þus þis is a fendis maner, þat Anticrist quenchip love, and for his owne hiþnes haþ envie þat oþir ben good.

And þus seiþ Joon for mannis love, to telle how it shal be. *Moost dere,* he seiþ, *ʒif God haþ loved us, we shulden love us silf togidere.* For no creature of God mai faile alʒatis of þis love, and þus we shulden be perfit in love, as oure fadir of heven is perfit. For ʒif a man love his owne good, and wiþ þat harm his broþir, þis love is not perfit love, but hate aʒens charite. Loke þat ech love of þisilf turne to profit of þi neiþbore, for so doip love of þe Trinite. And to þis entent seiþ Poul, þat charite sekip not his owne þing; for charite loveþ comynyng and profitynge, for so doip God. And þus, ʒif men have clene

This love of God was proved by His sending His Son into the world,

whence comes the duty that we should love one another,

love, þei don noon harme streitli to þing, but good after al þer power, oþir good profitable or plesing. And þus men in charite don good to boþe his chirchis and oþir þingis. For charite doiþ good, and noon harme but bi occasioun of more good. And þus werkes of þes popis shewen þat þei ben fendis children. For o pope harmeþ anoþer for to gete him propre good, as many þousend markes of rewmes ben dispendid for Urbanns cause, and many þousand men slayne; but who shulde seie þat þis were love? But moost harme here is disseite of mennis soulis in feiþ hope and charite, þat ben falsly feyned here. And whoever trowiþ to þis power þat is þus feyned of þe pope, he is harmed in his soule more þan is bodili harme.

And þus þes freris and oþer ordris, þat seien þat þei gendren charite, and maken men to large þer almes, feynen falsly aftir þer fadir. And þus, whan þei maken freris, þei failen in charite of God, for þei failen of Goddis reule in multipliynge of felowes þus, as þe fend þat temptiþ men coveitiþ to have felowship in peyne; and a lecchour seiþ to a womman þat he loveþ hir, and wole brynge forþ moo creaturis of God, to profite to holy Chirche; and so a þeef, þat getiþ him felowes to robbe trewe men of her goodis. Al siche failen in charite and ben ful of envie. For faile in charite of oon, and faile in charite of alle; for charite is an hevenly virtue, and doiþ not good to o man, but ȝif it do to alle men; and doiþ never harm streitli. And riȝt as man þat loveþ his bely doiþ in þat harme to it, so a frere, þat loveþ a child to make him frere, harmiþ him. And a man þat loveþ a womman to synne wiþ hir doiþ hir harme; as fend þat temptiþ man, to have him ever his felowe in helle, doiþ him harm aȝens charite, for him failiþ riȝt purpos. For charite doiþ nevere harm riȝtli, but ever good; for it mut nedis come of God, bi þe lawe þat he haþ ȝovun, and þanne it erriþ not in doying good, ne in menes to do þis good. As, ȝif God hadde ordeyned þes foure sectis for to profite, þanne in takinge oon of þes shulde not man do harme to þe Chirche; and ȝif God ordeynede none of þes, þanne in maynteynyng of ony of hem he doiþ harm to Cristis Chirche, and þanne he failiþ in charite, and loveþ neiþer God ne man.

And to þis entent spekiþ Joon, þat man shulde kyndeli love

a duty which
the two rival
popes noto-
riously violate,

nor do the
friars, or the
other orders,
observe it any
better.

his broþir. And for þis ende haþ God ordeyned þat man shulde knowe his broþir here; but *syt of God is not here*, but oþer manere of syt in hevene. But, *ʒif we loven us silf togidere*, God *dwellig þan in us*, and his *charite is perfit in us*, and stretchip oure love to alle þingis. And bi þis may men *knowun here þat þei dwellyn in God*, and *God in hem*, þat he haþ ʒouun hem of his spirit, to love comonli as he loveþ. *And we have sene and bere witnesse*, þat þe fadir sente his sone to save þe worlde, and to profite boþe to saved men and dampned. For clerkis proven here bi resoun, þat Cristis liif and his dedis done good to alle creaturis, bi perfeccioun þat he getip hem. For it is knowen þat al saved men have good bi passioun of Crist, for ellis þei shulden nevere have comen to heven, ne þer synne have ben ever forʒouun. Alle þat ben dampned in helle have greet good of Cristis passioun, for þei have just punishing, and þat is good, ʒhe, to hem; and but ʒif Crist hadde died þus, þei shulden have synned more in þe world, and so þer harme shulde have be more, and þer peyne þat sueþ þis synne. Alle oþer partis of þe world serven in ordre to God and man; and siþ þei have appetite herto, and þis is performed bi Cristis passioun, ech oþer part of þe world haþ good bi passioun of Crist. And þus mennis charite shulde stretche bi þe love þat Crist haþ ʒouun.

What man þat ever confessip þat Jesus is Goddis sone, God *dwellig in him and he in God*, bi þis perfit confession. Þis confessioun shulde be wilful in riȝt lif, for ellis it is uncomplet, and knowyng aȝens his wille. And þus Joon was moved of God to seie, þat he and his breþren *have knowun and trowun to charite þat God haþ in hem*. Joon hadde knowun above hope þat þis charite was in him, and he woot bi bileve þat þis charite mut save him. God is *charite*, as Joon haþ seid, *and he þat dwellig in charite, dwellig in God, and God in him*, as in his sone, to take to blisse.

And þis is perfit charite wip us, þat we have trust in domesday. For as he is, for his tyme, in peyne and tribulacioun, *so we ben in þis world*, and aftir þis mut nedis sue joie. For as þe riȝtwisnes of Crist lettid not his joie to sue, so þe same riȝtwisnes wole not lette in his membris. And alȝif men witen not þis

The good confession.

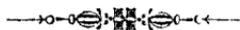
Confidence in the day of judgment.

clerely for þis tyme, nepeles þei have no drede þat ne þis shal sue in hem, for ellis þei weren out of hope, and so out of charite. And of þis drede spekij̄ Joon, and seiþ, *Drede is not in charite, but perfit charite sendij̄ out siche drede, for drede hab a greet peyne : and so he þat dredij̄ þus, is not perfit in charite.* For as moost peyne of man is of beryng of his synne, so moost servyle drede is of punishing þerof. And þis drede mut be away bi charite þat is perfit. Love-drede is in men wipouten siche servile drede, and þis holy drede dwellij̄ ever more in blisse wip seintis.

Man cannot love God and hate his brother;

this truth condemns the rival popes.

And þus *we shulden love God, for he bifore hab loved us. And ȝif ony seiþ þat he loveþ God, and hatij̄ his broþir, he is a lier.* And þus many men seien þat þei ben in charite, and ȝit þei gabben upon hemsilf, as Joon seiþ here sharply. And þus men mai punishe oþir by entent to do hem good, but not by ȝele of veniaunce, ne wipouten autorite of God. And þus þenken many men, þat þis was a fendis dede for to slee so many men for a synful and a roten office, þat þe pope chalengij̄ so folili; for þei boþe shulden be fayn to wante siche a sinful office. *For he þat loveþ not his broþir whom he seep here at ize, how may he love God whom he seep not þus?* And so many lesingis be maad on þe charitees of men; as many seyn þei punishen men for love of amendement; but þei holden not þe forme of punishing as Crist held. Preching and pacience shulden be meenes to scomfite synnes. *And þis mandement we have of God, þat who þat loveþ God, love he his broþir.* And þus, ȝif we haten oure broþir, we haten God in oure broþir. Studie we Poul and Joon, to knowe perfit charite.



DE SECUNDE SONEDAI AFTIR TRINITE.

[SERMON XXXII.]

*Nolite mirari si odit vos mundus*¹.—I JOHN iii. [13.]

Joon tellij in þis epistle how men shulden lyve þat suen Crist, and algatis how þei shulden kepe bisili charite. Þer ben two lyves here; oon of verre Cristene men, anoþer is of worldly men, whiche Joon clepiþ here þe world. Þe first sect holdiþ Cristis lawe wiþouten contrariyng bi oþer lawe, and in þis ben many degrees, as preestis, lordis, and laborers. Worldly men ben siche men þat þe world haþ overcomen, and boþe in lawes and in customes þei ben reulid bi þe world; as þes two sectis ben myche medlid wiþ fals feynyng of ypocritis. For men þat ben not Cristen men ben medlid now wiþ Cristene men, and þei have lerned of þer lawes, of þer werkes, and of þer customes, and þe fend haþ tauzt hem for to þenken þat þes ben beter þan lif after Cristis lawe, to make algatis hevене mennis eende.

Joon spekiþ to þe first sect, and biddiþ hem; *Wole 3e not woundre 3if þe world hate 3ou*, as Crist biddiþ ofte tymes. And Crist, to conferme men, makij þis resoun to his disciplis. 3if þe world hate 3ou, wite 3e þat it hatij me 3our priour; and it is ynow to disciple þat he be as his maistir. And now, whan þes newe ordriþ 3yven hem þus to þe worlde, þei haten men speciali þat speken Goddis lawe aʒens hem. And woundre 3e not herof, for þus hatiden scribis and Fariseis Crist. And Joon confessiþ þe first sect, and seiþ, *We witen sobli þat we ben translid fro deþ to lyf, for we loven men þat ben breþeren*. Þes two sectis ben dyvers algatis in þes two þingis. Þe first sect haþ þe Holy Goost þat techiþ it, and makij it lyve; þe secounde sect is goostli deed, for it wantij quykenyng of þis spirit. Þe toþer diversite is þis; þat men of þe first sect kepen hem in charite, þe toþir sect hatij þis. And herfore seiþ Joon þus, *We witen þat*

The life of
Christians and
the life of the
world

distinguished,
the one by
love, the other
by hatred.

¹ So G and I; A has *mundis*.

we ben translatid fro deþ to lyf, for we loven briþeren. Eche man undir Crist, boþe Cristene men and heþene, lyveden sum tyme worldly lyf til Crist hadde goostli baptisid hem. And herfore seiþ Joon soþli here, We witen þat we ben translated. And þis translacioun is beter þan worldly translacioun of þe pope, for it mai falle ofte tymes þat men þat he translatiþ þus ben more deep in goostli deef þan þei weren bifore þis. For spiritis of men þat ben dampned han more peyne bi þe synne þat þei bygunnen to grounde here, þan þei hadden bifore þis synne. As, ȝif a dampned man was riche, and castide togidir myche good, and ordeynede whan he diede to gete him worldli glorie bi þis, þat spirit is more punishid aftir þat þis error growiþ. And þus seiþ Bernard of sum heretikes, þat men knowen not now þer peyne, for þei witen not how many men ben pervertid bi þer lore. And hereon shulden þes sectis þenke, and stonde in lore of Jesus Crist, for þer newe lore pervertiþ many, and mak iþ hem more punishid in helle. For whanne a spirit comeþ to helle, þat synnede bi errour þat þei tauȝten, who dred iþ not þat ne þei han peyne bi newe comynge of siche felowis? And þis moveþ many men to holden þe boundis of Cristis lore, siþ þis lore is ynowȝ and mai not erre, but oþir mai. But Crist forbed iþ not, but bidd iþ his disciplis in figure, þat þei gidere up þe relif þat is leste of Cristis mete.

The new sects, by refusing to follow Christ's law, show a spirit of hatred.

And to þis entent seiþ Joon, *He þat loveþ not dwell iþ in deþ.* And as it is seid in þe nexte ^a Sermon, of þis love ben many gabbingis. For ypocritis seien þat þei loven, and done þus for charite, but þei failen in þer reule, and erren foule fro Cristis lawe. Þei ben þes þat Ysay discryveþ, þat þei seien good is yvel. And þus seiþ Joon aftir here, *þat ech man þat hat iþ his broþir is a man-sleer.* And here shulden þes sectis drede, þat han founden hem newe lawes, and leeven to profite and to teche after þe lawe þat Crist haþ ȝovun. Certis þis is a grete hate, boþe of þe Chirche and of hemsilf; and for peril of hardyng in synne, þei shulden dissolve þes sectis brouȝt in. And ech of hem miȝte at þe leste save hemsilf bi Goddis lawe, and leve al þes newe sectis, and flee to þe sect of Crist, and axe hem not

^a That is, as we should say, in the last.

leve of þe pope to fle from yvel to Cristis lawe. For al þes foure newe sectis ben homycidis in many persones. But Joon seip aftir in þis epistle, *þe witen þat ech homicide hap not ay-lastynge lyf dwelling in him.* Lif of hevene bigynneþ here bi þe comfort of Cristis lawe, and it lastiþ in þe spirit aftir þe deþ for evermore; as Poul seip þat charite nevere more falliþ adoun. And þis shulden Cristen men loke, what law sownned to charite, and in so myche love þis lawe, and forsake it in alle opir. And herfore ben sum men moved to leve þes foure newe sectis, for alle þe lawis þat þei have propre muten nedis faille aftir þis lyf. And þus it is of worldis lawe, þat techiþ here to parte goodis.

But Joon seip þat, *In þis we have knowen þe charite of God, þat he puttide his lyf for us, and we shulden for breþeren putte oure lyves.* He puttij his lyf for his broþer, þat traveilliþ wiþ his kyndely goodis, boþe of bodi and of soule, for þe profite of his broþir. 3if man, bi reulis of þe world, wastiþ his kyndely goodis, and doiþ harme to his neiþboris soule, al3if he seie þat he doiþ it for love, he loveþ not his broþir but hatiþ him. Lord, where þis pope Urbane hadde Goddis charite dwelling in him, whan he stired men to fihte and slee many þousaund men, to venge him on þe toper pope, and of men þat holden wiþ him! 3if þat Goddis lawe be trewe, þis was an opyn fendis turn. Joon tauhte never þis charite, ne ony opir bi Goddis lawe; siþ God, þat reversiþ not himsilfe, biddiþ þat men shulde love þer enemyes. But what love mai be colourid, to robbe pore men in a fendis cause, for to sle Cristen men þat trespassiden not to be þus deed? Lord, where þis was a good herde, þat puttide his lyf þus for his sheepe! Who wolde trowe here to a fend, and leve þe lore þat Crist techiþ?

But, for charite is shewid bi 3yvynge of bodili almes, bi which mannis bodi is susteyned, Joon techiþ, bi a lasse signe, how men failen in charite. He seip, *He þat hap substaunce of þis worlde, and seþ his broþer have nede þerto, and closiþ his mercy from him, how dwelliþ charite of God in him?* He þat wole not 3yve his broþir þes leste goodis, wolde not 3yve him more, neiþer traveile bi goodis of kynde, ne lore to þe soule bi goodis of grace. Bi þes wordis, yvel undirstonden, may many tirauntis and strong beggers be maynteyned in Cristis Chirche,

Pope Urban has caused the death of many thousands.

Love known by its fruits.

bi coloure of almes of ypocritis. But Joon seiþ here þree wordis þat shulden be chargid of Cristene men. He spekiþ not here to alle men, but to riche men of þe worlde þat God haþ lente siche goodis, þat þei shulden helpe wiseli her briþeren þat have nede of hem. For hier almes shulde be ʒovun of preestis and of perfit men. And þus seide Petir to þe begger, Gold and silver is not to me, but þat þat Y have þat Y ʒeve þee. Þus men shulden seie to stronge beggers, Y have noon sich goodis to ʒeve þee, but Y have lore bi Goddis lawe þat þou shuldist not begge þus, and þat Y wole telle to þee. Take þou Goddis grace ʒif þou wilt.

The words of the apostle do not justify the practices of friars and 'strong beggars.'

De secunde word þat Joon seiþ here is, *þat a man se his broþir*. And it semeþ to sum men þat þes men of þes foure sectis ben not breþeren to Cristene men, but of oþer strange sectis; and þus þes freris þat beggen þus ben not oure breþeren, but Phariseis. And Joon techiþ in his secunde epistle, to grete¹ hem not, ne dele wiþ hem, siþ þei bringen not þat lore þat Crist ʒaf to his disciplis. For as charite is not but ʒif it be clere and general, so love of Crist is not, but ʒif it be cleer, unmedlid wiþ errours. But siþ siche ben oure briþeren in kynde, men mai bi love seie þus to hem; Go þou and bicomme my broþir, and teche þat þou hast nede to þes, and þan Y wole wiþ charite ʒyve þee siche þing as þee nedip.

De þridde word þat Joon spekiþ here is, *þat a man suffre nede*, as ben hungri men and þirsti, nakid men and herborwles. But men perceyven not þes þingis of freris and of stronge beggers. And so þes wordis of Joon steren not wise men to maynteyne þus þes beggers aʒen þe lawe þat Crist haþ ʒovun, for þei ben not pacient, ne have nede to þes goodis, but þei ben harmed bi hem, and bicomen Goddis traitours herbi. And þus boþe þe begger and þe ʒyver ben ful unkynde aʒens Crist, for þei susteynen blasfeme lieris aʒens God and his lawe. And þus seiþ Joon aftirward, *ʒe þat ben my litil children, love we not falsly bi word or tunge, but love we bi werk and treuþe*. And wolde God þat ypocritis undirstonden wel þis word of Joon; for þanne þer begging were not þus fals bifore Crist þat is treuþe. For Crist

¹ So in I; *greete*, G; A has *gete*.

loveþ algatis treuþe and good werkis, and hatij fals wordis; for he is Goddis word and treuþe, and þus þes wordis reversen him.

DE ÞRIDDE SONDAI AFTIR TRINITE.

[SERMON XXXIII.]

Humiliamini sub potenti manu dei.— I PETER v. [6.]

Þis epistle of Petre techij men how þei shulen walke here to heven. And first hem nedij to be meke, for þat is ground of oþir vertues, and proud men þat reisen þer heed muten algatis spurne aȝens God. And þefore bigynneþ Petre þus, and biddij, *þat alle men shulen be mekid undir þe myȝty hond of God.* And þis bidding is resonable, for zif a child were ful suget to a strong maistir and witti, and his ȝerde were longe and sharpe, reisid above þis childis heed, and his maistir myȝte not be lettid to smyte þis child whanevere he trespassid, a witti child wolde drede þis maistir, to trespas þus undir siche an hond. But þus it is of alle men undir þe large hond of God. Men ben here but ȝonge children, and God shulde be maistir of hem alle; and Goddis hond is long and stronge, for it stretchij over al þis worlde, and he mut nedis punishe men whanever þei trespassen aȝen him. And herfore seiþ þe prophete of God, þat he haþ a wakyng ȝerde, and his hond is ȝit streijt, to punishe children þat sitten undir him. And þis is a tokene of love, þat þis maistir smytij þes children whan þei trespassen aȝens him. And zif þei ben lastynge tryauntis, and he leveþ to chastise hem, it is a token þat he abidij to þe ende to bete hem sore. What man þat haþ þis bileve shulde not be meke undir þis hond? And no drede, bi þis mekenes, wolde God take þis mannis hond and hie him at þe daye of dome unto þe blisse þat ay shal laste. And þus Petre biddij men be meke, *þat God hyȝe hem in þe tyme of þe laste visihynge,* whan he shal rekene wiþ al his servauntis. For God þat mai not lye seiþ; He þat hieþ him shal be lowed, and he þat lowij him shal be hyed, ouþer to hevене or to helle; for þe peys of Goddis riȝt mut nedis wey after mennys werkes.

Virtues necessary to the Christian in his pilgrimage,

1. Submission to God.

Is. x. 4. 5.

2. Abandonment of ourselves to his care,

And þus Goddis clerkis shulden here *caste al þer bisynes into him, for he haþ cure of hem*, and forȝetip not þat þei done. What man shulde not take tente to siche a maistir, for love and drede? And þus men ben to myche foolis, þat loken fro God to worldli þingis, for þei, as men out of bileve, seien þat God slepiþ or seþ hem not. And þus þei shulden wel gidere al þer bisynes unto him, siþ he sittip and seep her werkes boþe of bodi and of soule, and God chargip al þer maners, and þe lest entent of hem. Who shulde not drede to synne in presence of sich a Lord? siþ men shamen comounly to trespace in presence of an erþeli lord.

3. Vigilance.

And, for þe fend tillip¹ men bi many wilis fro siȝte of God, þefore seiþ Petre aftir, *Be ȝe sobre, and wake ȝe; for ȝour adversary þe devel compassip aboute as a rorynge lioun, to seke what man he shal swolowe*. And no drede siche men þat ben not in kepyng of God, and waken not in vertues to him, but lyve in lustis to þis world, þes ben þo men þat þe fend swolowip to him. For his bodi is his children, and his defying is his enduryng. And herfore biddip Petre here, *þat men shulden aȝen-stonde þe fend, strong in bileve*, þat Petre tellip here, and in hope of Cristis helpe. And þis shulden holy men wite, *þat þe same þassioun, of þe fend, bi which he temptip worldli men, is maad to holy men in God*. For þe fend temptide Crist, and assaiede where he myȝt overcome him. And þus þe fend þenkiþ him sure of sinful men þat he haþ gildrid², and temptip sharply holy men, to lette hem of þer good purpos. And þus Petre preieþ to God, *þat is autorite of al grace, þat haþ clepid men into his ay-lastinge glorie, for suffringe litil here for Crist, he shal make fulli, he shal conferme, and make sadde. To him be glorye and comandinge into þe worldis of worldis, Amen*.

The confirmation of God;

It is knowun to trewe men þat þei mai not overcome þe fend but ȝif God ȝyve hem grace, þat is first flowyng and litil; and aftir þis grace is confermed, for God holdip it in his place; and siþ þis grace wexip sadde, þat it may not falle away. And þis ordre of þe holy Trinite mai men se in bodely þingis. Blessid be þe holy Trinite, þat þus bigynneþ bi his grace, and con-

¹ So also in G; tolleþ, I.

² gilderid, G; geldrid, I.

tynueþ bi þe same grace, and makij ende bi þe same grace, and makij man sadde and perfit. For, but 3if he make fulli man, ellis mannis werk is not worþ. Lord, siþ men traveilen bisili to be confermed of þe pope of Rome in staat or in benefice here, þat done ofte myche harm to hem, how myche shulden men bisien hemsilf to be confermed in grace of God! And þis is in mannis power, more þan confermyng of þe pope; for man þar¹ not traveile more, but contynue vertuous lyf and clene, and God wole for þis litil good conferme man in more good. And þus man þar 3yve no money, ne traveile ferre in bodili traveile; but do he þis þing, good and li3t, and God is redi to conferme.

that of the pope much sought for, but often worthless if not injurious.

PE FORÞE SONDAI PISTLE AFTIR TRINITE.

[S E R M O N X X X I V .]

Existimo quod non sunt condignae.—ROM. viii. [18.]

In þis epistle techiþ Poul, how þat Cristen men shulden laste in þe service of Jesus Crist, wiþouten grutching a3ens him. *I gesse, seiþ Poul, þat suffringis of þis tyme ben not even-worþi to þe glorie þat is to come, þat shal be shewid in us.* As who seiþ, who ever suffre here nevere so myche for Goddis sake, 3it þis suffryng mut have reward þat shal passe al his traveile. But who wolde grutche a3ens God for þis traveile, siþ þis is soþ? siþ God susteyneþ a man, and moveþ him, and helpiþ him for to traveile sich traveile; and how shulde it not come of grace? And þus reward for þis traveile mut nedis al come of grace. For whan man traveliþ of² his owen myche more traveile þan þis is, 3it men maken aseþ to him for reward in þis world; and siþ reward of God in hevene is a þousand siþis beter þan þis, it is knowun þat joie of hevene is not even-worþi to þis traveile. For 3if man suffre to þe deep on good maner in Goddis cause, 3it he haþ ay-lastyng lyf, þat is beter þan al his 3ifte. For God of his grete lordship cannot rewarde but largely, as an erþely

The apostle exhorts to perseverance in the service of God.

¹ dar, I.

² So G and I; A has on.

lord for litil rewardip men bi more mede. And þus clerkes seien comounly, þat a man disserveþ on two maneris, covenabli and even-worþily. On þe first maner a man disserveþ blis; for it is covenable to God, worþi and just boþe, þat he of his greet grace rewarde largely his pore servaunt. But man disserveþ not blisse of God bi even-worþinesse, whatever he do, siþ God mut nedis, of his lordship and his grace, rewarde more men. Þe glorie of heven þat is to come is ȝit hidde, and shal be shewid aftir to men in blisse; and þis glorie is so myche, þat men shulden have wille to traveile herfore. And bi þis skile weren martiris moved to suffre joyfulli al þer peyne; for no man grutchip ne failip here, but for defaute of his bileve. And siþ man is Goddis creature, boþe bodili and goostli, man is clepid bi himsilf *creature*, bifore oþirs, and specialli þis man þat is lastinge in hope of blisse. And þerfore Poul clepip þis man, abiding of a creature; for þis man *abidiþ* sadli *shewyng* of blisse of *Goddis children*. For Joon seiþ, þat we ben now Goddis children alȝif it be hid, but we witen wel, at domesday, whan Crist shal apere in his glorie, þat we shulen be like to him; but þis is not ȝit shewid to us. And þe ground of al þis joie is, þat we ben Goddis creaturis, and^he hap ordeyned of his grace us to be Goddis sones.

Man made
subject to
vanity here,
that he might
suffer patiently,
hoping for
bliss hereafter.

Anoþir resoun þat Poul tellip is groundid in þis rote, þat fro tyme þat man hadde synned, *man was suget to vanite*. For he was nedid to bere vanite of his liif, boþe in peynes of his bodi and in passiouns of his soule, and bi þis he mut nedis suffre myshevous deþ for þis synne. What man shulde þanne grutche to suffre wilfulli for blis, siþ ellis he mut nedis suffre more peynfulli for lasse reward? Blessid be þat Lord þat, *sugettid men* to vanite, for þis cause, *for to have hope* of blisse, and þus suffre wilfulli for rizt. Hope and solace in þis peyne is, þat men trowen to come to blisse and ful heritage of Goddis sones, for litil peyne þat þei suffren here. And herfore seiþ Poul þus aftirward; *þat þis creature shal be delyverid from servage of corrupcioun, and to þe fredom of glorye þat Goddis sones shulen have in blisse. And certis we witen, þat ech man þat is creature, ordeyned to blis, weilip and traveilip peynfulli til þat he part from þis world;* for þus dide Crist oure alþer Lord, and so

muten alle his children do. And men þat have þer blisse here muten nedis in deþ have more peyne; and so þe wey þat Crist haþ ordeyned is boþe liþter and þe best.

And not al oonli oþir children, þat ben ferþer fro knowyng of God, but *Poul himsilf, and oþir apostlis, þat hadden þe first fruytis of þe spirit, weilen here wipinne hemsilf, desiryng e titil of Goddis sones.* And so, *þei abiden in hope biggyng azen of þer bodi, bi Jesus Crist þat is oure Lord.* Wel we witen þat man was maad in state þat he myzt lyve evere inne, and wipouten deþ and oþir mysheves¹ be translated into þe blisse of hevene; but bi synne he was nedid to suffre peyne and bodili deþ. But Crist haþ brougt him azen to state þat he shulde first have hadde. And þus þes resouns of þe apostle moven to suffre gladli for Crist. And as God rewardiþ man over þat he deserveþ, so þe state þat men have now in hevene is beter þan was state of innocens; and þis sentence shulde move men to be martiris for love of Crist.

This patient waiting shared in by the apostles themselves.

ÞE FYFÞE SONDAI [AFTIR TRINITE].

[SERMON XXXV.]

Omnes unanimes in oratione estote.—I PET. iii. [8.]

PETRE telliþ in þis epistle how men shal dispose hem to take ȝiftis of þe Holy Goost, and helpe of God in þis lyf; and þis shulde be bi² oonhede in undirstonding and wille, in which men shulden acorde to God, and þan ben þei wel disposid. And herfore biddiþ Petre þus, *þat ȝe shulen be al of oo wille in ȝoure preier.* And þis wille shulde be reulid bi resoun, and so undirstonding³ and wille shulden boþe serve God. And þus, as Poul techiþ, þere shulde be oo bileve and o charite among al men; and þanne myzten þei preie strongliere. But now men varien in bileve, as we seen in þe sacrid oost, and men have made hem a bileve of þe popis and oþir statis; and oon seiþ oon, and

The apostle urges to brotherly concord.

¹ *mescheves*, G; *meschevis*, I.

² So in G and I; A reads *his*.

³ So in G and I; A has *in undirstonding*.

anoþer anoþer; and þus men varien in bileve. Men varien also in charite, for oon loveþ þat his folk overcome, anoþer þat his folk þat fiȝtiþ wiþ hem discomfit hem and slee hem. And þis discord in charite, and suyng discord in praier, mut nedis be reproved of Crist, þat loveþ oonheed in þes þingis. And to distrie þis heresie, biddiþ Petre us alle be of o wille, for ellis oure praier mut be unherd, but ȝif we have goddis of Maniches, o good god and an yvel god, to heere þes contrarious praieris.

and recom-
mends the
practice of
eight virtues.

And Petre biddiþ, aftir þis word, to kepe eiȝte vertues to blisse. First, *we shulden be suffryng togidere*; ech have sorwe of oþeris yvel, and suffre injurie of anoþer, suppose þat he wirche aȝens him. And þus Cristene men *shulden be loveris of breþerheed*; not of breþerheed of freris, ne of breþerheed of gildis, but of breþerhed in Crist and of holy Chirche oure modir. For þes men þat maken þes sectis traveilen aȝens Cristis breþerheed; for Crist traveilid many weies for oonheed of þis breþerheed, and þes sectis traveilen fast to diversen þis breþerheed; and so þei don aȝens Petre, þat biddiþ to love oo breþerheed. And þus men shulden be *merciful*, siþ ech shulde be broþir to opir, of o fadir, and of o modir. But now þei ben dyvers in kyndis; sum ben children of Sathan, and sum children of Belial, and sum ben children of God. But how shulden þes comoun¹ togidere? siþe divisioun of breþeren lettij love in Cristendome. And þanne men shulden be *temporal*², and alle suen maners of Crist, siþ Crist shulde be oure alþer fadir, whom we shulden nedis sue. But now þes sectis varien boþe in maners and in wille, and so hem wantij þis temperour þat Petre techij here Cristen men. And þus alle men *shulden be meke*, siþ oure fadir and modir ben meke³, and God oure fadir haþ a ȝerde to beete⁴ us, but ȝif we kepen mekenes. And þus *we shulden not zelde yvel for yvel*, for þus done þe fendis children; *and we shulden not zelde⁵ wariynge⁶ for wariynge*, for þus doiþ kynrede of Belial; *but we shulden blisse alle men*, for þus usen Goddis children, for *in þis ben we clepid þat we han Goddis blessing bi*

¹ *comunen*, G; *comune*, I.

² *temporali*, G.

³ So in G and I;

A includes the clause in the quotation.

⁴ *bete*, G, I.

⁵ *ȝyve*, G.

⁶ *weryng*, I.

*heritage*¹. Seintis þat ben in heven han fulli Goddis blessing, and þe title þat men han by ay-lasting ordenaunce of God passij al mannis title þat man mai have to worldli good. And þus þes seintis ben eiris wiþ Crist bi title of ordenaunce of God; and þis is propre heritage, þat God haþ ordeyned bi his. And herfore we shulden love þe first eire Jesus Crist.

And aftir Petir 3yveþ a reule to kepe Cristis religioun; and þis reule mut nedis passe al þes newe reulis of ordris. *He þat wole love lyf, and see good daies in blis, constreyne he his tunge from yvel, and his lippis þat þei speken not gile; and bowe he away from yvel, and do he good, and seke he pees,—for man shulde seke pees wipinne bitwene God and himsilf,—and man shulde sue pees wipoute bitwene him and his neizbore.* For bi þis reule men ben *made juste, and God lokij graciously on hem, and þe eerres of God ben at þe prateris of siche men, but þe face of þe Lord is upon men þat done yvel.* And þis reule of David and Petre is ynow³ to alle men, and ech man shulde kepe þis reule bi religioun of Crist. And herfore take þou noon newe ordre bifore þis reule faile to þee. And siþ þes foure newe sectis failen in þis reule of God, þei shulden leve þis novelrie, þat makij hem turne from Goddis lawe. Alle þes foure newe sectis synnen in many gabbingis, boþe in gabbing of dede and gabbing of mouþ, ffor þei speken gile to þer breþeren, and wiþdrawun from hem juste helpe. He þat studieþ more þis matere mai see how þis gabbing goiþ.

And for surete of þis ordre seiþ Petir as bileve, þat no man *anoiþ* þis man, in þat þat he *sueþ* wel Crist. Holde þis ordre, for it is þe beste, and bringij mannis soule streijt to hevене. And þus seiþ Petre bi bileve; *Who is he þat anoiþ² 3ou, 3if 3e ben good sueris.* Many men han peyne here in þer goodis and in þer bodi, and many men ben deed for maynteynyng of rizt-wisness, but þis is noon harm ne noye, but more wynnyng of betre þing. And herfore seiþ Petre here, *If 3e suffren ouzt for rizt,* and leve not merit þat 3e have wonnen, 3e ben þan *blessid* of God. And herfore Petre tellij aftir þat, *men shulden not drede þer manasse,* for 3if þei holden þis lawe of God, þei mai bi

after which he gives a rule for keeping Christ's religion,

which the four new sects fail to observe.

¹ So in G; A misplaces the marks of quotation utterly. G and I; A has *anoiþ*.

² So in

no wey do hem harme. And þefore Petre biddiþ Cristen men, *Be not turblid* bi þer manas, for þe fend moveþ þes debletis to fere Cristene men¹ fro treuþe². But Petir biddiþ aftir þat Cristen men shulden, *stable Jesus Crist in þer hertis*. And blessid be þis reule and þis ordir þat alle Cristen men shulden holde.

ÞE SIXTE SONDAI PISTLE AFTIR TRINITE.

[SERMON XXXVI.]

Quicumque baptizati sumus.—ROM. vi. [3.]

What it is to be baptized into the death of Christ,

POUL telliþ in þis epistle how we shulden lyve bi lore of Crist, for Crist tauȝte til his deþ how men shulden holde his ordir. And Poul telliþ here sutilli to what witt we shulden take þis. He bygynneþ and seiþ þus; *Which ever of us be baptisid in Crist Jesus, we ben baptisid in his deþ*. Bodily baptisinge is a figure, how mennis soulis shulde be baptisid fro synne, for witt of Crist wole not suffre to kepe þis figure but for greet witt. Bodili waishing of a child is not þe ende of baptisyng, but baptising is a tokene of waisching of þe soule fro synne, boþe original and actual, bi vertu taken of Cristis deþ. And þus, *we ben biried wiþ him bi baptylm in to a maner of deþ*. And so Cristis resurecioun was figure to us, how we shulden lyve. And herfore seiþ Poul þus aftir þat, *as Crist was risen fro deþ bi glorie of þe fadir of hevene, and so shulden we lyve bi þis figure in newnes of goostli lyf*. And so þis watir þat we ben putte inne is token of Cristis tribulacioun, fro his bygynnyng to his deþ, and techiþ how we shulden lyve here so. Þe baptising of us in þis water bitokeneþ boþe biringe of Crist, and how we ben biried wiþ him fro synne þat rengneþ in þis world. Oure takyng up of þis water bitokeneþ þe rysyng of Crist fro deþ, and how we shulden rise goostli in clenness of newe lyf. So, riȝt as synne is rote of deþ, so shulde we kepe us fro synne after.

¹ So in G; *Cristene*. A.

² This sentence is omitted in I.

For *3if we ben made plantid to þe liknesse of Cristis deþ, þan shulde we be also like to Cristis rysyng fro deþ.* Þe first book of Goddis lawe telliþ how erþe is cursid in mannis werk, for erþe þat man beriþ in his bodi crokide to synne til¹ tyme of Crist. And, for Cristis bodi myzt not synne, þefore oure erþe was blessid in Crist. And *3if we ben plantid in Cristis bodi, þan we shulen have þe fruyt þat sueþ.* And þus we have in a maner an old man and a newe man; oure olde man is þe fleishly man, wiþ synne and lustis þat suen him; þe newe man is a spirit, purgid bi love and lyf taken of Crist. And þus seiþ Poul, *þat oure olde man is done on cros on a maner wiþ Crist, to distrye þe bodi of synne, þat we serve not aftir to synne.* And þus þe bodi of synne of man is fleishlynes of mannis freelte, and þis bodi shulde be distried, and holy purpos of spirit quykened. And þus seiþ Poul, *þat he þat is deed to synne is justified fro synne.* Þat man is dede to synne, þat is delyverid fro þat synne; and generali þat man is deed to a þing, þat is not quykened to þat þing. And þus it is a greet grace þat a man be deed to synne, for þanne he mut be quykened to vertue þat is contrarye to synne, and þanne he mut be justified and delyverid fro synne. And þus seiþ Poul þat, *3if we ben deede wiþ Crist, we bileven þat we shulen lyve togidere wiþ him.* For *3if þis olde lyf be dede, and oure lyf of synne be distried, lyf of clennes mut nedis dwelle; and so men shulde be in blis wiþ Crist.* And we shulden wite bi bileve, *þat Crist rysyng azen fro dede men, shal never more aftir die in bodi, and deþ shal not after be lord of him.* And þus men shulden die fro synne; and þus, as Crist lyved to God, and was evermore *deed to synne,* so we shulden, fro þat we ben risen azen to lyf of Crist fro oure olde lyf, and we shulden ever *ben deed to synne and lyve to God,* in liif of vertues. And þus gesse *3e 3ou deed to synne, and lyvyng to God bi meene of Jesus Crist oure Lord.* Þat man is deed to synne, þat wantiþ lyf for to synne; as he is deed to rihtwisnesse þat wantiþ wille to kepe it. As þat man lyveþ to synne, þat haþ strenþe and wille to synne, so þat man lyveþ to Crist, þat wole kepe his strenþe to Crist.

and to rise
again and live
with Christ.

¹ in, 1.

ÞE SEVENÞE SONDAI PISTLE AFTIR TRINITE.

[SERMON XXXVII.]

Humanum dico propter infirmitatem.—ROM. vi. [19.]

The apostle adapts his words to the capacity of the hearers.

POUL telliþ in þis epistle here how men shulden flee fleishli synnes, and seiþ, *he spekiþ mannis lore for sikenes of þer fleish*; as medecine shal be shapen aftir þat a syke man is disposid,— as it is not profitable to preche unto rude men subtilite of þe Trinite, or oþir þat þei cunnen not conseyye. And herfore biddiþ Crist in Matheu, þat his disciplis 3yve not holy þingis to houndis, ne scatere margarites amongis hogges. Þes men in a maner ben houndis, þat ben þus hardid in synne þat after þe tyme þat þei have spued þei turnen aȝen and eeten þe spuyng. Sich men mai tarie¹ seintis, but hooli loore doþ hem no good; and þus special lore of God, and sad as ben precieuse stoones, is not savorid of swynyshe men, for fleishly lustis þat þei have.

He urges those who had been slaves to sin now to become the servants of righteousness.

And þus biddiþ Poul goostli, *þat as þei have ȝouun þer lymes to serve to unclennes in wickidnes, for to mainteyne wicknesse, so þei shulden now ȝyve þer lymes to serve to riȝtwisnes unto holynes*, þat is, sadnesse of holy lyf. *For whanne ȝe weren servauntis of synne, ȝe weren free to riȝtwisnesse.* He is free to a þing þat is not oblischid to þat þing; as sinful men ben free to riȝt, and just men ben servauntis to it; as ay þe more þat a man doiþ riȝt, ay þe more he is holden þerto, for God oblischiþ a man more, þe beter þat he serveþ to God. And herfore axiþ Poul aftir, *what fruyte þe Romayns hadden in þo þingis in whiche þei shamen now*, siþ þat synne made hem strange fro riȝtwisnes, and it fro hem; for God is holden more to man ay þe beter þat he serveþ him. And þus seiþ Poul þat, *þe ende of synnes is þe worste deþ of alle oþir.* And siþ a þing shulde be preisid or dispreisid bi his ende, þes synnes shulden algatis be fled þat

¹ *tarien*, I.

leden a man to siche an ende. *But now, when ze ben delyverid fro synne, and maade servauntis to God, ze have zoure fruyte in to holynes, and¹ zour eende ay-lastinge lyf.* And bi þis may men see how good it is to serve God, for aye þe more þat a man serveþ him, ay þe more free he is, and ay þe lasse þat men ben holden to God, ay þe more bonde þei ben. And zif a mannis holynesse encrease, he resceyveþ þe more goodnesse of God, and zif a man serve werse to God, God ziveþ lasse of his grace. And þus he þat haþ more grace of God is more endettid for more zifte. And þus seiþ Poul sopleþ þat, *þe hire of synne is deb.* And þus seiþ Austin þat a man serviþ to God in suffrynge of peyne for his synne^a. *But grace of God, þat a man haþ here, is ended bi ay-lastinge life.* And so þis grace þat God ziveþ is þis lyf wiþouten ende. But al þis is groundid in grace of oure Lord Jesus Crist.

And here men douten comounli, how þat men serven to God, sum in doing as þei shulden, sum in suffring as þei shulden. Herof it semeþ to many men, þat men þat ben dampned in helle serven as myche and as justli as seintis þat ben blessid in hevене. But here men seien þat bi dyvers resouns þes two men serven to God. But just men serven medefulli, and dampned men aþens þer wille; and so her services ben not even, but of ful divers kyndis.

DE EISTHE SONDAI AFTIR TRINITE.

[SERMON XXXVIII.]

Debitores sumus non carni.—ROM. viii. [12.]

Þe apostle telliþ in þis epistle how boþe oure bodi and oure soule shulde be shapid to serve oure God, after his wille and his lawe. Poul bigynneþ on þis maner; *We ben dettours to þe spirit, but not dettours to þe fleish,* þat we lyven after þe fleishe. And here men taken comounly, þat man is dettoure to þre

The apostle tells us how we are to serve God.

Man is a debtor in three senses.

¹ So G and I; A reads *in*.

^a S. Aug. De Agone Christiano, cap. vii.

kyndis. First and moost to God of heven, þat is a spirit, as Joon telliþ; and of þis dette and of þis spirit spekiþ Poul in þes wordis. And so, siþ¹ þis spirit is beter þan man, man shulde love þis spirit more þan eiþer² of his two kyndis, to live as his spirit wole. And so a man shulde bow his spirit to obeishe to þe spirit of God, and do what God wole þat he do, and þan he ȝeldiþ þe first dette. Aftirward, man is in dette to his owen spirit to do it good; and ȝif he do harm to þis spirit, he rennep in dette to himsilf. So a man þat reuliþ his lyf aftir þe lawe þat God haþ ȝovun him, paieþ his dette, boþe to God and to his owen spirit, as God wole. Þe þridde tyme, man shulde be dettour to his fleishe, þat is himsilf. And þus seiþ Poul, þat nevere man hatide his owne fleish. If he die for love of Crist, he trowiþ to profite to his fleishe; and ȝif he fede his fleish to myche, he erriþ and weneþ to do it good; but ȝit he failiþ not fro comoun love, bi whiche he loveþ kyndly his fleishe. But man shulde love þe secounde spirit more þan he loveþ his fleishe, for he shulde not love his fleishe but to serve beter his soule. And þus man þat passiþ þis love hatiþ in a maner his fleishe.

but is under no obligation to serve the flesh.

And herfore seiþ Poul here, *þat we ben not dettid to þe fleishe, þat we lyve after þe fleishe.* For þanne we maden þe servant maistir³, and aȝens þe lawe of God we loveden more þat he loveþ lasse. And whoever þus reversiþ God, and chaungiþ in love þe ordre of kynde, God mut nedis reverse him, and resoun turneþ his love to hate. And to þis witt seiþ Poul aftir þat, *ȝif ȝe liven after ȝour fleishe ȝe shulen die, anentis ȝoure soule;* for goostli deþ þat falliþ to man is wanting of grace to come to heven. And herfore seiþ Poul aftir, þat ȝif *ȝe sleen bi ȝour spirit þe sinful dedis of ȝour fleishe, þanne ȝe shulen goostli lyve.*

Two contrary 'winds,' or impulses.

And þus, for mannis wandring is unstable here, Poul telliþ of two wyndis bi whiche man is moved here. And þes wyndis mut nedes lede a man to contrarie endis. *Sum men ben led bi Goddis spirit,* and þis comeþ fro above, and þus *ben Goddis somes* led, even to þe blisse of heven. Þe secounde spirit is fleishli, and so it mut be erþeli, and come bineþe fro þe fend;

¹ and, for, G, I.

² So in G; A and I have oþer.

³ þe maistir, I.

and þis lediþ þe fendis sones even to þe peyne of helle, and þis wynd shulden men flee. Loke bi what lore men lyven and þerbi maist þou knowe þes wyndis. And þis moveþ many men, how þe wynd of Goddis lawe shulde be cleer, for turblenes¹ in þis wynde mut nedis turbule mennis lif. And þis wynd is spirit of service, and makip man drede as servaunt. And herfore seiþ Poul aftir, *þat ze have not take þe spirit of service azen in drede, but ze have take þe spirit of grace, to take zou to Goddis children.* It is knowun to trewe men, þat bifore þat men weren Cristen, þei serviden in drede of soule to þe fend and many synnes; but fro þat þei weren Cristen men, and suen in lyf þe scole of Crist, þei ben taken to Goddis sones, *and in him crien, fadir, fadir. And þe spirit of God þanne berip witnes to mannis spirit, þat he is Goddis sone.* And þis is a faire title; for *3if we þus ben Goddis sones, we ben eires of God, for we ben eires of God, and togidere eiris of Crist.*

It is knowun of bileve þat Crist is kyndely Goddis sone, and siþ Crist is man wiþ þis, Crist is also mannis broþir. And bi medeful suffryng of Crist man haþ title to come to blis. For noþing lettip þat ne þe heritage is comen to many breþeren, but for takyng þerof from o broþir to anoþir, and make þe first eire pore. But þis is not in þe blis of hevene, for Crist haþ fulli þe heritage, and bi him alle his breþeren, and noon of hem haþ lesse herfore, but oon helpip anoþir in joie. And þus alle Goddis sones ben eiris of God in sum maner, Crist as kyndely Goddis sone, and his breþeren as sones of grace.

The Christian's inheritance.

ON NINÐE SONDAI AFTIR TRINITE.

[SERMON XXXIX.]

Non simus concupiscentes malorum.—I COR. x. [6.]

POUL tellip in þis epistle how men shulden flee fyve synnes, as it was tauht in þe olde lawe, bi fyve figuris þat God made.

The apostle, by examples taken from the history of the

¹ *troubilnesse, G; troublenesse, I.*

chosen people,
warns the
Corinthians
to shun certain
sins,
as 1. covetous-
ness;

2. idolatry;

3. fornication;

4. tempting
Christ; of
which sin the
four sects are
grievously
guilty;

Poul biddiþ at þe first þat Cristen men *coveite not yvel þingis*, bi yvel desires, for þis is rote of oþir synnes. For boþe Adam and Eve synneden bi þis coveitise, for bi þer unskilful desire þei coveitiden to ete of þe appil, and wenden þat it hadde be good for hem; but þei erriden in þis coveitise. Poul biddiþ aftirward þat a man shal not be made a worshiper of fals goddis bi siche wickide coveitise, as sum men in þe olde lawe made a calf þer god. And þus seiþ Poul aftir, þat sum men of þe olde lawe synneden fouli in þis synne, and þus in many oþer synnes. *Þe puple sate to ete and drynke, and þei risen after to pleye*; for wantonesse in siche wille, þat is misturned fro Goddis wille, bringiþ in oþir synnes, and mak iþ man out of bileve. And þus al þes newe ordris coveiten bi wrong desire strange patrouns, or oþir þingis þat bringen hem in wrong bileve. And þus it semeþ þat many men of þes sectis ben heretikes, for þei worshipen falsly þingis aþens Goddis wille; as Poul clepiþ averous men, þat loven to myche worldly goodis, servytours of mawmetis, and þis is open heresie. And þus may trewe men renne bi many synnes þat now ben usid.

Þe þridde tyme biddiþ Poul, *þat men shulden not do fornicacioun*, neiþer bodili ne goostli, for God mut venge for þes boþe. And þus in þe olde lawe God vengide fornicacion, *and killide foure and twenti þousand in o day*, as Poul telliþ. But Poul leveþ a þousand of þes, oþer for þis þousand weren saved, or for oþer cause þat we knowen not. But ay stondiþ þe treuþe of Goddis lawe in þe forme þat Poul telliþ it; for who so killiþ foure men, he mut nedis kille þree. Þe fourþe tyme biddiþ Poul, *þat we temple not Crist, as sum of hem temptiden him, and þei perishiden bi eddris*. And þes men tempten Crist þat loken as beestis to his cros, and wrappen hem silf in lustful liif, and suen him not in his peyne. And þus al þes foure sectis, þat forsaken Cristis rule and maken hem a newe rule, to loke wher þat rule were better, tempten Crist ful falsly, and þus þei perishen bi þe olde eddir. And þis tempting semeþ more grevous þan was þe topir temptyng in figure. For þe children of Israel grutchiden for hem wantide water, but þes newe ordris, now aftir more kyndenes of Crist, hadden plente of wisdom þat Crist ʒaf hem for to drynke, but þei grutchiden aþens þis water,

and drunken podel water of þe canel. And resoun dampnep more þis tempting þan þe topir in desert.

Þe fyveþe tyme biddiþ Poul, *þat we grutche not azens God*, for worldli desire ne fleishli, ne for peyne þat we suffren; but be we paied of Goddis soude. For þe book of Moises telliþ, *þat many men for siche grutching weren killid*, bi God and his angel, bifore þei camen to lond of biheste. And as hem wantide þe bihiȝt ende to þe children of Israel, so þes grutchers muten wanten blis þat God haþ bihiȝt to his. And þus grutchen men to dai azens þe ordenaunce of Crist, and shapen hem a newe reule, as if þei lesten Crist for a fool. And þus in þes fyve figuris many men licly suppose, þat moo perishen in tyme of grace bi þes fyve synnes þat rengnen now, þan diden in þe olde lawe of þe children of Israel.

And ȝit Poul seiþ here, *þat alle þes falliden in figure to hem*, for to teche þe Chirche aftir to fle to synne as þei diden. And herfore seiþ Poul aftir, *þat þes ben writun to oure snybbyng, in to whom þe endis of þe worlde ben comen*. It is knowun of bileve, þat nyȝ þe ende of þe worlde þe fend temptiþ man faster þan he dide in þe bigynnyng, for þe shrew is more envious, and dredid him of þe day of dome. And þerfore God haþ sent a gracious remedie to oure helpe, þat we have a good lore of ensaumplis þat have bifallen, boþe in þe olde lawe and þe newe; and in þes shulden we studie, and leve fablis and newe reulis, for þei helpen not but to flee hem. And þus, ȝif we þenken wel of þe worldis þat weren bifore, how strong and faire men weren þan, and how þe fruytis weren þan good, and now is al turned up so doun, and ȝit we have helpe of Crist bi his lif and his lymes, we shulden herfore leve þis world, and desire more þe blis of heven. And herfore seiþ Poul here, *þat we ben þo ilke men in whom þe eendis of former worldis ben comen*. And þus þer welþe failiþ; for siche þingis muten nedis faile in þer eende, bi wey of kynde. And herfor seiþ Poul aftir, *And þerfore he þat gessiþ he stonde, se he warly þat he falle not*. For boþe we ben now more feble, and enemyes tempten us more sutilli, and þerfore we shulden be more ware, and sue Crist more bisili.

And, for it is nede here men to be temptid many weies,

5. murmuring
against God.

We, near the
end of the
world, whom
the devil con-
sequently as-
sails more
fiercely, have
the advantage
of a great store
of examples.

Various tem-
ptations.

perfore Poul telliþ what tempting man shulde flee in al weies. Sum is tempting of man, and sum is tempting of þe fend. He is taken in mannis tempting, whos soule is temptid of ony enemy, and oþer he aȝen-stondiþ þis tempting, or ellis he risiþ soone of his synne. And þus was Crist taken in temptyng, for he hadde it boþe in bodi and in soule; and þan þis tempting toke him as a suget to þis tempting. But Poul biddiþ oþer aȝen-stonde it, or ellis soone arise fro falling. Þe fendis tempting is þanne, whan it is so hardid in man, þat it leveþ him never til þat he be brouȝt to helle. And so ech man þat is þus temptid is a fend, as ben þei þat he goiþ to. And man shulde trow bi bileve, þat non mai have þis fendis tempting, but ȝif his synne or his foli bryng him into þis tempting. And herfore seiþ Poul aftir,—*God is trewe, þat shal not suffre ȝou be temptid over þat þat ȝe may, but he shal make wiþ ȝoure tempting a ferre comyng of grace, þat ȝe mai susteyne ȝour temptinge.* And þan þe victori of siche temptinge is medeful, as was in Crist. And so who so falliþ in to þe fendis temptinge, his owne foli mut be in cause.

ON TENÞE SONDAI [AFTIR TRINITE].

[SERMON XL.]

Scitis quoniam cum gentes essetis.—I COR. xii. [2.]

POUL moveþ in þis epistle, for former kyndenes of Crist, to be kynde to him aȝen. For clerkis seien, and soþ it is, þat boþe God and kynde haten þat a man dwelle unkynde after greet kyndenesse þat he haþ taken. For soþ it is þat al synne turneþ to unkyndenesse to God. And þus Poul bryngiþ to þes mennis mynde how myche kyndenesse Crist haþ done hem. *ȝe witen*, he seiþ, *whan ȝe weren heþene, ȝe weren led to doumbe maumetis*; goyng as beestis from oon to anopir, as ȝif ȝe hadden no soule of man. And siþ mannis God shulde be a þing þat were þe fairest and þe best, in which shulde lye þe helpe of men, and make mennis soule like to him, þe foulist þing þat

The apostle endeavours to stir up in the Corinthians a feeling of gratitude to God who had brought them from a false to the true religion.

fallij to man, and moost perelous to his soule, is to have a fals god, as men han þat worshipen mawmetis. For þei maken þer soule foule, to greet peril of þer soule; and þus it is a foule þing to be led as a bere to a stake, by untreuþe of a fend, to love ouzt as it were God, þe which þing is not God; for al siche ben fals goddis.

And þus seiþ Poul aftir þat, *noon þat spekij in Goddis spirit puttij cursidnesse to Crist*; for al þe Trinite approved him, and boþe his dedis and his wordis weren holi, and ful of resoun and love. And þus men seien comounli, þat fals men on þre maners putten cursidnes to Crist, and al ben dampnable. First, whan men bi open synne ben not kyndely to Crist, as al sinful men done, for tyme þat þer wille is turned amys. Þe secounde seiynge of cursidnesse þat fals men putten unto Crist, is to seiþ wip herte and word þat Crist was a fals prophete, and curse him bi unbileve, as diden Jewis longe tyme. Þe þridde cursinge, and þe worst, þat fals men putten upon Crist, is þat þei feynen þe name of Crist and his goodnesse wip his lawe, and 3it þei falsen þis in dede, and seien þat oþir lawe is beter. As men of þes foure sectis putten bihynde Cristis lawe, and taken hem a newe patroun and a newe reule, wipouten Crist. Þes men ben ypocritis, þat Crist hatij moost of alle. And þus seiþ Poul aftir, as treuþe suyng of his wordis, *þat noon may seiþ Lord Jesus, but in þe holy Goost*. And Poul spekij here of seiynge þat is seiynge fulli formed, as is seiynge of trewe men, in herte, in word, in dede, þat seien rijtly to Goddis worship in þe name of þe Trinite. What men, trowen we, may þus seiþ, Lord Jesus is oure Lord, savyour fro þe fend, but 3if þe Holi Goost teche hem? for þan he makij no departing fro Cristis godhede and his manhede. But whatever Crist haþ ordeyned or seid, was done to his Chirche at point devys. And in þis cursing fallen þes sectis, þat dispisen Cristis lawe, as 3if his ordenaunce failide, but þer ordenaunce is myche beter; for what man shulde chese anoper lawe but 3if þat lawe were betere þan Cristis lawe? For he is a fool of alle foolis, þat þus techij þe worse wey, and leuþ a beter wey to heven, more lijt and more redi. For he puttij to Jesus Crist boþe cursing and disseit, whan he seiþ bi his dede þat Crist hidde þe beter wey, and tauzt þe unperfit wey, til þat

No man, speaking by the Spirit, could say anathema to Christ,

nor confess Christ, but through the Holy Spirit.

The new sects blaspheme and dishonour Him.

God had sent þes sectis. And þes sectis camen not fulli out till Sathanas was unbounden. Among al blasphemes þat ever sprongen, þis is þe moost cursid, for þei techen opinly in dede þat þus it is, however men glosen. But alȝif þes two kyndis of Crist ben divers in hem silf, ȝit þes two ben o God, and þer ben no moo goddis. And þus men shulden in þer þouȝt þenke, how divisoun of þingis comeþ of þis o God, which God is a spirit.

Diversities of gift and operation in the unity of God's originating grace.

And herfore seiþ Poul aftir, *þat þer ben divisounis of grace, but certis it is þe same spirit*, of whom comen al þes graces, as of o welle comen many strondis. And þus of þis same spirit moten come *divisounis of servises*. Ffor þis o God mut have servauntis aftir þe grace þat he ȝyveþ, siþ þis Lord loveþ degrees in his servauntis as it falliþ. And þus, in þe þridde tyme, *þer ben divisions of worchingis, and ȝit it is þe same God þat worchip al in al þing*. Who shulde grutche for þes divisounis, siþ þei ben þus ordeyned of God? As ech part of a man mut have þes þre diverse in ordre : as first he haþ an hid power, and of þis power comen his willis, and of þis power and of þis wille comen worchingis to mennis profit. And þus it is in man; and so it is in holy Chirche; and joie we of þis ordenaunce of God, siþ it is boþe faire and good.

And þus Poul declarip aftir, nyne degrees of mennis worchingis þat God haþ ordeyned in þe Chirche, as þer ben þree ierarchies. *For ech membre of holy Chirche haþ sum shewyng of þis spirit, boþe to profit of it and to profite of þe Chirche*. As to sum by ȝifte of God is ȝovun *þe word of wisdom*, for sum han sum knowyng here of treupis of þe hye Trinite. *And anoþer haþ word of witt, after þis same spirit*, for sum han knowyng of God, boþe of angelis and of hevens, and how þe world comeþ of God, bi faire ordre þat he haþ ordeyned. *Opere men have bileve*, of hidde þingis and of heye; and al þes þre comen of God, þat ȝyveþ þes to his Chirche. *Sum han graces of helþes*, boþe bodilli and goostli, boþe to have hem in hem silf, and to ȝyve hem to oþer breþeren. And God is *þat ilke spirit*, of whom al þes graces comen. *God ȝyveþ anoþer to worche vertues*, and speciali to knowe Goddis vertue, and how God of his graciose vertue haþ ȝovun men power to worche vertues, as in departyng

of þe see, and in standing of þe sunne, and in many oþer woundris þat God haþ done for mannis sake. And 3it þe wisdom of God 3yveþ, to profit of his Chirche, *prophecie* to sum men, to sue God and fle yvel, as Joon hadde in Apocalips, and sum men after him han lasse. And þis secounde ierarchie answeriþ to þe secounde persone. *To oþirs* is 3ovun, þe sevenþe tyme, *discrecioun to knowe spiritis*; and þis is a greet 3ifte, þat comeþ of þe Holy Goost. Ffor no drede siche spiritis moven men to divers werkes, and it is a good 3ifte of God to knowe good spiritis from yvel. For good spiritis moven ever men to vertuous dedis, and yvel spiritis moven men to yvel, and to bigile men. Þis same spirit 3yveþ to men *divers maner of langageis*, as þis goost 3af apostlis witt and tungis on Wit Sunday. And, at þe last, þis goost 3yveþ to men *to undirstonde witt of wordis*, as þe goost 3yveþ many men witt, to knowe what holy writt meneþ. And al þes 3iftis of God ben proprid to þe Holy Goost; but 3it, siþ al þes þree persones ben o God and o spirit, noon of hem 3yveþ ony of þes, but 3if þei alle þree 3yven hem. *For o God doiþ alle goodis*, and he *departiþ þes þingis to men*, after his power, witt, and *wille*. And þus he departiþ not amys, al 3if þe resoun be hid from us.

ÞE ENLEVENÞE SONDAI AFTIR TRINITE.

[SERMON XLI.]

Notum vobis facio Evangelium.—I COR. xv. [I.]

In þis epistle techiþ Poul bi many resouns, how þis gospel is to be preisid of trewe men, for fruyte of blis þat comeþ þerof. And evangeli¹ is seid as good tyþing of blis; and þus not oonly þes foure gospels, but epistlis of Poul and of opere apostlis ben clepid evangeliis here, and in many oþir placis; and þes ben men out of bileve, þat denyen þat þes ben gospels. And herfore seiþ Poul here, *Y make knowun to 3ou þe gospel þat*

The apostle declares the excellency of the gospel which he preaches,

Evangelie, G, I.

Y have prechid to 3ou, þe whiche 3e have medefulli taken, in which gospel 3e stand 3it¹, bi whiche, 3if God wole, 3e shulen be savyd. And þus many trewe men se how þis gospel is to be preisid bi many resouns, bi þe fruyte þat springiþ to men of þis gospel. First bi autorite of God, þat spak þis song in þis vessel. For prescious licour, in prescious vessel, shulde be preisid of hem þat taken it. Þis licour is wisdom of God, and Seint Poul is þis vessel. And he was ravishid to þe þridde heven, and seiþ þere þe wisdom of God. And þis licoure shulde be taken more dereworþli þan oile of tombis, for it heliþ more mennis soulis þan siche oile heliþ mennis bodies. And meedful takyng of þis witt is anoþer resoun to preise it. And siþ it areriþ mennis soulis, and makij hem þus stonde in bileve, Poul telliþ þe þridde resoun whi þat men shulen preise þis gospel. Þe fourþe resoun þat Poul 3yveþ of preising of þis gospel, is þat it is a nyȝ meene to save men in blisse of heven. And Poul boostiþ not here of þis gospel for his persone, but bi resoun of his God, of whom þis gospel sprong bi grace. And þis shulde move trewe men to take þis gospel and leeve fablis. And Poul telliþ aftir of þis gospel, how men shulden last þerinne, for ellis þer traveile þeraboute were idil and wiþouten fruyte. For preching of Goddis word, and holding þerof in mannis mynde, shulde be to gendre bileve in men, and þerbi brynge forþ good werkes. And Poul seiþ, but 3if þis sue, *þei have bileved here in veyn*; as clerkis seien þat traveil is vein, of whiche comeþ not þe good eende þat men shulden shape to come þerof, bi grace and ordenaunce of God.

concerning the
death of Christ

And þus seiþ Poul; *For what resoun shulde Y have prechid þus to you, and 3e shulden have holden þis lore, but for comyng of þis ende? and 3if þis eende comeþ not, 3e have bileved here in vein. Y bitoke first to 3ou lore þat Y have taken of God, þat Crist was deed for oure synnes, aftir þe witnes of holy writt, and betir witnes may noon be, for þerinne mut God witnes it. Crist diede not for .his owun synne, as þeves dien for her synne, but Crist oure broþir, þat myȝte not synne, diede for synne þat oþir hadden done. And boþe riȝtwisnes of God, and*

¹ So G and I; 3ite, A.

grace and savyng of men, movede Crist to die þus, and not oonli synne of men, for þanne Crist hadde died for nougt and ideliche, wiþouten cause.

Y tolde ȝou more of bileve, *how þat Crist was aftir biried, and how he roos on þe bridde day, bi witnesse of holy writt.* And, for þis bileve was writun in þe book of lyf, and mennis soulis, and also in dede skynnes, Poul clepiþ it many scripturis. And Poul telliþ of sixe degrees bi which Crist was seyn on lyve, aftir þe tyme þat he was deed; and þis bileve shulde be trowid. Poul telliþ þat, *Petre say him, and aftir al þe enleven apostlis.* And after, whan Crist stiede to hevene, *mo þan fyve hundrid men sawen him togedir*, for þei weren warnid bifore þerof, and þerfor moo camen to þis siȝt. *And sum of hem lyveden to þis tyme, of Poul, and sum of hem weren deed bifore.* And aftir was *Crist seen of James, and aftirward of al þe apostlis; and at þe last of al was Crist seen of Poul.* And þus Poul, *as a child þat weren mys-born, distriede synne of þe synagoge, as summe children, whanne þei ben born, sleen þe modir þat beriþ hem.* þus Poul distriede þe synagoge whanne he cam to Cristis Chirche.

Poul seiþ mekeli of him silf, *þat he is þe leeste of þe apostlis, and þat he is not worþi of himsilf for to be clepid apostle, for he pursued Cristis Chirche.* Here we shulden undirstonde þat Poul seiþ soþ as he shulde, siþ noon shulde gabbe for ony cause. Poul seiþ þat he is leest of apostlis, in his owne acountyng, for Poul was woundirli meke; and how he cam bi grace of oþere; and þus he seiþ he is not worþi to be clepid apostle wiþ oþer; and cause of þis unworþinesse is, þat he pursued Goddis Chirche. And herfore seiþ Poul aftir, *Bi grace of God Y am þat Y am.* And þus he is not even worþi to be clepid a Cristene man, but neþeles, *þe grace of God was not ydül in Seint Poul*, for it movede him to profite to þe Chirche, which he harmede bifore. And þus men mai preise God in þe ȝiftis þat he haþ ȝovun hem; but þenke we how Poul travelide for to gete worship to God, and sue we him, in as myche as Poul þus suede Crist.

and His resur-
rection.

The apostle's
humble esti-
mate of himself.

DE TWELFȚE SONDAI PISTLE AFTIR TRINITE.

[SERMON XLII.]

Fiduciam talem habemus.—2 COR. iii. [4.]

The apostle declares the excellency of the grace and ministry of the New Testament.

POUL telliþ excellence of grace of þe newe lawe over grace of þe olde lawe, to come liȝtlier to hevene. And Poul bigynneþ þus; *We have sicke trist bi Crist*, as bi þe best meene to God, *þat we be not sufficient to þenke ouzt of us, as of us, but oure sufficiencye is hoolli of God.* For siþ mannis þenkyng, among his werkes, semeþ moost in his power, and ȝit þis þouȝt mut come of God, more ech oþir werk of man. It is knowun þing to clerkes, þat no creature mai do ouzt, but ȝif God do first þat same þing, and helpe þis creature to do it. And siþ we have a betir proctoure in tyme of grace, to preie to God, þan men hadden in þe olde lawe, no woundir ȝif þis be a betir tyme; and þus shulden we putten of pride, and holli tristen in Jesus Crist. For he þat mai not þenken of himsilf mai do not of himsilf; but al oure sufficiencye is of God, bi þe meene of Jesus Crist. And siþ Crist is boþe God and man, he is boþe juge and proctoure. And þes wordis ben bileve, siþ ech power is of God, and so ech sufficiencye of man mut nedeli be ȝovun of God. And ȝif þou grutche here aȝen, þat a man doiþ many yvel werkes, and God doiþ al þat man doiþ, and so God doiþ many yvelis,—trewe men graunten þis of God, þat ech creature of þe world, where þat it be good or yvel, is made of God, Lord of alle; but synne, þat is no creature, but a defaute of man or angel, is not made of oure God, siþ to do it is faile to God. But ȝif synne were a creature þat myȝt be bi himsilf, þanne synne muste nedis be made of God, and man myȝt make þat it were synne.

The Christian better than the Jewish ministry.

And þis mediatoure, *Crist, made apostlis*, and þer vikers, *covenable servauntis of þe newe lawe.* And þis¹ avaunsement is grete, for it is holden a greet grace to be pope or oþer prelat;

¹ So G and I; þus, A.

but it is a þousand fold more grace to be a mynystre as Crist haþ ordeyned, for þe wyunnyng is more, and þe servise more clene. For siþ þe Newe Testament is þe last lawe of God, and bringiþ men nexte to hevене, þes mynystris bringen þus men bi grace þat God hymself 3yveþ, and worchiþ þus wiþ þes mynystris. And þis is covenable service þat hie preestis shulden have; but 3if þei kepen not wel þis office, noon ben fouler traitours þan þei ben. And grete diversite is fro hem, and fro preestis of þe olde lawe; for prestis of þe olde lawe diden figure of grace þat now is done bi Crist. And þerfore seiþ Poul here, þat prestis of þe newe lawe worchen now, *not bi letter, but bi spirit* þat God 3yveþ; and þis word men undirstoonden þus: þat preestis of þe newe lawe han honest service and liȝt, and ben not killers of beestis, as weren preestis in þe olde lawe; but þe grace þat þei figuriden is made now of God bi his preestis. And herfore seiþ Poul þat now preestis worchen not bi letter but bi spirit.

And here Anticristis tirauntis speken aȝen þe newe lawe, and seien þat literal witt of it shulde nevere be taken, but goostli witt; and þei feynen þis goostli witt after shrewid wille þat þei han. And þus þes foure sectis ben aboute to distrie literal witt of Goddis lawe; and þis shulde be þe firste and þe mooste bi whiche þe Chirche shulde be reulid. And aȝens þis witt Anticrist argueþ many weies; þat holy writt is fals bi þis, bi many parties of holy writt; and so þer is anoþer witt þan þis literal witt þat þou hast 3ovun; and þis is a mysty witt, þe which Y wole chese to 3eve. And þus failiþ autorite of holy writt bi Anticrist. But Poule seiþ to þis entent; *þat lettre*, in þe tyme of grace, þat is taken in þe olde lawe, and holden þat it shulde ever last, as it lastid for þat tyme, *sleep* men goostli, for it lettij men of bileve þat þei ben now neer to blis þan þei weren in þe olde lawe, bi comyng of Crist in tyme of grace. But leve we þes heresies, and bileve we þat many þingis were beden to fadirs in þe olde lawe in figure of þingis in tyme of grace; and þis figure shal be goostli knowun, for ellis literal undirstonding wole slee mennis soulis in unbileve. But *spiritual* undirstonding *quykeneth* mennis soulis bi riȝt bileve. And 3if þou wolt knowe þe ground to juge of þes undirstondingis, bigynne at

The ministers of Antichrist pretend that the Scripture is not to be understood literally, but mystically.

Cristene mennis bileve; and trow þat Crist haþ now lyved here as it was figurid in þe olde lawe, and bide it not as ȝit to come. And so ech word of þis newe lawe þat sowneþ to vertues of Crist, and to charite of his Chirche, shulde be taken after þe letter. And herfore ben heretikis dampned, as Austin telliþ in his book ^a, whiche denyeden literal witt of undirstonding of Goddis lawe.

If the dispensation of the law were glorious, how much more glorious that of the Spirit.

And þus seiþ Poul aftir, *þat ȝif service of deep, writen fouli bi lettris in stones, was in glorie of Moises, so þat þe children of Israel myȝten not loke into his face, for þe glorie of his shynyng, þat was soone voidid aftir, how not more spiritual service of Cristene preestis shal be in þis tyme in glorie, siþ þis glorie boþe is more, and encresip¹ unto blisse.* And ȝif men wolen undirstonde þis resoun þat Poul makip here, it were nedeful for to wite how þe face of Moises shynede whan he cam doun out of Synay, and ȝaf þe lawe writun in stones, and so þe puple durste not loke into Moises face þat was horned wiþ liȝt. And þus þer goostli iȝen weren hidde whan þei lokeden to þis Moises, but he hidde his shynyng face, and þan þe puple spake to him. And siþ Crist in þe newe lawe puttip it in his apostlis hertis, myche more þer goostli suyng shulde be in glorie þan was Moises. For printyng in þer soulis was beter þan was pryntyng in þe stones, and þe shynyng of grace of Crist passiþ bodily shynyng in Moises face. And þis service in Moises lawe is clepid service of deep; for many hadden deep of soule, and deep of bodi sueþ ay þis servyng; but servyng in þe newe lawe quykeneth sum men til þei comen to blis. And þus þis writyng in lettris was foule to writyng in mennis soulis.

Poul makip aftirward anopir skile, *þat ȝif service of dampnyng of many was in worshiþe and glorie of Moises, myche more service of riztwisnes to Cristis children shulde be in glorie.* As who seiþ, siþ þis hidde figure, þat brouȝt men but ferre fro blis, was in so myche glorie and worship to men þat hadden but litil bileve, myche more þe lawe of Crist, and service þat his preestis done, shulde be in more worship and joie, siþ it is neer þe state of

¹ So G; *enreceþ*, I; A has *encreessit*.

^a I have not been able to find this passage.

blisse. But as Moises face was hid, þat tolde but treupe of Jewes to come, so þis hidyng figuride trecchours comyng of Anticrist; for he is aboute many weies to hiden and derken þe lawe of Crist, and bi his tradiciouns fordo þe freedom þat Crist gaf.

FRITTEENÞE SONDAI [AFTIR TRINITE.]

[SERMON XLIII.]

Abrahae dictae sunt promissiones.—GAL. iii. [16.]

POUL telliþ in þis epistle þe excellence of Crist and þis tyme, over þe tyme of þe olde lawe, 3he, 3if men kepten wel þat lawe. Poul notiþ first þis word; þat *to Abraham weren seid biheestis, and to þe seed of him. God seiþ not, and to his seedis, as in many, but as in oon,—and to his seed, þat is Crist.* Poul notiþ, as trewe men shulden, ech varynge of Goddis word, siþ no varynge þerinne is wiþouten cause and witt. And þus whan God bihiȝte Abraham þat he shulde 3yve þat lond to him and to his seed, he seid not pluraliche, þat he shulde 3yve it to his seedis, but singularerly, to his seed, for specialte þat was in Crist. And lond was but figure to þe hey lond of blis. And þus Abraham hadde but figure to come aftir to þe blis of hevене. And also whan God biheetiþ þat al folk shulden be blessid in his seed, he meniþ bi þis seed Jesus Crist, þat blessiþ in joie al maner of folk. And bi þis undirstonden trewe men, þat Crist in 3yvyng of his lawe dide alle þingis wiþouten defaute, boþe in worching and resting; so þat no resting ne levyng was don of Crist wiþouten cause; and siþ he lefte speche of þes ordriþ, he wiste þat þei shulden harme his Chirche. But in þis men muten be ware, and take witnes of quyk signes, for siche levyngis ben not ynow3, but 3if sensible harmes sue.

And *Poul seiþ, þat þis biheest þat God bihiȝt to Abraham was testament confermed of God, which biheeste was aftir made lawe* ^a

The inheritance was given to Abraham by promise,

which promise was afterwards turned into the law.

^a This same mis-translation occurs in the earlier of the two Wycliffite versions, but is corrected in the later.

bi foure hundred ȝeer and þritly. Here men moten knowe þe storye, and witty manere of Poulis speche. It is knowun bi Goddis lawe how God bihiȝt to Abraham þat foure hundred ȝeer and more shulde his seed serve in Egipt, and þei shulden aftir go to þe lond of biheste; and how in þe wey God ȝaf Moises þe lawe writun in þe mount. And al þis lawe was in effect bihest þat God bihiȝte Abraham, siþ þis lawe was but a lore, to bringen his seed to blisse of heven. And so seiþ Poul aftir, þat makyng of þis into lawe, *avoidiþ not þe biheest* of God, but raþer confermeþ it; and so gracious¹ biheest of God was ground of ȝyvyng of þis blis, and not law þat God ȝaf Moises, alȝif it helpiþ aftir þerto.

which was added because of transgressors, and had three parts,

And þus seiþ Poul aftir soþli, *þat ȝif heritage* of blisse of hevene *were* groundid of *þe olde lawe, þan it were not* groundid of *God bi gracious biheste*, þat he bihiȝt. But þis is knowun fals bileve, and so þis first word is soþ, *þat God ȝaf Abraham þis biheste.* And ȝif þou seię, what servede þis lawe, siþ it groundide not þus blis?—but *lawe was putt for trespassours*, þat wolden ellis have be ever wantoun, but ȝif lawe hadde þus chastisid hem; and so þis lawe was profitable. But þis lawe hadde þree parties;—þe first part tauȝt men vertues, þe secounde part tauȝte jugementis, and þe þridde part tauȝte figuris. Þe first part mut ever last, boþe in þe olde lawe and þe newe. Sum of þe secounde part may last þat techiþ just jugementis now; and ȝif it be to rigorous², or impertinent to oure trespas, it shal ceesse on sutil maner; as Crist dide mercy to þe womman þat was taken in avoutrie, bi forme þat þe gospel telliþ. Þes figures and cerymonies þat bitokeneden þe comyng of Crist, muten nedis ceesse in tyme of grace, siþ Crist, ende of hem, is now comen; and ellis we kepten, as³ fals Jewis, a newe comyng of Crist hereaftir.

and lasted till the time of Christ.

And to þis entent spekiþ Poul, *þat lawe was putt for trespassours, til þe tyme þat Crist came*, þat was seed of Abraham; to *which seed God bihiȝte* þat it shulde fulli bigge mankynde. For Crist was made a mediatoure bitwene God and mankynde. And *God puttide in Cristis honde*, lawe þat *he hadde ordeyned* bifor

¹ So I; A has *gracicious*.
G and I; als, A.

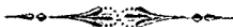
² So G; *rigorus*, I; *rigous*, A.

³ So

bi aungelis. And þus Crist tauzte þe olde lawe, as lord þerof, over Pharisees. And of þis word, mediatoure, techiþ Poul wittily þat Crist is boþe God and man, for ellis he myzte not þus be meene. *A mediatour mut have two partis,* and acord in resoun wiþ hem boþe; and siþ þes partis ben God and man, Crist mut nedis be þes two; *and siþ þer is but oo God,* Crist mut nedis be almyhti. And so Crist mai 3yve þe newe lawe, and suspende sumwhat of þe olde; and siþ he mai not contrarien himsilf, his law may not contrarien his bihestis.

And herfore seiþ Poul aftir, *þat God forbede þat þe lawe be aȝens Goddis heestis,* for þan God reverside himsilf. Poul techiþ aftir how nedeful was Crist þis mediatour, siþ þe olde lawe brouzte not man at þe fulle to be riȝtwis; for þan o doying of þis lawe shulde justifie mankynde; and þan þis lawe shulde be over myche bi every part þat sued aftir. And herfore seiþ Poul þus,—*þat 3if lawe were 3ovun þat myzte quykene* of himsilf, *sopli of lawe were riȝt* groundid. As 3if Poul wolde seie þus, over þe olde lawe þat was 3ovun mut come a man to make asseþ, and þis mut be boþe God and man. *But þis lawe concludid wel, þat al mankynde was undir synne;* and bi occasioun yvel taken was synne agreggid bi lawe. And þe blessid eende of al þis sorwe was conteyned in Jesus Crist, *þat biheeste* maad to Abraham *shulde be 3ovun of bileve of him.* So þat, 3if men bileven in Crist, and maken a knott of þis bileve, þan þe biheste þat God haþ bihiȝt, to come into þe lond of liif, shal be 3ovun bi vertu of Crist to alle men þat maken þis knott. And here mai men opynli see how myche Anticrist is to blame, þat after þe fre lawe of Crist 3yveþ anoþer contrarye lawe; for it lettij keping of Cristis lawe, and puttij men fro fredom of Crist.

Whose mediation brings the justification which the law could not give.



ÞE FOURTEENÞE SONDAI [AFTIR TRINITE.]

[SERMON XLIV.]

Spiritu ambulate.—GAL. v. [16.]

The apostle exhorts the Galatians to walk in the spirit, not in obedience to the flesh.

IN þis epistle techiþ Poul how wey-ferynge men þat lyven here shulden go þe streiþt wey þat lediþ men to þe blisse of hevene. Poul supposiþ at þis bigynnyng þat man haþ two partis, þe which ben þe spirit and þe fleishe; and þei have divers lawes, and divers weies and endis, bi which þei leden men in þis lyf; and þus Poul biddiþ men, *Waundre in spirit, and do not fulle desires of þe fleishe.* Þat man wandriþ in spirit, whos spirit is led bi þe Holi Goost, and hevy fleish of man lediþ him not doun þe weye to helle. And Poul seiþ here wisely, þat men shulden not do fulli þe desires of þer fleishe, but sumwhat þei moten nedis do, as mete and drynke and reste of man we muten nedely taken here; but loke þat þis be reulid bi resoun, þat þe fleish have not þe maistry. *For þe fleish coveitiþ azen þe spirit, and þe spirit azen þe fleish.* And þis is soþ to undirstonde,—þe fleish, wiþ his strengþis þat ben unchastisid¹ bi þe resoun of þe spirit, as it is led bi Goddis spirit,—and to² undirstonde mannis spirit bi þe resoun þat is þus led³; ffor þus fleishe coveitiþ dounward and þis spirit upward, and þus þe fleish coveitiþ to drawe þe spirit after his desire, and þe spirit coveitiþ azen to drawe þe fleishe after his desire. But man þat þus contrarieþ himsilf mut nedis be undisposid bi synne; and so, whan men ben led bi resoun, þei done not al þat þer fleish wole. *And 3if 3e ben led bi spirit, 3e ben not undir þe lawe,* siþ oonli þei ben undir þe lawe þat þe lawe biddiþ punishe for þer synne. And þus, whan a just man is wrongli punishid, his charite beriþ him above þe lawe.

And for to make þis beter knowun, Poul rekeneþ seventene

He reckons seventeen works of the flesh.

¹ So G and I; *unbastid*, A. ² om. G. ³ So in G; A has *bi resoun þat it is þus led*. I reads, *and by undirstondinge mannis spirit bi þe resoun þat it is led þus*.

fleishly werkes, and twelve werkes of þe spirit, to flee þe first and sue þe secounde. *Þe werkes of þe fleish ben opin to man*, as ben fyve þat Poul telliþ first;—as oon is *fornicioun*, as whanne a man deliþ wiþ womman, and nouþer is bounden by matrimonie, and þis lechery is knowun. Unclennesse of þis synne stondiþ in unclene sheding of mannis seed, however it be done. And fleishli men knowen how þe þridde synne of þis kynde stondiþ in *unchastite*, as ben unclene kissingis and unclene touching of folc. Þe fourþe synne is, generally, þe comoun kynde of *lecherye*, on what manere þat it be done; and þis haþ many knowun partis. Þe fyfþe synne, þat sueþ of þes, is *service of mawmetis*; for wymmen¹ drawun ofte men to worshiþe her fals goddis; and bi þis synne was Salamon drawun unto mawmetrie. And in þis cercle of þes fyve turnen men bi leccherye. Þe sixte werk of leccherie is *venefice*, þat is þanne done whan men usen experimentis to geten þis werk of leccherie. And þis is done on many maneris, as men knowun þat usen it. Þe sevenþe synne aftir þis sixte is *enemyte* of contrarious partis, whan o part lettliþ þe lust þat is coveitid of anoþer, and þus rengnen enemytes boþe bitwene men and wymmen. Þe eiztiþe synne is *strif*, þat springiþ of þes former synnes; for of leccherie comeþ stryves and chidingis in wordis, boþe in men and in wommen, about many maner goodis, as ben fairnes and oþir goodis bi whiche leccherye is nurishid. Þe nynþe werke of þis synne ben *envious wordis*, as sclaudris and oþir shrewid wordis, þat comen ofte of fleishly synne. And of þes comeþ þe tenþe synne, þat is *wrappe*, of man or womman. For ofte after þes nyne synnes comeþ wille to be vengid; and þis wille is ofte shewid bi shrewid signes in þe face. Þe enlevenþe synne, þat comeþ of þis, ben maner of *stryves* þat suen after, in wordis or in oþir contynauce of folk, for to venge hemsilf. Þe twelfþe synne is *dissenciouns*, whan men or wommen maken part for to venge hemsilf, more þan God vengiþ him. For God mut suffre mekeli, and at þe last take ful veniaunce.

Þe þrittenþe synne of fleishe ben *sectis*, as we mai now see of foure sectis þat ben now brougt in, aftir þe secte of Cristis ordre.

¹ Sects' the thirteenth work of the flesh; applica-

¹ So G and I; *womman*, A.

tion to the four
sects before
spoken of.

And no drede þes newe sectis comen in for defaute of love; for unite of Crist our patron, and of his reule, shulde distrie þes sectis. Þe fourtenþe werk of fleishlynes ben *envyes*, þat comen ofte to siche sectis among hemsilf, and also to men þat speken aȝens hem. And þus þes sectis wolden have propre goodis, þat is aȝens charite; and þus þei quenchen good love þat shulde be in holi Chirche. Þe fiftenþe werk, þat sueþ after, is *mansleyng*, þat comeþ ofte, boþe in þes newe ordris, and bitwen part and part. Þe sixtenþe werk, þat comeþ after, ben *drunkenessis*, bi felowshipis, for þe fend striþ men to make hem glade þus out of mesure. Þe seventenþe synne ben *etingis togidere*, as eerly diners and late sopers; for þes fallen to siche felowshipes, and many unresonable wordis. Many siche werkes comen of þe fleishe, þat *letten men fro þe rewme of heven*. And so, ȝif þou studie wel, þes newe sectis disturblen rewmes; and herfore þes paynim princis wolden have oonheed in bileve, and oonhede in mennis hertis, for ellis þe comynte wolde not stonde. And herfore have men spoken so myche of þes foure sectis of þe fend.

Twelve fruits
of the Spirit.

Poul telliþ aftir of twelve fruytis, þe which spryngen of þe *spirit*. Þe first *fruyte is charite*, and þat conteyneth al good, as Poul shewid in anoþer place, bi sixtene condicions þerof. Þe secounde fruyte of þe spirit is, þat men have joie togidere. Oon joieþ of anoþeris welfare whan þei acorden in Goddis lawe. And þus þes foure newe sectis have þer joie in varyng, and þat oon is oppressid þat he myȝte conquere Cristis secte. Þe þridde fruyt of þe spirit is *pees*, þat contrarieþ þes stryves, and þis pees shal be in hevne where Cristis secte shal be clene. Þe fourþe fruyte of þis spirit is *pacience*, þat men shulden have. For Crist bi sovereyne pacience groundide his sect, and fordide oþer. But as þe fend haþ brouȝt in sectis, so he haþ brouȝt in stryves; and ȝif a man telle þis gospel, þei seien þat he disturbliþ rewmes, as þei puttiden upon Crist þat he disturblide þe rewme of Jude, bigynnyng at Galile to þe citee of Jerusalem. Þe fiftþe fruyte, and þe sixte, ben *benignite and goodnesse*. Benignite is hete of love, bi which a man wole make his broþir hote; and goodnesse is a beam of þis, bi whiche a man profitiþ to his broþir in hav- yng of worldly goodis by good mesure for þe soule.

Ʒe sevenþe fruyte of þis spirit is *long lasting* in vertues, for þe droppe persiþ þe stone not bi oones, but by longe lastinge. Ʒe eiþtþe fruyte is *bonerness*; whan man spekiþ and doiþ good bi þe forme of Goddis lawe, and not bi rancour ne envie. Ʒe nynþe fruyt of þis spirit is þe *treuþe*, þat men shulden kepe, not oonli in bileve of God, but up þat it profitiþ to his broþir; as þat man were a traitour boþe to God and man, þat siþ a peril come to a puple, and hidde it and nurishide it. Ʒe tenþe fruyte is *temperoure* þat man kepiþ in his lyvyng, boþe in noumbre and in spensis, and oþir þingis þat profiten to folk. And here men þenken þat þes sectis failen in þis temperour, and þei disturblen rewmes bi þis defaute þat þei maynteynen. Ʒe enlevenþe and þe twelfþe fruyte ben, *contynence and chastite*. Contynence suffriþ wiþinne strif of mannis fleishli lustis, but it kepiþ fro outward werkes; and chastite kepiþ from boþe. Ʒes twelve fruytis ben ful ripe in blisse, as Apocalips telliþ;—*and lawe of God reversiþ hem not*, siþ God loveþ hem algatis. *And þes þat ben on Cristis side have done on crosse her fleish wiþ synnes*. Ʒan is mannis fleish done on cros, wiþ what vicis ever þei ben, whan his fleishe is so punishid þat it mai not wandre in hem.

Apoc. xxii. 2.

ƷE FIFTENþE SONDAI PISTLE AFTIR TRINITE^a.

[SERMON XLV.]

Spiritu vivimus.—GAL. V. [25.]

POUL telliþ here more speciali how men shulden flee perils of synne, and supposiþ his former wordis how þat men shulden lyve bi spirit, and biddiþ, *þat ȝif we lyve bi spirit, wandre we here bi spirit and be we not made covetous of vein glorie, stirynge to wrappe togidere in havynge envie togidere*. And ȝif þis mandement of God were wel kepte of ech persone, al synnes werent

The apostle again urges that men should live according to the Spirit,

^a From this point to the end of the epistle sermon for the twenty-first Sunday after Trinity we again have the assistance of the MS. E (Douce 321).

exilid, boþe of pupilis and of persones. Þe first cautel of þe fend, bi whiche he disseyveth men, is to stire hem to vein glorie, for in þis he himsilf was disseyved. And þus he castiþ many meenes to coveite siche heynes. Alle batailis and stryves spryngen of þis cursid roote. And þes men, of þis veyn glorie, lyven not bi þe Holy Goost; but 3if þei lyven spirituali, þat is bi þe wickide spirit; and þus lyven þes newe ordres, bi coveitise of vein glorie. And herfore printe¹ we mekenes instede of þis coveitise, and þanne we wandren surely, bi þe wey þat Crist haþ tauzt.

and admonish
the erring
mildly; which
precept is
broken by the
two popes.

And þus biddiþ Poul aftir; *Briþeren, 3if a man be bifore occupied in ony trespas, to God or man, 3e þat ben spiritual enforme þis man in spirit of softnes.* And þis lore leven þes popis, whan þe ton firtþ wiþ þe toþir, wiþ þe moost blasphemie lesingis þat ever sprong² out of helle. But þei weren occupied bifore many 3eer in blasphemy, and synned azen God and his Chirche; and þis made hem to synne more, for an aumblynge³ blynd hors, whanne he bigynneþ to stumble, he lastiþ in his stumblynge til he cast himsilf down. And þus men of þes newe sectis, fro þe first to þe last, procuren deþ of trewe men þat tellen hem even Goddis lawe. Lord, where þei lyven spirituali, and techen men bi softe spirit! Certis þis is craft of that spirit þat compassiþ here erþeli men, to loke how he mai tempte hem, to putte hem fro Goddis lawe. And 3it blyndenesse of Cristene men makith⁴ hem to sue þes spiritis. And þis shulden spiritual men done, and þenken on þer owne freelte, how myche worþ it were to have helpe *whan men ben temptid* in hem silf. And þus *oon shulde helpe anoper*, bi mekenesse and pacience, whan he is temptid of þe fend to pride or ire or opir synne; and his broþir shulde bere him up azen, for tyme þat he is temptid.

and nourish a
humble spirit.

And þus men shulden bitwene hemsilf fulfille love, þat is Cristis lawe. For 3if ony gesse þat he be ouzt, þe while he is nozt but a shadowe, *þat man disseyveth himsilf.* And in þes wordis þat Poul spekiþ mai men see how God is substance of alle maner of creaturis, and⁵ so þei ben nozt to God. Þe spirit

¹ putte, E.
A has maken.

² sprongen, E.
³ So E; om. A.

³ aumblynde, E.

⁴ So in E;

of man is made of God to ymage and licsesse of him, and he may kyndeli turne fro God, and þanne he is nouzt bi synne. And so Poul techiþ aftir, *þat ech shulde prove his owne werk*, wheþer þat he haþ do þis werk after þe comandement of God, *and þan he shal glorie of himsilf and not of bede men*, ne worldly power. For tyme shal come *þat ech shal bere þe charge* þat God haþ beden hem to do. But ȝit, aftir þe lawe of Crist, ech man shulde helpe his broþir, ouþir bodili or goostli, for þus is ech man chargid of God. But as men helpen not þing of nouzt, but ȝif þat þing have beyng first, so man helpiþ not his broþir, but ȝif he helpe himsilf first.

And herfore biddiþ Poul here, *þat þis man þat is enformed shal comyn wiþ his enformer in al maner of goodis*, boþe bodili and goostli, for þat mai oon do to anoþer. And þus, ȝif freris disseyven þee, aȝens bileve of Goddis lawe, ȝit helpe hem goostli, and withdrawe from hem worldli goodis, for þus þou doist hem myche good, and drawist from hem þer sinful lyf; as God doith good to many men, takynge from hem worldli goodis. And among blyndenesse of þe world þat¹ is oon newest brouzt in, þat þes newe sectis holden not þat a man doiþ hem good but ȝif he ȝyve hem worldli goodis, al ȝif he do hem harm in þis. And here men speken to þes sectis, þat siþ þei, bi lawe of charite, taken goodis fro seculer men, and ȝyven not so myche aȝen, whi shulden not lordis love hem þus, siþ þei seien þat þis is love, and hem falliþ bi Goddis lawe to ben pore, and lordis riche? But Poul seiþ to þes ypocritis, *þat þei shulden not wil þus erre*² for however þes ypocritis seien, *God wole not here be scorned*, for resoun of Goddis lawe moot algatis be fulfillid. For oþir man shal lyve bi Goddis wille in doing good, or suffryng peyne.

And þus seiþ Poul aftir, *þat certis what werkes a man sowiþ, þo werkes shal he reþe*, in reward þat God mut ȝyve. *For he þat sowiþ in his fleish*, lyvynge bi fleishly desires, of his fleishe *shal reþe peyneful corrupcioun*, but *he þat sowiþ in spirit*, of his spirit *shal he reþe aylastyng lyf*. He sowiþ in fleish or in spirit, þat lyveþ aftir fleish or spirit. And þus stireþ Poul aftir, *þat we*

Deceiving friars are to be helped spiritually, by withholding from them our worldly goods.

As men sow so shall they reap.

¹ þis, E.

² willen þus to erre, E.

do good and faile not, for in his tyme shulen we repe, and not faile for evermore. Men þat God ordeyneþ¹ to blis, alȝif þei failen ofte here, ȝit sum maner þei holden on, and don sum good to holi Chirche. And herfore concludiþ Poul, þat we do good þe while we have tyme to al maner of men, but moost to homely men of bileve. It is often seid bifore, þat Crist dide good to al þis world, boþe to heven and to helle, and biside to al þis world. And so men þat shulen be saved ben laborers in Cristis werk, and profiten bi vertue of Crist to al þis world, as Crist dide. But ȝit þer is diversite in helpyng of men in þis lyf; for þes þat treuly holden bileve and shulen be blessid for þer work, ben homely men of Goddis hous, and holden wel Cristen mennis bileve; but þes ypocritis þat feynen þat þei suen Crist and þer patrons, and ȝit þei suen þer goostly enemyes and done² contrariousli to Crist, men shulden not helpe hem so moche as trewe men in Goddis cause.

ÞE SIXTENÞE SONDAI [AFTIR TRINITE].

[SERMON XLVI.]

Obsecro vos ne deficiat.—EPH. iii. [13.]

POULE telde in þe nexte epistle how ech membre of holi Chirche shulde helpe to anopir membre, as ech man shulde helpe to opir; and so þei shulden bere lȝhtier, and algatis beter come to hevене. And þus Poul *preieþ* Ephemians³ to *faile not in his peynful travailes*. For siþ his travailis ben good to hem, and he tristip in Jesus Crist, þat he shulde performe þes peynes, and þus glorifie holi Chirche, þes folc weren to myche foolis ȝif þei failiden in þes peynes, þat is to seie, ȝif þei failiden to joie of hem and helpe of hem. For Poulis tribulaciouns *ben taken for good of þes folk*. And þus, as Poul loveþ hem, shulden þei love hemsilf and him.

And þus for *lastyng in þis peyne*, boþe to Poule and to þes

The apostle insists on the communion of saints in joy and sorrow.

¹ So E; *ordeyned*, A.

² *gone*, E.

³ *Ephesians*, E.

folk, Poul bowid ofte his knees to þe fadir of Jesus Crist; and of þis fadirheed is named al opir in hevene and erþe. 3if we speke of fadirheed þat is trewe and not fals feyned, þat mut have o bigynnyng, þat is fadirheed of þe first persone. Al kyndely fadirhede of erþe mut nedis come of þe Trinite, and so of þe first fadirhede, þat is wel to al oþer. Al goostli fadirheed, of þat¹ þat þe Trinite is fadir of men, springiþ of þis fadirheed, bi which God fadriþ his Sone. And þus, 3if men clepen soþli oþer men to be þer fadir, þat fadirheed mut nedis come of fadirheed of þe first persone, as good men seen² here þat þe Trinite is þer fadir. But feyned fadirheed of þe pope, and newe fadirheed of þes abbotis, 3if þat it be falsly feyned, is groundid in þe fadir of lesyngis.

And for love of þis eende, Poul preieþ þus to God; *þat he 3yve to þes folc, astir þe richesse of glorie, vertue for to be strengþid bi his spirit into þe inward man, þat Crist dwelle bi bileve stably in þer hertis.* And here ben two trinites; þe first trinite unmade, and þe topir trinite made, þat is feiþ, hope, and charite. And to preie þus for þis trinite is beter preier þan for worldly þing. And bi þis power of siche 3iftis is God seid riche wiþinne; and þis passiþ al worldli richesse, for þis power mai not faile. And þus shulde men *be rootid and groundid in charite, for to take wiþ al scintis which is þe brede, and lengþe, and heyne, and depnes,* bi which God haþ siche names. And here many greet men undirstonden bi þes foure wordis diversly. But sum men þenken þat Poul meeneþ, þat God haþ þes foure names bi foure divers resouns þat shulen be knowun fulli in blisse. So þat Goddis brede is myche shewid by brede of God in creaturis; and Goddis lengþe is also shewid bi aylasting of hem; and þe heynesse of God is his excellence above creaturis; and þe depenesse of God is makynge of alle creaturis, fro bodily þingis þat ben made to þe last goostli creature. Þis shulen we fulli knowun in hevene, but here we blabren it as blynd men.

And bi þis, *3e shulen knowe þe above-passing of charite of Crist* þat passiþ al cunnyng here. And þus bi þes foure branchis here men tellen of charite of Crist. For Crist lovede boþe

True and false
paternity.

He prays that
his converts
may be
strengthened
and settled,

and so come to
understand the
fourfold charity
of Christ.

¹ So E; A reads *God*.

² *seyen*, E.

frendis, and enemys, and God, þat is above his manhede, and creaturis, byneþe his manhede. *To þis Lord þat mai do more plentenously þan we axen or we undirstonden to axe, aftir þe vertue þat worchip in us, to him be¹ glorie in þe Chirche, and in Crist Jesus, bi al kynredis of þe world of al worldis.* Þes wordis of Poul ben ful sutil; but it is ynow³ to us to knowe sumwhat of Cristis charite, and þeraftir shape oure charite; for in blisse shulen men cunnen al þes þingis wiþouten traveil. And þefore þe best conseil were now to us to practise oure lif in charite, and to aʒen-stonde Cristis enemyes, boþe for love of Crist and hem. And trowe we not to þes heretikes, þat ne men mai speke wel aʒens hem bi þe stronde of charite; for so dide Crist, boþe God and man. Clense þee fro pride and envie, and cloþe þe in mekenesse and charite, and stonde strongly aʒens Goddis enemyes, for þis is token of love of God.

ÞE SEVENTENÞE SONDAY [AFTIR TRINITE].

[SERMON XLVII.]

Obsecro vos ego vincitus in Domino.—EPH. iv. [1.]

POUL telliþ in þis epistle al Cristene men to kepe charite, for þis is lore ful and ynow³ to ech man to come to hevene. Poul bigynneþ, and seiþ þus; *I, bounden in þe Lord, preye ʒou to kepe þis lore, for love of God and of ʒoure soule.* Poul meneþ þat he was bounden, not for þeste ne for mansleyng, but for þe love of God þat he hadde to teche his lawe. And þus he was boundun in prisoun at Rome bi enemyes of Crist; and² siþ Crist is Lord of alle, in þis Lordis name was he bounden. And þis shulde move þes Ephesies to take hede to Poulis wordis, for he chargiþ hem not bi money, ne biddiþ hem bi lordly mandementis, but preieþ hem for þer soulis helpe of þing þat shulde be good for hem. Lord, what love hadde þis Poul to Crist and to Cristene men, whan he wroot þus in prisoun

The apostle urges all Christian men to keep charity.

¹ So in E; A has *bi*.

² So in E; om. A.

to folk to turne hem to Crist! And whan he myzt frely go, he travelide to hem many perils. Lord, how ferre is oure pope and his bishopis fro Poulis lyf! whan þei comanden men to come to him, alȝif God comande þe contrarie; and þis is for worldli wynnynge, and to shewe þer lordshipe. Poul preieþ þes men mekeli and honestli, not for¹ his wynnynge, *þat þei walken worpili in þe cleping þat þei ben clepid.* Þei ben clepid Cristene men of Crist, Lord of al lordis; and ȝif þei taken worpili þis name of þis Lord, þan þei muten holde his lawe², and teche it and defende it; for he is traitoure to þis Lord, þat foulþ falsly his name. And þis preiynge þat Poul preieþ is ferre fro Anticristis somounnyng, for it conteyneþ fyve partis, þat drawun to oonhede and pees, and not to rebelloun ne lordship of Anticrist.

Poul biddiþ hem at þe first to go *wiþ al mekenesse.* It is greet mekenesse þat þe lasse obeishe to þe more, but it is more meeknesse þat þe even obeishe to his even. But it is moost mekenesse, þat þe Lord obeishe to his servaunt; and þus came Crist to Baptist, to be baptisid of him. And þus shulde Cristene men kepe þes þree degrees of mekenes; and specialy siþ men witen not what witt þat God haþ ȝovun þer breperen to telle³, and to consaile hem to þing þat is Goddis wille. And herfore Poul biddiþ aftir, þat þei go in *bonernesse*, þat is a vertue of mekenesse, whanne men done as þei ben conseilid; for þes men ben trefable in Goddis name, as þei shulden. But Cristene men shulden not trowe to ech spirit þat spekiþ to hem; for ȝif it be aȝen resoun, and sowne to worldly heynesse, and not to profite to mennis soulis, þei shulden not do aftir it; for þat were fendis obedience, and unobedience to God. Þe þridde tyme preieþ Poul, þat þei go wiþ *pacience* to God, and suffre wrong of þer neiȝboris, for bi sicke pacience may oo man *supporte anopir*, and overcome his pride and ire, bi whiche þe fend temptiþ him. And þis is a gret work of goostli mercy to þi broþir, and bi sicke pacience ben þe fend and man overcomen.

And aftir þes foure honest preiynge biddiþ Poul, *þat men be bisie to kepe oonhede of spirit in bond bi which God knittiþ pees.*

and humility.

and tractable-
ness,and be patient,
and bear with
one another,
in peace and
unity.¹ So E; om. A.² So E; *lawes*, A.³ *telle hem*, E.

Would that
this last pre-
cept were ob-
served by the
four sects!

And wolde God þat þes foure sectis wolden traveile aboute þis oonhede! for þan shulde pees be in þe Chirche wipouten strif of doggis in a poke. Anticrist haþ put diverse doggis in þe poke of his obedience; and þei grutchen azens þis, for it is so unkyndely. For al men shulden be *o bodi*, siþ þei shulden be o chirche; and þei shulden be o spirit, as it was in þe former chirche. Luk seiþ, þat of þe multitude of men þat trowiden þan in Crist, was o herte and o soule, and so shulde it ȝit be, siþ al þe Chirche *is clepid ȝit, in oon hope of þer clepyng*. For al Cristene men ben clepid to þe fest of hevenli blis, but Crist seiþ þat fewe ben chosen, for fewe holden oonhede of love. And herfore haþ þe fend brouzt in diversite of þes newe ordris.

The four-fold
unity of be-
lievers

And herfore telliþ Poul oonhede in foure þingis, þat shulden move þes foure sectis to kepe oonhede in þer lif. Þer is *o Lord*, seiþ Poul, *and o bileve to alle men, and o baptyng* in þe ground. For o Crist baptysiþ þe soule, o water cam out of his herte, o vertu makij men clene; and þis is oonhede of þe Trinite. Þe fourþe oonhede þat Poul telliþ is, *o God*, þat knyttiþ al þes, for *he is fadir of alle men*, and speciali of al his children; and ȝit *he is above alle þingis, and bi alle þingis, and in us alle*. Blessid be þis God, þat þus drawiþ men to oonhede of himsilf.

disturbed by
mis-belief con-
cerning the
Eucharist.

And here trowun Cristene men þat diversite of bileves þat ben in þe sacrid oost makij diversite in þe Chirche; and þis mut nedis make aftir diversite at þe day of dome, and maken sum men be taken to hevене, and sum men to go to helle. For Poul seiþ, þer is oo bileve þat alle Cristene men shulden have; and diversite in o part þerof makij diversite in al þe bodi. And wolde God þat lordis knewun þe errour¹ in þis unite, and constreyneden men in þe Chirche to acorde in þis bileve; as Crist seiþ, and seintis aftir, þat þe oost, whan it is sacrid, is verili Cristis owne bodi in forme of breed, as Cristene men bileven, and neiþer accident wipouten suget, ne nouzt, as heretikes seyn. And errour in witt of holy writt haþ brouzt in þis heresie. And þey seyen² þat holy writt is fals, and ȝyven it witt aftir hemsilf; and þus þis witnes moveþ hem not þat Crist seiþ þus in holy writt. But oon newe secte seiþ on

¹ *kneuen errors*, E.

² So E; A has *þei þat seyn*.

in þis, and anopir sect seiþ þe contrarie. But wolde God þe bodi of holy Chirche wolde forsake hem til þei acordiden; siþ o sect haþ o feiþ, and anopir haþ here þe contrarie; but ech of þes fals sectis azen-seiþ bileve of Crist. And 3if þei seien, to plesse þe puple, þat þis oost is Cristis bodi, þei seyn pryvely¹ þe contrary, and sclaundren þe pope and his courte, þat al3if he seide sum tyme þat þis oost was Cristis bodi, now þei han tau3te him bettere, and seien þat it is worse þan ou3t².

PE EI3TENÞE SONDAI PISTLE [AFTIR TRINITE].

[SERMON XLVIII.]

Gracias ago Deo meo.—I COR. i. [4.]

IN þis epistle preisþ Poul his disciplis þat 3it ben trewe, and stonde wel in Poulis lore a3ens þe wordis of fals apostlis. Poul seiþ, *I zelde grace to my God evermore for 3ou alle, in þe grace þat is 3ouun of God to 3ou*, bi my traveile. Joon seiþ, Y have no more grace of alle my children, þat Y have geten in Crist, þan þat Y here þes children walke ri3tli in Goddis lawe; for siche children schulen³ bere witesse at domes day of apostlis traveil. And so shulden dampnyd men bere witesse, hou þei weren murþered in bodi and soule in þis lyf by yvel prelati. And þus þes fadirs gon wiþ þer sones to peyne of helle for evermore. Poul, ne ony opir apostle, þankeden not þer sugettis for gold, ne for worldly cause or wynnyng, but for þei profitiden in Cristis lawe. And þus newe prelati 3yven þer þankyngis to men for love of Anticrist, where *apostlis þankiden God in Jesus Crist*, bi whom þei profitiden. And þus þes prelati suen apostlis as gre-houndis suen an hare; for þei pursuen trewe men for trewe teching bi Goddis lawe; and siche suyng of apostlis, siþ it is pursuyng of Crist, axiþ no mede of God but peyne, siþ fendis children ben þerbi dampned.

Poul telliþ how þis puple *is made riche in Jesus Crist in al*

The apostle thanks God for the graces received by the Corinthian converts,

that they were made rich in

¹ So E; om. A.

² nou3t, E.

³ So E; sbullen, A.

utterance and
in knowledge.

maner of word and cunnyng, þat turnen hem to getyng of blis. For boþe þer speche and þer cunnyng was so reulid bi Goddis lawe, þat þei diden medefulli boþe bi þer speche and þer cunnyng, and þis riches¹ is myche more þan never so myche hid money. For worldly riches þat man gederip, leeveþ aftir and drawip him to helle; but þis riches goip bifore to hevene, and moveþ trewe men to come aftir. *And witnes of Jesus Crist is confirmed in siche men*, þat þei loven him and his lawe; and herein stondip verre richesse. *And so no þing faillip to hem in ony grace*, to putte from hem hevene², *for þei abiden surely þe shewyng of oure Lord Jesus Crist*. For þei shal be knowun at domesday, bi clenness and bi bride cloþis, þat þei ben of Cristis secte, and shulen be taken in aftir his mustre. *And Crist shal conferme þes knyztis wipouten synne til þe eende, in þe day of þe comyng of oure Lord Jesus Crist*. And here spekip Poul bi prophecie, or ellis desiring þat it be so.

DE NYNTENÐE SONDAI [AFTIR TRINITE].

[SERMON XLIX.]

Renovamini spiritu mentis.—EPH. iv. [23.]

POUL tellip in þis epistle how men shulden amende þer lyf, and how þat þei shulden serve God boþe generali and speciali. And Poul biddip þus first; *Be ȝe newid in spirit of ȝoure mynde*. And to undirstonde þes wordis, undirstonding of þree wordis is nedeful. First, what is a mannis mynde; aftir, what is þe spirit of þis mynde; and aftir, how man shulde be newed aȝen in spirit of þis mynde. No drede þis mynde of man is þe substance of his lyfe, þat is, a spirit lyke an angel, þat ever shal be in blisse or peyne. And bi resoun þat he may knowe himsilf, þis substaunce is clepid mynde. And so þe secounde word, of þe spirit, haþ many wittis, and þis is one³; þat⁴ þe propre

The apostle
urges his con-
verts to be
renewed in
spirit.

¹ *richees*, E.
is þat oon.

² *hem fro hevene*, E.
⁴ So E; om. A.

³ So in E; A reads *but þis*

acte of þis spirit, bi whiche he saveriþ many þingis, oþir hevenly þingis or worldli þingis, is clepid a spirit in þis place. And þus man is made newe aȝen in þe spirit of his mynde, whan his soule haþ good savour of hevenli þingis as he schulde. For in tyme of grace of men, whan þei weren baptisid of Crist or ellis bi grace confermed of him, þei saveriden þanne hevenli þingis; and if þei saveriden þes aȝen, þei ben renewid¹ in þis spirit. And þis is a good preier to bidde for men þat þus han fallun.

And þus biddiþ Poul aftir, *þat men shulden cloþe þe newe man þat is born aftir God in riȝt hoolynesse and truþe.* Poul clepiþ þe newe man þe substaunce of mannis soule, in as moch as it is newid, to lyve aftir Goddis ordenaunce; and so þe good lyf of man is þe cloþing þat Poul biddiþ. But, for men mai not have þis cloþing, but ȝif two þingis worchen þerto,—þe grace of God is þe first, and þat oþer, mannis werk,—þefore seiþ Poul aftir, þat þis man is made of nouȝt, aftir ymage and licnesse of God. For þe þingis of his soule ben clene peintid wiþ vertues, and þis is aftir þe Trinite, as Poul meneþ aftir bi þre wordis, in riȝtwisnes and holynes and treuþe shal al þis be done. Riȝtwisnes þat mai not folde answeriþ to þe Fadir of hevene, and to þe power of þe soule, þat Austin clepid mannis mynde. Holynes þat is so stable answeriþ to þe secounde persone, and to resoun of mannis soule, þat is þe secounde þing þerof; for no þing is more resonable þan to quemely serve God. Þe þridde word, þat is treuþe, answeriþ to þe þridde persone; for trewli schulde man love² God, even wiþ þe knowyng of him.

And for þis þing put ȝe away lesingis, and speke ȝe treuþe ech wiþ his neizbore, for we ben ech membre to oþir. Alle þes þree seid vertues ben treuþis in a maner, siþ þei ben evenhed³ to Goddis witt, and þat is treuþe, as clerkis seien. And herfore, siþ God hatiþ lesingis moost of alle oþer þingis, we shulden put away lesingis, and kepe treuþe in al oure lif. And love schulde move men to þis þreuþe, siþ ech man schulde be oþiris membre. Ech man schulde come to blisse and be membre of holy Chirche, and so ech man schulde goostli do to oþir þe office of ech membre. And to þis witt seien seintis, þat ech membre

putting on the
new man of
holiness and
truth,

ceasing to lie
one to another

¹ *renewid*, E.

² *serve*, E.

³ *evenyd*, E.

and keeping
anger under
control.

of holy Chirche is transformed in to Crist, for love and werk þat he haþ.

And þus, as Poul biddiþ aftir, *Men shulden be wroop and not synne*, for men shulden hate mennis synnes, and love þer kynde and þer vertues. And þus was Crist wrapful, but *þe sunne felde not on his wrappe*. And þus shulden Cristen men be wrap, and kepen þre þingis in þer wrappe. First, þat þer wrap shulde not longe last, and herfore biddiþ Poul, *þat þe sunne go not down upon þer wrappe*, for þan it were to longe lastinge. Þe secounde witt of Poulis wordis biddiþ, þat þe sunne of rihtwisnesse go not down fro man bi grace, for sich wrappe þat he haþ. And so þe þridde witt of Poulis wordis biddiþ, þat man shulde not be wroþ, but for þe more liȝt of love, þat shulde shyne fast in his soule. And wel were him þat hadde þis lore þat Poul meneþ in þes¹ short wordis. And for as myche as a man haþ love quenchild in his soule, þe fend comeþ in instede of love, and bringiþ in synne wiþ him. Þerfore seiþ Poul aftir, *Nyle ȝe ȝyve stede to þe devel*, but holde ȝour love ever hool, and þat shal ever holde þe fend out. And herfore biddiþ Poul aftir, *þat he þat stole, stele he not more, but more worche he wiþ his hondis þat þing þat is good, þat he have whereof to ȝyve men þat suffren nede*. And þis lore þat Poul techiþ is usid to litil of freris and oþer. For þan þes strong men shulden traveile, and not þus begge and gabbe on Crist; and þan þei shulden ȝyve to nedy men þat Crist haþ put in his prisoun.

ON TWENTIÞE SONDAI AFTIR TRINITE.

[SERMON L.]

Videte quomodo caute ambuletis.—EPH. V. [15.]

The apostle
urges to a wary
and circumspect
walk in
this world,

POUL telliþ in þis epistle how men shulden walke in þis lyf, and knowe weies to flee perilis, for many spies ben made to men. Poul biddiþ at þe bigynnyng, *to see how men shulen warly*

¹ So E; A has þis.

walke. For many men ben travailours here fro Jerusalem into Jerico, and herfore it were nede to se first aspies þat þe fend haþ leid, for blydenes in þis point makij men to be taken in his gnaris¹, and þan þei ben his prisoners, and lettid to serve freeli Crist. And herfore seiþ Poul aftir, þat men shulden *not walke as unwise, but as wise men*, bi wisdom þat God haþ ʒovun. And þis lore shulden prestis lerne, and speciali hey prelatis; siþ þei shulden scure² þe weie to þe oost þat comeþ aftir, þei mut nedis kunne Goddis wisdom, for worldli wisdom wole make hem taken. And among al synnes of þe fend, bi³ þis synne he blyndij þes capteynes, þat þei usen not Cristis lawe but mannis, to gete hem worldly goodis. And bi þis blydenes of þes capteynes þe fend getij to helle many men.

And Poul biddij þat we shulden *bie aʒen þe tyme, for þe daies ben yvel.* It is knowun bi bileve þat tyme was ʒovun of God to man for to disserve þe blisse of hevene, and þis lost man bi his synne. And þerfore it is nedeful now men to bie aʒen tyme, but þei weren not riche herto, but bi vertu of Cristis passioun; and þerfore men shulden putte þis passioun as þe ground of þis bigyng⁴, and putten to medecines þat Crist ʒaf, and þus bye aʒen þis tyme, and make þis tyme, be it never so short, ynowʒ to man to bigge heven. And þus men muten nedlingis put þer painful lyf to þis tyme; for bi þis peyne and love-drede, and wiþ wisdom þat Crist haþ tauʒt, mai men go siker fro enemyes, or ellis þei ben cauʒt bi þe weye.

And þus VI and XXX houris þat Crist lay in þe sepulcre quykenen al Cristene mennis tyme, bi þre partis of þe Chirche; so þat ech have twelve houris þe which maken o day to man. So þat preestis han twelve houris, and seculer lordis twelve houres, and þe comouns twelve houris; and þanne þei mai come to hevene to kepe þe paþ þat Crist haþ tauʒt. So þat ech day of Cristen man be dispendid in peyne and sorewe, and hope of oure maistir Crist, þat helpij þes children fro þes enemyes. For certis þes daies ben ful yvel, by assailing of þe fend. And herfore biddij Poul aftir, þerfore *nyle ʒe he made unware, but undirstonding what is Goddis wille.* Þes men ben

and that we should redeem the time.

The thirty-six hours during which Christ lay in the tomb mystically interpreted.

¹ grynnes, E.
bi grynnyng.

² skoure, E.

³ wiþ. E.

⁴ So in E; A has

made unware, þat reulen þer lyf bi mannis witt, and leven þe witt þat God haþ ȝovun to passe þis paas fro oure enemyes. And þes men muten nedis be taken and putt in þe fendis prisoun, but þe wille of oure duke forfendiþ þis, and he is heed of al þe Chirche. And þus, ȝif ony man be taken, his owne unwitt is cause þerof; and þerfore Poul biddiþ undirstonde, what is þe good wille of God. And alȝif God be hid fro men, ȝit studie þou wel his lawe, and þou shalt wite what is his wille, boþe in oo þing and in opir.

The apostle urges men to a joy and cheerfulness not of the flesh but the spirit;

And þus Poul biddiþ aftir, *Nyle ȝe be drunken bi wyne*, for siche drunkene men ben unable to studie aftir Goddis wille, siþ *in wyne is lecherie*, bi which men wexen wood fro God. And goostli lecherie of man mut nedis make him faile in witt, but men shulden *be fillid of þe Holi Goost, speking to hemsilf* bi him, not in foli, but in wisdom, aftir þe profite of þer soulis. And þes men þat ben fillid þus, speken to God and to hemsilf in *salmes, in ympnes, and goostly songis*, þat ben holden foli to þe world; and þus *þei singen in þer hertis to God*. And þus pilgrimes þat gone liȝt, and singen gladli bi Cristis vois, and whistelen sweteli bi hope of blis, feren þus þer goostli enemyes. For it is seid comounli þat a wey-goer, whan he is voide, singiþ sure bi¹ þe þeef^a, and money mak iþ him drede more. And þus bade Crist to his apostlis to bere not² in þe wey þat shulde lette hem for to wandre, and do þer office þat he bade. And þus þe fend, bi worldli lordshipis, mak iþ preestis to-day so hevy, þat he dryveþ hem doun to helle, as his sones þat swepten his weye. And al þer song þat þei singen is of þe worlde and worldli goodis, and into þis is preching turned, and opire preieris maad to God; and þis is vois made of þe fend bi which he cacchiþ³ on his carte.

abounding in thankfulness and docility.

But Cristene men shulden treuly, *ȝelde þankingis to God and þe fadir* of heven *ever more for al þingis, in þe name of oure Lord Jesus Crist*, þat is a meene to ȝyve alle þes to his children; and þis is a ful greet grace. And þus, for men shulden be meke, Poul biddiþ hem *to be suget ech man to his broþir in þe love-*

¹ *surely before*, E.

² *nowt*, E.

³ *catchiþ*, E.

^a 'Cantabit vacuus coram latrone viator.' Juv. x. 22.

drede of Crist. Whan ech serveþ to opir, and doiþ him good bi charite, þan ech man is þus suget, wiþouten love of worldli worship. But siþ þe pope lettij þis lore, he coude not wite how he shulde be suget to opir men þat weren his sugettis; for he rengnede in Luciferis pride, and knewe not how bi charite man shulde obeishe to his servaunt. But as Lucifer coveitide to have ful evenhed bi¹ God, so Anticrist his viker wole be moost in worldly worship; but whan he is heirest, as smoke þan he shal vanishe away.

XXI SONDAI PISTLE AFTIR TRINITE.

[SERMON LI.]

Confortamini in Domino.—EPH. iv². [vi. 10.]

POUL techij in þis epistle to fiþte wiþ oure goostli enemyes, and how we shulen be goostli armed, and in what forme fiþt wiþ hem. First Poul confortij Cristis knyztis to make hem hardi for to fiþt, and seiþ; *Be 3e confortid in þe Lord and in power of his vertue.* For þe capteyne of oure bataile, þat is Crist boþe God and man, haþ lordship of al þis world, siþ þat he is Lord of Lordis. What good knyzt shulde drede him to fiþt in þe armes of þis Lord? And bi þes same wordis of Poul it sueþ, þat he is of more power þan al þe fendis þat ben in helle, or ouzt þat mai reverse him. And siþ he overcam þe fend, þat is heed of contrary bataile, he haþ vertue bi his manheed to overcome al enemyes of his knyztis; and in þis knyztis of Cristis bataile shulden be confortid for to fiþte. And herfore biddij Poul aftir to take oure armes in Goddis name; *Cloþe 3ou, seiþ Poul, wiþ Goddis armer, þat 3e may stonde azens þe fendis sautis. For þer is not fiþting to 3ou azens fleishe and blood of man, but azens princis and potestales, azens governours of þis world, þat is in þes derknessis.* And þus Cristis knyztis fiþten not oonli azens þe lest fendis, ne oonli azens middil fendis, but azens þe heyrest

The apostle teaches, by what arms we should contend with our spiritual enemies.

¹ wiþ, E.

² E also has *iv* in the text, but *vi* in the margin.

fendis. And Poul clepiþ þes *spiritual þingis*, bi kynde þat þei hadden of God; but þes ben þingis of *wickidnesse*, for þei helden wiþ Lucifer in þe first synne of al, þat was done *in heavenly þingis*.

who are of various kinds, and more dangerous than enemies of flesh and blood.

Men shulden undirstonde here þat þei shulen fiȝte aȝens fleishe and blood, but þis fiȝtinge is litil unto þe fiȝting wiþ fendis, for þei ben quyke enemys, and of myche power and sutil. And so Poul þenkþ it but litil to fiȝte þus wiþ fleishe and blood. Þat man is seid to fiȝte wiþ fleishe, þat temperiþ it in bodili foode; and þat man fiȝtiþ wiþ blood, þat swagiþ lustis of lecherie, boþe in chastisinge his spiritis, and his blood þat governeþ hem. And for as myche as fendis felden wiþ Lucifer of many ordris, Poul clepiþ hem princis and potestates þat ben of þe myddil ordre, and fendis of þe lowest ordris ben clepid governours of þis world, and þei worchen in derknes þat hevene makþ of þe nyȝt. And sum men dremen of þes fendis, þat sum ben elves, and sum gobelyns, and han not but litil power to tempte men in harme of soule. But siþ we cunnen not prove þis ne disprove þis spedily, holde we us in þe bondis þat God telliþ in his lawe. But it is licy þat þes fendis have power to make boþe wynd and reyne, þundir and liȝtyng, and oþir wedir; for whan þei moven partis of þis erþe, and bringen hem nyȝ togidere, þes partis moten nedly bi kynde maken siche wedirs, as clerkis knowun. Þe þridde part of þes fendis is moost heie of alle oþir, as Lucifer and his nexte spiritis, þat assentiden moost unto him; and þes ben þe fellere¹ fendis þat Cristen men fiȝten wiþ. Al þes fendis han witt and power to move mennis hertis and oþer lymes, aftir þat þei gessen men to be temptid to a goostli synne. For alȝif þei knowun not þe þouȝt of mynde, ne purpos of it, neþeles þei gessen ofte nyȝ þe soþe, and þus tempten men. Fiȝting wiþ þes þree fendis is moost hard of al oþir, siþ Joob seiþ þer is no power up² erþe so myche as is þis. But ȝit þes knyȝtis han confort þat Crist overcam þe moost fend; and þis Lord wole not suffre fendis for to tempten his knyȝtis, þat ne þei mai overcome hem, but ȝif þer foli be first in cause.

¹ *fellest*, E.

² *up on*, E.

And herfore biddiþ Poul to us, to take þe armer of God, and rehersiþ sixe armures,—fyve to defende, and þe sixþe to assaile. Þe armynge of þis goostli armure shulde be to *azen stonde in yvel day, and stonde perfilly in al þes temptaciouns*. Þe first armure of þe soule is chast þenkyng þerof; and, for chastite of bodi makij oftē mannis spirit to faile not, þerfore biddiþ Crist to his apostlis, þat *per leendis be girde above*¹. And here men mai see þat Poul menep goostli armer, not bodili, for ellis he wolde not telle first þe girdil bifore he tolde cloþis to be gird. And for men shulden be Cristis spouse, and holde to him þe treuþe of wedding, þerfore Poul clepiþ here þis first vertue, *treuþe* of spirit. And see we þat Poul stireþ oftē here to stonde in þis goostli bataile, for ȝif þe fend have oones man doun, he stireþ him liȝtlier to fouler synnes. And herfore mannis affeccious, þat is þe foot of his soule, shulde stonde stalworþly, lest þe soule snaperide aftir. And herfore preieþ David þus, þat þe foot of pride come not to him, and þe hand of sinful man move him not to consente. And þus Poul moveþ to stabilte², whan he biddiþ us stande þus. He moveþ aftir to clene desire, whanne he biddiþ us be þus gird, and aftirward to riȝt entent, whan he biddiþ us stonde in treuþe. And þes þre ben nedeful to men þat fiȝten in slidir weye, cley³ and⁴ unknowun. Þe secounde goostli armure of soule clepiþ Poul *þe haberioun*⁵ of *riȝtwisnes*, whanne þat riȝtwisnesse is cheyned to God and al his creaturis. And þis haberioun is þe beste to kepe þe soule fro þe fendis sautis. Þe þridde armure is legge harneis, þat Poul biddiþ *cloþe wiþ mennis feet, in makyngē redy of þe gospel of pees*. Þes feet ben affeccious þat prechours of þe gospel shulde have, not for to wynne hem worldly good, ne to gete hem worldly fame, ne to stire men to fiȝt, but to make pees wiþ God and man. And many prechours ben to day þat failen in al þes þre pointis; and so þei shaken not of þe poudir of þer feet fro þes þree.

Þe fourþe armure algatis to take, *is þe sheld of bilve*, for in þis mai trewe men *quenche alle brennyngē dartis of þe fende*. Mannis fleish is an evyl enemy, but þe world is þe worse,

He rehearses six sorts of arms, five of defence and one of offence.

Ps. xxxvi. ii.

¹ aboute, E.

² stablete, E.

³ and cley, E.

⁴ om. E.

⁵ haburioun, E.

and þe werst of alle þes þree and þe fellerest is þe fend; for temptyng of þe fend is hoot, and moveþ to many synnes. Þefore clepiþ Poul here þes temptaciouns brennyng dartis. But be þre corners of þis shelde wel stablid in þe Trinite, and oþer articlis of bileve sadli pryntid wiþinne, and wiþ senewis of charite wiþouten hoolis wel bounden, and al dartis of þe fend mai not perishe siche a sheeld. Þe fiþþ armer, for þe heed, is *an helm*, of hope of blis. And ȝif resoun and wille of man be wel wlappid in þis helme, no stroke of stones ne hevye þing shal noie þis soule þat þus is armed. And Poul clepiþ þis armer *an helm of helpe*, þat is blisse. But, for he were a feble fiþter þat ever suffride and never smoot, þefore Poul clepiþ þe sixte armure, *swerd of þe Holy Goost*. And þis armure is ful sharpe, siþ it perischip¹ more þan iren swerd, for it partiþ þe soule and spirit, whan it makip man lyve to God and leve worldli affeccions, and þus doip no bodili swerd. And þus þe tunge in mannis mouþe is a scaberke² to þis swerd, and shapen in forme of bodili swerd, wiþouten boon³ or straunge part. And with þis swerd was sum tyme woundir wrouȝt aȝens spiritis, but þis swerd failip now in preching of Goddis lawe. For prelatis han scaberkis wiþouten swerdis, and oþir han swerdis of leed, bi which þei tellen worldly wordis, wiþ fablis and gabgingis on God. And so no woundir ȝif þis swerd assaile not enemyes as it dide.

XXII SONDAI [AFTIR TRINITE].

[SERMON LII.]

Confidimus in Domino Jesu.—PHIL. i. [6.]

POUL techip in þis epistle how prelatis shulden love þer sugetis, and how sugettis shulden love aȝen, and þus how charite shulde sprede. Poul, wiþ his breþeren, spekiþ *þat þei tristen in þe Lord Jesus, þat he þat haþ bigunnen in hem a good*

The apostle teaches how mutual love should unite Christian pastors and their flocks.

¹ *peersip*, E.

² *scauberk*, G, I, E.

³ *bon*, E.

werk, to turne hem, *shal performe* þis werk *unto þe dai of Jesus Crist*. And þis shal be domesday, whan Crist shal have ful victorie. And þis werk þat Crist bigan bi Poul and his opir felowis, passip al mannis ordenaunce, al bildingis or worldli goodis. And þus shulden bishopis edifie, and not make hepis of dede stones. Poul is certein þat God bigan þis goostli werk as he baad; and Poul is sikir þat God wole not bigynne a werk but 3if he performe it. And herfore it is licli þat newe sectis and mannis ordenaunce, þat han not þer ground in God, muten have eende bifore domesday. And Poul seiþ þat he shewip þus charite to hem, *as it is rightful to him to fele þis for hem alle*; siþ a man shulde suppose or gesse good of anopir, whan he haþ greet evidence of just lyf þat he lyveþ. And, for Poul haþ þes fok as recomendid in al his meritis, he haþ more evidence þat þei shulen make a good eende.

And foure meritis he tellip, þat passen sixe pointis of freris lettris, bi whiche þei graunten men blisse in hevене, as 3if Anticrist passide Crist. Þe first of Poulis suffragies stondip in his *heriteli praier*, þat he praieþ for his children whiche he haþ geten in Crist. Þe secounde suffragie þat Poul tellip is, þat he haþ hem *in his bondis*; for Poul was bounden and prisoned for Crist, and part of þis peyne was ful medeful. Þe þridde suffragie þat Poul nemedē, *is defending of þe gospel*; for þe gospel hadde enemyes in Poulis tyme as it haþ now, and it is a medeful þing to stonde aȝens þes enemyes. Þe fourþe helpe þat Poul wischip, *is confermyng of þe gospel*, in preching and miraclis makyngē, in orisouns and in opir traveilis, and part of þis semeþ more medeful þan suffragies of þes newe sectis.

And marke þat Poul grauntip hem not part of þes foure medeful dedis, but he seiþ þat he haþ hem in þes foure, and lete God part. And Poul doip not þis for moneie, ne to gete him annuel rente, but for pure charite, *þat þei ben al felowis of his joie*. For God is witnes to me how Y coveite 3ou to blis in clene mercy, and no symonie, and þat is *þe entralis of Jesus Crist*. And þis Y preie, not for 3oure goodis, but *þat 3our charite be more, and bi double wey be plentenous more and more*, as 3e ben eldere boþe *in science and al witt*, for al þis shulde turne to charite; *þat 3e assay beter* drinkes to conforte goostli 3oure soule,

The merits of St. Paul, in which it is better to have part, than in the suffrages of friars.

And yet he grants no interest in them, but leaves that to God.

þat ȝe be clene wipouten synne to domesday, þat is Cristis; þat ȝe be fillid of fruyte of riȝtwisnes, to heriyng and glorie of God. And Y preie God þat þis be done bi medling of Jesus Crist. And wolde God oure prelatis now wolden lerne þis crafte of Poulis love, and charge þer sugettis no more in erþely goodis þat drawun to helle.

DE XXIII SONDAI AFTIR TRINITE.

[SERMON LIII.]

Imitatores mei estote.—PHIL. iii. [17.]

The apostle tells the Philipians to be followers of him; but men should not follow or support the popes and bishops of the present day, because their life is the opposite of Paul's.

In þis epistle techiþ Poul how þat men shulden sue þer prelatis, and what þei shulden cunne and do, to wynne hem þe blis of hevene. Poul biddiþ at þe bigynnyng, *to sue him* in werkes and lyf, for he is certein þat he goiþ þe riȝt wey þat lediþ to hevene. And siþ prelatis lyven to-day contrarie to Poulis lif, it is not good to sue hem, lest þei leden þer children to helle. And siþ þei contrarien þis bileve, and mai not soundli þus bidde þer children, men shulden not comoun wiþ sich prelatis, ne ȝyve hem worship ne worldli goodis. For Joon biddiþ to grete hem not, and resoun biddiþ, wiþ charite, to make hem not worse ne more hevy, for ȝif ony men diden þus, þei token part of þer synne. And wolde God þat þis lore were wel knownen of worldly lordis! for þan þei shulden seie to þes popis, þat rewmes and men wolden obeishe to hem bi forme þat men obeishiden to Crist and to Petre, and no more; and certis, ȝif þei chalyngen more, þei ben open Anticristis. And þis answeie shulden men ȝyve to prelatis and to oþir preestis; and it is open, ȝif þis were holden, þe pope shulde not þus spuyle rewmes, ne chaffere þus bi symonie wiþ beneficis þat ben in rewmes. And þan boþe prelatis and prestis shulden holden hem paiid wiþ Poulis reule, to take foode of þe puple for goostli traveile þat þei done, and ȝit take not þis of þe folk but bi title of almes and love. And mennis owne cowardise is cause þat þei holden not þus Goddis lawe, but ben oppressid þus bi fendis, and drawun bi þe brode

wey to helle. Late witt wake in siche men, to axe þer prelatiſ þat axen hem goodis, where þei ſhulden ſue hem in þiſ, and flee foule avarice. 3if þei ſeien þe firſt part, þei ben not prelatiſ of hem, ſiþ þeſ ſheep ſhulden ſue þer prelatiſ, as Criſten men ſuen Criſt, and it iſ knowun bi bileve þat men ſhulden not þuſ be coveitouſ. 3if þei ſeien þe ſecond part, as Criſten men moten nedis ſeien, and þei ſpuylen men of worldli goodiſ bi ſymonye and oþer weyeſ, men ſhulden flee hem in þiſ and not aſſent for peril of ſynne. For if men aſſenten here to hem, þei ſhulden coveiten worldli goodiſ, and not 3yve hem to be pore, ſiþ prelatiſ traveilen þuſ for riches. And þuſ ech ſynne of þe fend iſ contrarie to himſilf.

And herfore Poul biddiþ aftir, *to kepe hem wiſeli þat gon þuſ as 3e have 3our forme*, and ſue 3e hem in ſo myche. For Criſt and hiſ apoſtliſ, and Criſtiſ lawe þat iſ bileve, techen þiſ lore, to ſue good prelatiſ, and to flee from evil prelatiſ. And Poul telliþ more ſpeciali aftir of ſiche falſe prelatiſ; *Many gon, whom Y have often told 3ou, but now weþyng Y ſeie, þat þei ben enemyeſ of Criſtiſ croſ*; for þei haten painful liſ, and loven luſtiſ of þe world and of her fleiſh, as beſtiſ done. And þuſ done foure ſectiſ to-dai. But, for þiſ luſt mut nedis have haboundaunce of worldli goodiſ to maynteyne it among þe puple, þe fend haþ tauþt a newe raveyn, more þan it waſ in Poulis tyme; for ſenſure^a to ſpuyle þe puple, and indulgenſiſ þat now ben feyned, weren not in Poulis tyme, and Poule myþt wepe now herfore. Poul prophecieþ þre þingiſ of ſiche falſe prelatiſ in hiſ tyme. Firſt, þat *þer ende iſ gooſtli deeb*, for þei moten nedis be deppiſt dampned. Þe ſeconde prophecie of Poul iſ þiſ, þat *þer god iſ þer beli*; ffor in glotonie and leccherie þei leden þer liſ, aſ beeſtiſ done. Þe þridde prophecie of Poul iſ, þat *þer glorie iſ in þer confuſioun*, for þei ſaveren *erþeli þingiſ*, and litil or nouþt hevenli þingiſ. Juge men wher þeſ foure ſectiſ þat ben to-daye leden þiſ liſ; and 3if þei done, lerne þei of Poul to ſue hem not, but to flee hem; for manniſ owne ſynne iſ ynow³, al3if he gete not more to. And 3if men grutchen a3enſ þeſ wordiſ, loke þei þe bileve þat Poul telliþ here, and grutche þei a3enſ God and

and they are enemies of the cross of Christ, like the false teachers of the apostle's time.

^a That is, censures.

azens treuþe þat witnessiþ þis. Ȝif we in oure owne persones taken þis lyf of þes sectis, woo is us bi peyne after fro þis dede and consense.

But the life and hope of Christ's true servants are fixed above.

But Poul seiþ, *þat þer lyyng is in heven*, out of þis erþe, boþe bi þer pouȝt and þer wille. And þus shulden good prelati and preestis seie treuli in þer lyf, and þanne myȝten þei surely *abide þer Savyoure, and þer Lord Jesus Crist*, at þe day of dome. For he is to siche men savyoure to bodi and soule, and Lord to blisse siche men. Þis Lord shal þan, *reforme bodies of his meke servauntis*. Alȝif þei ben now deformed and scorned of many worldly men, ȝit seintis hopen þanne þat þes *bodies*, þat now ben foul, shulden in blisse be *like to þe bodi of Cristis clerenesse*. For men þat ben blessid in hevене shulden have foure doweris of þe bodi, and þis shal be *up þe worchinge of Crist*, þat was so medeful and so holi, *þat he myȝt make suȝet to him* and his *alle þingis* of þis world.

The general and special injunctions of the apostle.

And aftirward spekiþ Poul to his breþeren wordis of confort, and moveþ hem to holde þe lore þat God haþ told to hem bi Poul. *And so, moost dere breþeren*, seiþ Poul, *and moost desired of þingis here, my joie in hevене, and my coroun, stonde ȝe þus, moost dereworþe in þe Lord*. Þis bidding þat Poul axiþ shulde make him loved and unsuspect, for he axiþ not worldli þingis, but goostli good, for him and hem. And Poul preieþ aftir to two persones þat weren two devoute wymmen,—þe ton was clepid *Encodia* þat was more stable in God, þe toþer was clepid *Sintisem*^a, *þat was more ȝong and freel*,—þat þei shulden *savere þis same lore in þe Lordis* name, as Poul haþ tolde. And marke þou wel þat Poul preieþ comounli þe first persone, but he preieþ speciali þe secounde, not for worldli goodis. And Poul hadde a man to felowe þat was clepid German^b, þat was ever wiþ him in Goddis cause, boþe in preching and oþir helpe. Poul preieþ him *to helpe forþ boþe wymmen and men, þat han travelid wiþ Poul in þe gospel of Crist, wiþ Clement and oþir helpers of Poul, whos names ben writun in þe book of liif*. Poul hadde helpers,

^a Wycliffite Version (1) gives these names as Encodiam and Syntesem. Wycliffite Version (2) has Encodiam and Synticem.

^b Wyclif imagines 'germane' (the

Vulgate rendering of the *ἡρώσιε* of the original) to be a proper name. Both Wycliffite Versions translate 'german felowe.'

as men han now, boþe of men and of wymmen, in good word and good dede to helpe apostlis boþe to preche, and herborwe hem and waishe þer feet. Ffor þer travaile was good and greet, and but ȝif God hadde made hem helpe, þei myzt not have performed þis lore.

DE FOURE AND TWENTY SONDAY PISTLE AFTIR TRINITE.

[SERMON LIV.]

Non cessamus pro vobis orantes.—COL. i. [9.]

In þis epistle telliþ Poul boþe his wille and his werk, to profite to Cristis Chirche, þat it be þus tauȝt bi him. Poul seiþ first to þis puple, þat þei *ceesen not for hem preiynge and axinge, þat þei be fillid bi knowynge of Goddis wille.* And no þing is more nedeful to man here þan for to knowe what God wole þat he do for Goddis love. For ȝif man performe þis, he getiþ blisse wiþouten drede. For siþ God is þe moost Lord, and ech man shulde do his wille, it is moost nedeful þat his wille be comounli knowun. And God mai nevere more faile in þingis þat ben nedeful, þerfore God telliþ certainli what is his wille of al þingis. Soþ it is, þat al þingis þat kynde doiþ God wole have done, for God doiþ alle þingis bi kynde, and God doiþ not but þat he wole do. And so God wole make al creaturis þat ben made; and shortli for to seie, fille þou Goddis comandementis and it is ynowȝ to þee, for God wole axe no more of þee. Leve we to speke and argue þat God wole al peyne for synne, bi þis skile þat it is just, and God makिþ al siche peyne. And sum seien þat God wole synne be done for þe good þat comeþ þerof; and þus þei seien þat God wole al þing, boþe for synnes and creaturis. But leve we here þis doute of scole, and lerne we what God wole þat we do. For þis is ful nedeful, siþ Poul axide þis in his convertynge. And no drede God wole þat al men holden wiþ his lawe, and reverse it in no manere; for ȝif þei done, God wole punishe; and so Goddis wille mut be fulfillid, for no þing mai azenstonde it. And þus God wole þat

The apostle prays for the Colossians that they may know what is God's will concerning them.

The remainder
of the epistle,
with com-
mentary.

we lyven not for his profit, but for oure owun; and God wole noþing but honest; and al honeste God wole have done. And þus men witen more singularly, bi good lyf and good werkes, what þing God wole þat we do, whan we ben of betir lyf.

And herfore biddiþ Poul aftir to þes Grekes, þat þei be fillid in knowinge of Goddis wille, *in al maner of wisdomes*. It is a wisdomes to man to wite what God wole þat he do, and to do aftir þis knowynge in his persone, for Goddis sake. And it is myche to Cristene men to be fillid *in goostli undirstondinge*; for ech creature of God telliþ þat he wole þe beste, and what þing God wole þat þei done, ȝif men undirstonden it. *And þan men go worpili to God, and plesen to him in al maners*, boþe bodili and goostli; and þes maners ben *al þingis in ech good werk* þat men done. Þei shulden *make fruyt* of reward, for al oure lyf shulde be ful of fruyte, to helpe in blis of hevене. And bi þis shulden men *growe in þe cunnyng of God*. It is but litil to men to knowe bi resoun Goddis cunnyng, but ȝif þei turne þis cunnyng of God to þer lif and þer good dedes. For God is maistir practisour, and loveþ wel good dedis of men. And þus men shulden be *confortid in ech vertue*, þat þei done *aftir þe power of Goddis clerenesse*; siþ þei shulden knowe as bileve þat God seep clerly al þer vertuous dedis, and wille and purpos þat þei have, and castiþ to reward al þis. Who shulde not be confortid here to contynue and worche Goddis service? And herfore seiþ Poul aftir, þat þei shulden lyve *in al pacience and long abiding wiþ joie*, for trust þat þei shulden have in God. For bileve techiþ men þat God mai not faile on his side for noun-power or unwitt, but al defaute is in men. And grace wiþ witt of al þes þingis stondiþ in Jesus Crist oure Lord.



PE XXV SONDAI PISTLE AFTIR TRINITE.

[SERMON LV.]

Ecce dies venit.—JER. xxiii. [5.]

Þis lessoun of Jeromye telliþ whi þat Crist cam in fleishe, to amende þes yvel heerdis þat disseyven Goddis puple. And þus haþ þe Chirche ordeyned þat þis be redde in þis Sunday to knytte matir of þe Advent to þis matir þat here is seid. Jeremye bi-gynneþ þus; *Lo, daies comen, seiþ þe Lord, and Y shal rere up David, þat is a rizt burionyng; and he shal rengne kyng, and he shal be witti, and he shal make doom and riztwisnesse in þe erþe.* It is taken as bileve þat Jeremye spekiþ here of Crist; for he is ofte clepid David, boþe bi figure and witt of word. For he is strong bi his hond^a, and figurid bi þe king Daviþ; for manye propretes in David answeren to þe manheed of Crist. And þus, as Crist seide þat Joon was Heli, so Jeremye seide þat Crist was David. And al þe sophistris of Anticrist cunnen not prove þat þis word is fals. For sum þing is seid in figure, and sum þing bi his owne kynde; as Baptist is Hely, as Crist seiþ, and he is not Hely in persone. And þus Crist and Baptist weren not contrary in þer wordis, for contrariouste in witt, and not in nakide wordis, shulde be taken. Þus men shulden studie þe witte þat God spekiþ in holy writt; for no man mai reprove God þat he shulde not speke þus, siþ he is lord of wordis and witt, and of al partis of his world.

But zit grutchid Anticrist, for God seiþ þat daies comen; for he bostiþ þat he can prove þat þer ben not many tymes, and how shulden þanne daies come? where daies han feet for to go? But here men seien to Anticrist, þat al þe tyme þat was bifore, and al þe tyme þat is to comen, is present bifore God. And so many tymes ben don in o tyme, and anoþir in anoþir, and so many tymes passen bifore oþir, bi many þousend þeeris.

^a Modern writers are agreed in interpreting the name David to mean 'the beloved one.' Wyclif derives his rendering from St. Je-

rome, who in his treatise *De Nominibus Hebraicis* explains David by 'fortis manu sive desiderabilis.'

The prophecy of Jeremiah applied to the coming of Christ.

Objections stated and refuted.

And þus many daies comen as fast as ony tyme mai come, for þei comen not bodili, and þus hem nedij not to have feet. And ȝit many þingis comen bodili þat walken not bi þer feet; as þe smytyng of þe stoon comeþ bodili, but it walkij not. Þus oure David, Jesus Crist, is a just burionynge, for he makij al a newe world, and saveþ þe Chirche þat ellis were dampnyd. And þis Crist rengnede kyng boþe bi his godhede and his manhede. For bi his godhede he is kyng of al þis world, as bileve techij; and bi his manhed he is kyng bi titil of staat of innocens, whan it is joyned wiþ his godhede. And what trewe man mai denie þis? And Crist is witti on many maneris, and doij many jugementis, and þerto many riȝtwisnessis. Blessid be siche a patroun.

Prophetic
promises of
deliverance.

In þo daies shal Juda be saved, and Israel shal dwelle tristiliche; for men þat confessen Cristis lyf, how he was boþe God and man, and þes men þat seen God bi good bileve in Cristis persone, ben saved and dwellen surely in þe vertue of þis patroun. And þis is þe name þat men shulden clepe him, þe Lord oure riȝtful, þat is, God. Herfore, lo, daies comen, seiþ þe Lord, and þei shulen not seiþ, Oure God lyveþ, þat ledde out þe children of Israel fro Egipþe, but þei shulen seiþ a more preisynge,—God lyveþ, þat ledde out and brouȝt to þe seed of þe hous of Israel, fro þe lond of þe norþ, and fro al oþir londis to þe whiche Y have caste hem; þei shulen come aȝen to Jerusalem and to þe lond of biheste, and þei shulen dwelle in þe lond, seiþ God þat is Almyȝti. Here Jeremye wolde mene, þat boþe þes two prisounyngis, þat Jewis þat weren flemed out of þer lond, in Moises tyme and Jeremyes, boþe þes figuriden þe flemyng þat þe fend prisounyd mankynde in þe lond of synne. And þis lond was boþe Egipþ and þe lond of þe norþ; but Crist brouȝt þes folk aȝen to hevene, þat is þer kyndly lond. And it semeþ bi holy writt, þat Jeremye and oþir prophetis hadden þer witt of Jesus Crist, for ellis þer speche were to nakid.

Conclusion.

And þus mai preestis of Cristis secte teche þe puple on Sundaies, boþe bi þe gospel and þe pistle, alȝif fals prophetis bigilen hem not. For fals men of þes newe sectis, and speciali þe laste sect, robben þe puple of þer goodis and bigilen hem fro trewe lore.

VAE OCTUPLEX.

[THE following treatise is found accompanying all the complete copies of the Sermons, except Douce, 321. See Shirley's *Catalogue*, p. 34. Both it, and the succeeding treatise, seem to have been regarded in the light of pendants to the Sermons. It contains no indication of authorship, nor of date. Whether it be the same work with that which appears in Bale's *Catalogue* under the heading *In xxiii caput Matthaei*, it is impossible to decide with certainty. Dr. Shirley seems to have derived the title which he gives to the tract in his *Catalogue* from the MS. Laud, 314, which introduces it thus,—‘*Expositio textus Mathei xxiii capitis Ve* [evidently an error for De] *ve octuplici scribis Phariseis et ypocritis imprecato.*’]

VAE OCTUPLEX.

ÞE EXPOSICIOUN OF ÞE TEXT OF MATHEU, ÞE ÞRE AND TWENTIÞE
CAPITL OF EIJTE SIÞIS WOO SEID TO ÞE SCRIBIS
AND PHARISEES, IPOCRITIS.

CRIST biddiþ us be ware wiþ þese false prophetis, þat comen in cloþinge of sheep, and ben wolves of raveyné. And þes ben speciali men of þes newe ordris, and moost þese freris þat last comen ynne, for þe fend sutilliþ evere aþens holy chirche. Crist telliþ eijte woos to þese Farisees, and not oonly wischiþ hem, but ordeyneþ hem to come to þese ipocritis, for þei disseyven his puple.

Þe first woo þat Crist seiþ is teld on þis maner, *Woo be to þou, scribis and Fariseis, ypocritis, þat closen þe kingdom of hevене bifore opir men, for neiþer 3e entren, neiþer 3e suffren oþer to entre.* Þis mai be undirstonden upon many maneres. First bi þe lettre, þat þe kingdome of hevене is þat hooli chirche þat now is in hevене; and so þes Farisees entren not into hevене, for bi her love þei gone into helle, siþ þei loven erþe and erþely þingis, and litil or nouzt goodis of grace, and þei drawn wiþ hem myche erþely peple. Þe secounde manere of undirstondinge is of holi writ, þat þei entre not to undirstondinge þerof, ne þei suffren opir men to undirstonden it wele. Sum prechen fablis, and sum veyn storys; sum docken holy writt, and summe feynen lesyngis; and so lore of Goddis lawe is al putt abac. And þus þe ladder þat men shulden come to hevене by eiþer wantiþ rounGIS, or ellis it is not rerid. Þe þridde undirstondinge of þese wordis of Crist may be aþyed to lyvyng of þes Farisees. Þei lyven ypocritis lyfe þat hemsilf han founden, and þei maken oþer men confourmen hem þerto; for þei seien þat þis lyf is þe beste of alle. And so lyf þat Crist ordeynede is al put abac, and þis newe founden lyf drawiþ men dounward, siþ freris ben

The eight woes denounced by Christ against the scribes and Pharisees are all applicable to the friars and prelates:

1. Because they do not follow Christ themselves, and prevent others from following Him.

confessours and leden moche peple. And þes scribis helpen þes Farisees, for prelatiſ and persouns and oþir possessioneres seien in her lyf þat Crist lyvede þus, and so volupteis and rychesse of þe worlde maken þei to be loved, and Cristis lyf dispisid. And bi keies of helle, þat ben her feyned censuris, þei closen þe weie to hevене from hem and from oþir men.

2. Because they deceive and despoil the laity.

De secounde woo þat Crist wiship is seide þus of Crist, *Woo worþe þou, scribis and Fariseis, ypocritis, þat eten widowis housis, makeinge longe preieris; herfore shulen 3e taken þe more jugement of God.* Ffor þese ypocritis persen houses of lewede men, and eten good mete þat her meyne shulde ete. And siche lewede men ben widowis fro þe lawe of Crist; siþ bi þe firste cautel þei priven men from Goddis lawe, and bi þis lawe shulden þei be weddid to Crist her Savyour. And to blynde þe puple more þei feynen longe preieris, þat þei seien ben moche betere þan þe Pater-noster, and so undirstondinge and wille ben blyndid bi þes ypocritis. And þus shulen þei be jugid of many kynnes falshede; þei robben þer neizboris bi cautelis of þe fend, and over þis þei priven hem from hir riȝt bileve, and bi her ypocrisie þei disseyven hemsilf and oþir, and þus shulen þei be dampnyed bi many jugementis of God.

3. Because the friars entice children to join their orders.

De þridde tyme seiþ Crist unto þes fals folk, *Woo worþe þou, scribis and Fariseis, ypocritis, þat gone aboute boþe watir and lond to make a child of your ordre, and whanne he is maad, 3e maken him a child of helle double more þan þou.* Þes wordis tellen opinly of making of freris, hou þei comen þeesfly, boþe bi water and bi lond, to robben men of her children þat ben betere þan oxen. And so it semep bi Goddis lawe, þat siche þeves shulden be dampned, siþ þei taken away mennis goodis, coostly and presciouse, and þei han noo leeve perto neiþer of God ne man, siþ God 3yveþ hem no leve þus to harme her neizbore. And where many children bi Cristis ordre shulden be saaf, þei shulen now be dampned bi taking of þes false ordriſ, for a frere can teche no more þat þis child shal be beter bi takinge of his ordre and kepinge of his reule, þan þis frere can telle þat God 3af him þis mannis oxe. And so freris miȝten spuyle men of alle þe goodis þat þei han. And it falliþ ofte tymes, as Crist seiþ here, þat summe children þus maad freris ben worse þan her bew-

peris^a. And þe meenes bi which þei stelen siche children ben ful of venym; þei feesten hem and 3yve hem 3iftes, as applis, pursis, and oþer japis; and þat is moost yvel of alle, þei bigilen hem wiþ false wordis; þei seien her ordre is þe beste for to come to hevne by; þei bihoten lustis of fleish and worldely welfare, and neiþer þei may perfourme þis, ne it acordiþ wiþ her staat. And þus þei dampnen many men bi her false feyned meenes.

De fourþe woo is seide þus bi soþenesse of Cristis word; *Woo worþe 3ou, blynde leders, þat seien it is nouȝt to swere bi þe temple of God, but he þat swerip bi þe gold of þe temple, he owiþ to perfourme his oop. Foolis and blynde men, wheþer of þes is more, þe gold þat is in þe temple, eþer þe temple þat makip it hooly? And so 3e seien þat it is not to swere on þe auter, but who ever swerip by 3ift þerof, he is holden to 3yve it. But, 3e blynde men, wheþer of þes two þingis is more, þe 3ifte or þe auter þat makip þe 3ifte hooly? For he þat swerip in þe auter, he swerip in it and alle þingis þat ben þeron; and he þat swerip in þe temple, he swerip in it and in him þat dwellip þerinne; and he þat swerip in hevne, he swerip boþe in Goddis trone and in God þat sittip þeron; and herfore shulden we no weye swere, but as God grauntiþ us. Þis ferþe woo mai be seid boþe to scribis and to Fariseis; for þese prelati, fro þe pope unto preestis þat kepen men, alle þei chargen biheestis of wynnynge, and þei chargen not more biheestis^b; as, if a man have vowid to God to wende in pilgrimage to Rome, or ellis to ony oþer seint, þat axiþ traveile and dispensis, þei dispensen wiþ þis traveile so þat þei han þe dispensis, and on þis condicioun wolen þei wele assoile men. But who woot not bi his witt þat ne þese men sillen her soilynge, siþ þei marken to hem þis moneie, but þei tellen not bi þe traveile? Lord, whi shulden þei have þis moneie but for her absolucioun? But men þat þus chaffaren wiþ hem ben in þis caas blynde foolis. For wheþer it is resonable to dispense þus bifore þat þei dispencen wiþ men, or it bigynneþ to be resonable bi vertue of her dispensing? If þou seie on þe firste manere, þan 3if*

4. Because the power of dispensing with vows, and of giving absolution is abused by prelates and friars for the sake of gain.

^a That is, *beaux-pères*, properly, fathers-in law; but here it seems to mean 'god-fathers.'

^b That is, they attach great im-

portance to promises which involve pecuniary gain to themselves, but none at all to promises intrinsically greater and more serious.

God hadde moved þis man to leve þis vow, and 3yve to pore men as myche as he shulde 3yve hem, þis man hadde algatis do beter, save oo þing of myche charge, þat he hadde left for to offre to dame Symonie in þis prelat; for he hadde do as resonable þing and as it semep on betere manere. Ne no man of witt wolde seie, þat it were resonable after þat þis prelate hadde jugid, or þis man hadde paied his moneie, and no gatis bifore. For, if it were resonable, God wiste and ordeynede þe resoun, bifore þat þis vow or þis chaffare were maad; and so, if it was resonable þanne, it was bifore resonable. And so, if we marken þis dispensinge, it stondiþ in þis, þat þe prelat changiþ þis moneie wiþ his jugement, and þat is more verrey treuþe þan þat he changiþ þis traveile, or his dispendinge in þe weie, wiþ 3yvynge of þis moneie. And however þis ypocrite seiþ, he spekiþ above his owne witt, and þat he silliþ riþtwisnesse for þe moneie þat he takiþ. For no man chaungiþ oo þing for anoþer, but 3if boþe þes þingis weren; and if it were unresonable to þus vow, and þus traveile, neiþer God ne man changen þes þingis for 3ifte of moneie. And so witt of Goddis law shulde teche men þat suche vowis weren nougt, and have sorewe for folie of þes vowis, and make aseþ discretli; and þanne God dispensiþ betere þan þes prelatis wiþ here chaffare. For þei chargen þe lesse, þat sownep to her wynnynge, as gold of þe temple and offringe to þe auter; but þe ground of al þis þei chargen to litil.

And where þei feynen to men þat þei oonly han power, so þat, but if þei dispensen þus, þese men shulen nevere be saved, þis is as myche blasfemye as to seie þat þei ben God. To sum of hem God haþ 3ovun knowinge of þe soþe, and power to teche men how þei shulden do here; but 3if þei sillen þus þis þing, þei ben þe fendis disciplis, siþ Crist biddiþ to 3yve freely, as þei token freely of him. Þe Farisees practizen wiþ þe puple in þis point, for whanne þei han power lymytid to hem to 3yve counceil in þis mater, and astir to assoile, þei maken, as men out of bileve, þis matere to harde, and kepen a part of moneie to prelatis above hem and a part to hemsilf, and þus is þe puple spuylid. But if men wolen 3yve to making of her chirche, or ellis hemsilf to be freris, or ougt þat turnep hem to wynnynge, men moun listly passe aweie fro peril þat is feyned. And her-

fore sum discret men wolen heere witt of siche confessours, and if it acorde to resoun, þei wolen do þerafter, and if it smatche covetise, þei fleen it as symonye. And if þei ben not assoilid of men, þei taken wisely noon hede; for it is ynowȝ to hem for to be assoilid of God; and God made nevere covenaut wiþ hem þat he schulde not do wiþouten hem, ne it fell not to God to make folily such a covenaut.

De fiſþe woo þat Crist telliþ to come to sich ypocritis sueþ in þese wordis, þat Crist seiþ in þe gospel; *Woo worþe ȝou, scribis and Farisees, ypocritis, þat tipen mynte, anet, and comyn, and forsake oþir þingis more grevous of þe lawe, for to do riȝt iuge-ment, to men þat ȝe iuge, and to do mercy, to sugettis þat ben undir ȝou, and to do feiþ, to God and to man; þese þre laste moten men nedis do, and oþir þre firste not to leve. Blynde leders, syyng þe gnatte and swolowe þe camel. ȝe chargen more þing þat is lesse, and passen more listly gretter þing.* And þis synne rengneþ now among oure scribis and Farisees; for þei chargen more a litil þing þat sowneþ to wynnyng of hem, þan a myche more þing þat sowneþ to worchip of God; and for þat wolen þei curse and plete and use censuris, but bi brekinge of Goddis lawe tellen þei but litil, al if it be more synne þan many sich trespassis. And þus bi biddingis of God tellen þei but litil, but biddinge of men chargen þei moche; and if þei sownen worship or wynnyng of prelatiſ, þei wolen die for þis and seien þat it is Goddis cause. And þus siche ordenaunce of prelatiſ þat þei loven, þei publishen as bileve, and holden hem cursid þat trowen it not; and þus is bileve of God put abac, and newe feynyngis wiþouten groundis holden bileve; and for þes wolen men fiȝte and traveile to þe dep, but for love of Goddis word, þat is oure bileve and shal save Cristene men, wolen fewe men traveile. And þis is oon of þe mooste cautelis þat þe fend usiþ. Treuþe of þe gospel is Cristen menniſ bileve, and bi þat shulden men stonde, boþe knyȝttis and oþer, and oþer þingis chargen lesse, al if þei be trewe; for not ech treuþe is evene for to charge, but treuþe þat God himsilf seiþ and techiþ in þe gospel, þat shulden men worshiþe and take as bileve, and oþer lawe of menniſ fyndinge shulden men litil telle bi. And þus litil þing, þat savereþ helþe of manniſ bodi, þei techen boþe to titþe and

5. Because they practically set rules and ordinances of their own framing above the gospel.

take tise þerof, but greet maundementis of God þat touchen soule heele ben lesse teld of Farisees, for wantinge of worldely wynnynge. But þes þingis shulden men kepe as moche as þei ben nedeful, but more gretter þingis, for þei ben more nedeful. And þus shulden men telle bi diversite of synnes; as more bodily harm is more to eþchewe¹.

6. Because they have a specious outside, while inwardly corrupt.

De sixte woo þat Crist wiship to þes ypocritis is seid in þes wordis in þe gospel to Cristene men, *Woo worþe þou, scribis and Farisees, ypocritis, þat clensen wipout-forþ of þe cuppe and of þe dishe, but wipinne in þoure soule ben 3e ful of raveyn and of unclennesse in þouzt and in wille. But, blynde Farisee, clense first wipinne-forþ þat þou drynkist and etist goostly þi mete of, and þanne þe bodi wipouten-forþ shal be maad clene. And it is no nede to applie þis to freris, for þei tellen more bi her synne, known in þe peple, þan bi myche more synne hid fro þe peple, for þei coveiten more her fame in þe worlde þan þei done her holynesse knowun of God. And after þis þei eten and drynken goostli hemsilf, and serven to oþir men foode of þer soule.*

7. Because they value their habits and other externals, and care not for the pride and hypocrisy within them.

De sevenþe woo þat Crist wiship to þese ypocritis is seid in þese wordis of Crist þat is al witti, *Woo to þou Scribis and Farisees, ypocritis, þat ben like to þe sepulcris white wipoute, þat semen wipoutenforþ feire to men, but þei ben wipinne ful of dede mennis bones and alle manere of filþe þat comeþ of dede careynes. So 3e semen wipoutenforþ riztwis to oþer men, but wipinne 3e ben ful of wickidness and ypocrisie. And þis þing falliþ to oure newe religieuse, for þei ben weddid wipoutenforþ wip sensible signes, þe which þei putten to bitokenen her holynesse wipinne, and neþer þei ne þese signes stonden þus in holynesse, for God hap ordeyned siche holynesse to stonde in soule. And þese men seien þat siche holynesse stondiþ in her colours, and bodily abitis, wip oþer feyned signes, and so fals ypocrisie is biried wipinne hem, and so stinkinge pride, wip manye oþer vici; but her ground þat þei coveiten is boones of dede men, for þe substauce of her goodis coveiten þei moost, and þei sleen þes men bi falsenesse of bileve. But þe gospel techiþ us þat we shulden do privily al siche holynesse, and crie it not to þe world, but purpose clenly worship of oure God, and leve wor-*

¹ *eschewe*, Laud, 314. (C)

ship of þe worlde and reward here. And þus þenken many men þat þese newe ordris ben ful of ypocrisie, and herfore Crist clepiþ hem sevene siþis ypocritis, and not wiþouten cause, siþ þei myzten do as myche good to profit of holy Chirche, if alle þes signes were away, and þei kepten pure Cristis ordre.

þe eiztipe woo is seid of Crist in forme of þese wordis, *Woo be to you, scribis and Fariseis, ypocritis, þat edifien sepulcris of prophetis, and maken feire biriels of riztwise men, and seien over, falsely, If we hadden ben in tyme of oure fadris, we wolden not have done to dep sich holy prophetis. And þus ben 3e witnesse þat 3e ben sones of þes men þat slouen þes prophetis;* and 3e wolen do wel worse, for 3e casten to slee Crist, heed and eende of alle prophetis. And herfore profecieþ Crist, þat þei shulden *fulfille þe measure of her fadris*, in sleyng of prophetis. And herfore, *3e serpentis, gendruris of eddris, how shulen 3e flee fro dampnyng to helle?* And þus þese newe ypocritis drawun to þis eende, for þei quenchen truþe of Cristis religioun, and so þei sleen Crist in manye of his membris. And 3it þei seien falsely, þat Fariseis bifore hem diden untreuly to treuþe, but þei wolen helpe treuþe, and make Cristis religioun to renne among þe puple. But as myche as þei taken of her owne ypocrisie, as myche þei drawn fro þe ordre of Crist. Lord, if Cristis ordre were clenly holden hool, and men loveden it so moche as þei done þes newe ordris, þanne shulde Cristis ordre be stiflyer defendid, bi as myche as men traveilen aboute þes newe ordris. And þanne, as þer is oo bileve, shulde þer be oon ordre, and charite shulde be nurishid more þan it is now, siþ we witen wele bi dede þat a man loveþ more a man of his ordre þan he doiþ anoper man þat is of straunge ordre. And so oonhede in bileve and oonhede in ordre shulde gendre kyndely charite among men; but charite is now coold, and dividid þe Chirche, as deed bodi is dividid for defaute of humure. Þis oonhede þat Crist made is wel nyze excilid, and stablenesse of þe Chirche is torned in to gravel. And moost cause of þis þing is ypocrisie of men. And bi þis cause Fariseis pursuen trewe preestis, þat tellen her defaultis and letten hem of her wynnynge, so þat no pursuyte is more ful of envie ne more perilous to men for cautelis of ypocritis. For þis synne þei magnifien þe witt

8. Because by quenching gospel truth they slay Christ in His members while pretending zeal for Him.

of her owne men, and seien þat þei passen Goddis lawe and alle þat weren bifore hem, siþ þat Goddis lawe is fals, but þese men glosen it and tellen how it shal be koud, and olde doctours undirstonden. And þus þei bowen to her orders boþe lordis and clerkes. And þus, if strife amonge hemsilf do good to þe Chirche, nepeles it were betere þat we drowen all in oo þok, for þanne þe Chirche were not þus chargid wiþ novelries, and þanne þe Chirche were shapen bi ordenaunce of Crist for to renne liztli þe ordenaunce þat he haþ ordeyned. But now it is mysshapen bi cloutinge of mennis wille, and unable to go fast þe weie þat Crist haþ ordeyned; for þe partis ben to hevy, and oon lettijþ anoþer.

The false belief of friars concerning the Eucharist.

And þe þridde cautil of þe fend, in whiche he travellijþ moost, is to varie in þe bileve þat God himsilf haþ ordeyned. As we may see opinly of þe sacrid oost,—that is, þe white þing and round þat þe preest haþ sacrid, and is perceyved many weies wiþ bodily wittis, þat Cristen men seien is Goddis bodi in fourme of breed, as trewe clerkes and lewde men han bileved siþ God wente to hevене. But þe fend, siþ he was loosid, haþ meved freris to reverse þis; and, as þei seien, her newe seintis and newe doctours þat þei han, techen þat þis sacrament is an accident wiþouten suget, or ellis nouȝt, for it is quantite and qualite. Þis knewen not Jerom, ne Austin, ne Ambrose; siþ Jerom seiþ þus, after tretinge of þis matere, Here we þat þat breed þat Crist tooke and brake it and ȝafe hise disciplis for to ete it, is þe bodi of oure Lord, savyoure of mankynde, siþ he seiþ and may not lye þat þis þing is his bodi. Seint Austin seiþ þus, and resoun acordijþ þerwiþ, þat þat þing þat men seen wiþ þer yȝen is verre breed, but þat þat bileve axijþ þe breed is Goddis bodi. And herfore seiþ Ambrose, þat þat þing þat bifore was breed is now maad Goddis bodi bi vertue of Cristis wordis^a. Siche wisse of holy writt is not chargid of þese freris, but wisse of her owne felowis, þat þei holden more þan Crist.

^a St. Jerome speaks (Epist. xcviij § 13.) of the 'Panem Dominicum quo Salvatoris Corpus ostenditur;' but the exact words given in the text do not appear to be in any of his genuine works. The same must

be said of the quotation that follows, purporting to be from the works of St. Augustine. For the passage from St. Ambrose, see vol. i. p. 379, *note*.

Al if þei knowen wele þat comounnes bileven as we seien, 3it þei pursuen trewe men, and disseyven comouns bi false wordis, whos religioun is veyn, but ordris of siche men. Siþ þei glosen Goddis lawe evene bi contrarie wordis, and seien þat þe wordis of God mut nedis be denyed, and wordis þat þei han founden shulde be usid as bileve. And so þei seien prively, þat Crist and hise apostlis and seintis, til freris comen ynne, weren expresse heretikes. And þus þe Chirche here is foule deformed from children of God to þe fendis lymes, and herto vertues ben transposid to vices; as mekenes is cowardise, and felnesse of pride is clepid rȳtwisnesse for to maynteyne Goddis rȳt, and wrappe is clepid manhede, and myldenesse is shepenesse, and envye is condicioun of Goddis child to venge him, and slouþe is lordlynesse, as God restiþ evermore; covetise is prudence to be riche and myzti, as glotonie is largenesse, and leccherie is myry play; Goddis servaunt is an ypocrite, and an etike is sad in feiþ. And þus alle vertues ben transposid to vicis, and so holy Chirche to synagoge of Sapanas.

And as bileve is ground of alle oþer vertues, so þe fend castiþ to marre men in treuþe. And he entriþ bi þis, þat whatever his prelate seiþ is bileve of holy Chirche þat men shulden bileve; as, whatever þe pope seiþ, þat is trewe and stable; þerbi shulden alle men stonde as bi þeir bileve, as whomever he canonisiþ, assoiliþ, or dampneþ, he is þus diȳt of God, siþ God mut conferme him, and what ever þe pope doiþ, siþ Crist bihiȳte þis to Petre. And þus may eelde bileve be opinly suspendid, and newe bileve may growe as Anticrist castiþ. And cause of þese errours is unknowinge of bileve, and trowinge of falsenesse, or takinge of strange treuþe as bileve of þe Chirche, for Anticrist determyneþ þat þus shulden alle men trowen. Ground aȳens alle þese errours weren stablinge in Cristis lawe, to wite what is his Chirche, and what is bileve þerof. Bileve is an hid treuþe, þat God telliþ in his lawe; and it is declarid ynowȳ in comyn crede of Cristen men; and if þou wole examine feiþ, where it be truþe of Cristis Chirche, loke where þat it is groundid in ony article of þe crede; if it be not groundid þere, take it not as bileve. And þus bileve seiþ privly þing þat men nede nouȳt þus to trowe, and sum þing expressly þat

Pretensions to infallibility to be repudiated.

men shulen opinly trowe^a. And þus Cristene men shulden trowe þat holy Chirche mut nedis stonde, but þis pope or þese prelatiſ we shulden not bileve to be of Cristis Chirche; but ȝif þei suen Crist in lyf, we shulden suppose þat þei ben of Cristis membris, and if þei lyven contrarie to Crist, taken hem as þe fendis synagoge. And al þis þing shulde be taken bineþe bileve, for uncerteynte of þe ende þat wole sue, bi privey orde-nance of God. And þus shame we of þis venym,—if þis pope determineþ þus, þanne it is comune bileve þat ech man owiþ to trowe,—for two popis shulden make two credis, and crede of þe Chirche shulde honge on þe pope, and he moste nedely be saved, for he were God here in erþe. Þus crying of freris blyndiþ þe peple, and [þei] seien þat holy Chirche seiþ þus, and determineþ it as treuþe; for false preestis and disseyved seien þat bi God it is þus, and þus ech man owiþ to bileve. But axe þese freris where it is groundid in comyn bileve of þe Chirche, and if þei failen in þis point, have hem suspect as fendis children. And þus knowe þow riȝt bileve, and stonde þerbi to þe deef, and putte away unknownen treuþe, and seie þat it may wel be soþ, but put þee not to þe deef þerfore; but if riȝt bileve teche þee þat it mut nedis be treuþe of God, þat þou shuldist trowe bi his wille. On þis wise shulde feiþ be purgid, and vertues groundid in þe peple. And þus, if men trowen in God, þei trowen wel þat hem nedij, for þanne þei trowen wele þat God is, and loven him and her neijbore. And þus in general crede ben con-tenyed many treuþis þat us nedij not to dispute, but bileve hem as unpertinent; as in þe creed of Atanasie and þe crede of þe Chirche ben expressid many treuþis þat men neden not þus to trowe, but it is onest ordinaunce to men that God wole þat [þei] taken it.

And þus ech man shulde trowe þat God is beter þan ony oþer þing, and in generalte bileve alle þe treuþis þat God wole, and muse not in specialte aboute treuþis þat God wole hide. As God wole have hid fro þee wheþer þou shalt be saved or dampned, but he wole þat þou trowe, if þou bileve in him to þe

Finally, man should believe all that God requires, but turn away from speculative points, on which certainty is purposely withheld from him.

^a So Dryden in the *Religio Laici*:

'Plain truths enough for needful use they found;
But men would still be itching to expound;
Each was ambitious of the obscurest place,
No measure ta'en from knowledge, all from grace.'

deef, þanne þou shalt be wiþ him in blisse of hevene wiþouten ende. And þus God wole have hid fro þee þe our of tyme whan þou shalt die, and þe daie of þe laste doom, for God wole þat þou be ever wakinge. And þus God wole þat þou leve to muse on doutis þat he wole hide, as of oure Ladi, and Seint Joon, and oþer seintis þat foolis glaveren, and bringiþ þis ynne as bileve, for þei hopen to wynne herbi. And þus, siþ God made al þing in mesure, we shulden holde us in his hondis, and trowe treuþis þat he haþ ordeyned, and tauzt Cristene men to trowe, and putte us not in straunge perilis þat we han no nede to treete.



OF MYNYSTRIS IN þE CHIRCHE.

[THIS tract, like the preceding one, is found in all complete copies of the Sermons, except Douce, 321; it also occurs in manuscript K, at Trinity College, Cambridge. (See vol. i. p. xviii.) There is no reason to doubt that it is the same tract as that which Bale enters in his Catalogue under the title 'De Christo et Antichristo.']

EXPOSICIOUN OF MATHEW XXIV.

OF MYNYSTRIS IN þE CHIRCHE.

Egressus Jesus de Templo *.

Þis gospel telliþ mouche wisdom, þat is hid to many men; and speciali for þis cause, þat it is not al red in þe Chirche. But siþ it is of evene auctorite wiþ oþer gospels of Crist, and of hid sentence and good, þat were profitable to þe Chirche, sum men wolde seie it in her modir langage as þei cunnen. And al 3if þei witen wel þis text of bileve, neþeles, þe expownyng is supposid bineþe bileve, and þei ben redi to take mekeli betere witt if it be tauȝte hem, and so forsake her owne witt, 3if ony techiþ þat it is fals.

Jesus wente out of þe temple; and hise disciplis came to him to shewe him bilding of þe temple. But he answeride and seide to hem; Se 3e alle þes þingis? Sopli, Y seie to 3ou, þer shal not a stoon be left here upon a stone þat ne it shal be distryed. And so it was er fifty 3eer. But whanne Crist sat upon þe mount of Olyvete, his disciplis camen privyly to him, and seiden, Seie to us whanne þes þingis shulen be, and what signe of þi laste comyng, and of endinge of þe world. And Jesus answeride, and seide to hem, Loke 3e þat noon disceyve 3ou. For many shulen come in my name and seie, þat I am Crist, and þei shulen begile many men. For 3e shulen heeren fiztingis and opynyouns of fiztingis; loke þat 3e be not disturblid, for þes þingis moten be done, but 3it is not ful ende maad, for many þingis shulen falle aftir. A folk shal rise azens folk, and rewme shal rise azens rewme, and þer shal be pestilencis, and hungre, and erþe-dene shal be bi stedis; and alle þes ben bigynnyngis of sorowe. Þanne shulen men betraie 3ou in

The author proposes to expound the twenty-fourth chapter of the gospel of St. Matthew.

* We have already had a sermon (No. LXXIII.) upon this gospel, which is one of those for the feasts

of 'Many Martyrs' in the Comune Sanctorum.

tribulacioun, and shulen kille you; and ȝe shulen be in hate to alle folk for my name. And þanne shulen many be sclaundrid, and shulen bitraie togider, and hate hem togidir. And many false profetis shulen rise, and disceyve many men. And, for wickidnesse shal abounde, many mennis charite shal wexe coold. But he þat shal laste to þe ende, he shal be saaf. And þis gospel of þe rewme shal be prechid in al þe world, in wintesse to alle folk; and þanne shal ful ending come^a.

Dangers which the Church shall pass through before the judgment day.

from Antichrist, by whom is meant the papacy.

and from false prophets, by whom are meant the new orders.

Peter and his successors, if real followers of Christ, must imitate him in poverty, meekness, and well-doing.

It is seid ofte tymes bifore, how Crist leeeþ to specific comyng of þe daie of dome. But he telliþ of perils bifore; and þerfore trewe men in Crist shulden be wel paied of þis uncunnyng, and be wel paied of knowing of þe perils þat shulen be bifore þe ende of þe world. For boþe þis cunningg and þis uncunnyng ben profitable to men, and Crist haþ ordeyned hem to be for oure good; who shulde grutche? It is seid, over þis, þat fiftene perils þat Crist seiþ here, ben many passid now, and many shulen contynue herafter. And we supposen þat Antichrist, heed of alle þes yvel men, shal be þe pope of Rome, and of him Crist spekiþ here. And many popis þat comen to þe Chirche ben oo greet persone, þe which is a greet kynde, and haþ many wickide lymes, as cardinalis, and newe ordris, and many þat ben hirid bi hem. And þes newe ordris, and algatis freris, ben clepid of Crist pseudo-profetis. And herfore sum men han travaillid to discryve a pseudo frere; for it is certein þat þe pope wiþ hise wingis distrieþ þe Chirche, and is rote of þes synnes, and of perilis now in þis world. And it is certein of bileve þat Crist knewe þis everemore; and kyndenesse, wiþ charite, shulden meeve Crist to telle þis. But no man can telle, Y gesse, what wordis of Crist wenten neer þis mater, þan wordis þat ben in þis chapiter, which semen best þus to be aplyed.

It is knowun of bileve, þat Petir, wiþ his successouris, shulde sue Crist in þes þree, for ellis þei weren Antichrist, to take falseli þis name, and do algatis azens it. Þei shulden be moost pore men, and moost meke men in spirit, and moost profite to Cristis Chirche, for so dide Peter in Cristis name. But jugs

^a This version, though by no means identical with that in Sermon LXXIII, is yet on the whole nearer to it than to either of the Wycliffite

versions. For instance, it keeps to the 'erþe-dene' instead of 'erþe-moving,' as in those versions.

þe world wheþer þis be soþ of þes þre condiciouns. Men seien þat þei ben moost riche of alle þe men in her lond; for þei han half þe empire of þe Emperour of Rome; þei han of seculer lordis myche almesse getun aftir; but þei han hid tresour of her extraordinarie getinge, as of chaffaringe of benefices, and of þe firste fruytes; and þe emperour haþ not so moche, þat shulde be richest in Cristyndom. Lord! siþ Crist wolde not have as mouche as a litil hous to reste ynne is heed, as propre to him silf, how shulde Cristis viker be so greet lord in þis world? And siþ Crist was so acordinge wiþ lordship of þe empire, þat he chargide it nouȝt in begginge ne in almesse-takinge, but tauȝte how it shulde stande, boþe in word and dede,—how is he Cristis viker þat reversiþ Crist in þis? For bi cautel of þe fend, he haþ getun him half þe empire, and alle þe rewmes in Cristendom feelen his pryvy spoilinge. Siþ Anticrist is þat ilke man þat contrarieþ Crist in lvyng, as anentis poverte þis pope is Anticrist.

And, as anentis þe secounde point, it semeþ þat þis pope is moost proude in herte of alle men in erþe, for worldli lordship and þis pride goen togidere. And þe pope, as he dar, chalengiþ to be cheef lord of ech rewme and lordship þat is here in erþe. But blessid be þe Lord of hevene, þat kepþ moche in hondis of seculer lordis! And stinkinge pryde of þis pope haþ dividid many londis fro him. Þe secounde condicioun to asaie mekenesse of herte, is þat a man be merciful, and not venge his owne injurie. But lete a man seye Goddis lawe, if it myslike to þis pope, he wole curse him as etike, and aftir sle him if he mai. And reising of his croiserie aȝens anoþer pope techiþ mouche þat he wolde venge þing þat he clepiþ his owne injurie. Þe þridde condicioun þat sueþ poverte of a mannis soule, is þat he be meke in speche, and hiȝe not his name here. But þis pope wole þat he be clepid þe moost blessid fadir, and þat noon oþer in erþe have name þat mai be evene to his name. For he seiþ þat his power is more wiþouten mesure þan ony oþeris, as in graunting of indulgencis and oþir dedis þat he doiþ. But bileve of þe gospel techiþ þat Crist, in al þis, dide þe contrarie. For, as Crist seiþ himsilf, if he seke þus his owne glorie, his glorie is nouȝt but falskede

but the papacy
is the richest
power in the
world,

and also the
proudest,

in ypocrisie. And so anentis þis mekenesse þis pope contrarieþ to Crist; and þus he semeþ to be Anticrist for þe secounde condicioun.

And as anentis þe þridde condicioun, þat is, profitinge to þe Chirche, siþ it shulde be goostli profitinge, groundid in vertues, noo drede sich an ypocrite doiþ moost harm to þe Chirche. And if he parte benefices, and ordeyne ouȝt bi his lawe, it smatchiþ aftir symonie and crokiþ fro Cristis lawe; and þis is no profiting, but harmyng to Cristis Chirche; for coveitise and pride mooven him to siche workis. But it is bidding of Crist to ȝyve freeli, as men token, and to do good pryvyli, for to quenche ypocrisie. And so, if þes þre condicions be wel examyned in Crist and Petir, and þe liif of þis pope be treuly examyned bi hem, he is an open Anticrist among alle þe sinful men in erþe.

And þus semeþ þat Crist meenede, whanne he spekiþ þese wordis;—*Whanne ȝe shulen se abhominacioun of discomfort, told of Daniel þe profete, standing in þe holi place; he þat rediþ undirstonde he.* Sum men undirstonden þis word, þat Crist wolde telle to his disciplis þat þe dai of dome shulde not be bifore þat þis pope rengnede þus;—and whan men seen þis rengnyng, rede þei þis gospel and undirstonde it. First, he stondiþ in holi place; for he seiþ þat he is Cristis viker and Petris felowe, and passiþ myche oþer apostlis of Crist. For if a prest reprove him, as pore Poul reprovede Petir, he wolde not take it as dide Petir, but dampne þis preest to be brent. So þe state þat he stondiþ inne shulde be holi, if it were wel; and more abhominacioun was nevere, þan an ypocrite to stonde þus, and lyve þus contrariously to Crist, for he is worse þan oþir fendis. For, siþ þat Bernard seiþ wel^a, þat an unwise kyng in his rewme is an ape in þe roof of þe halle, for propirtees þat fallen to him, mouche more sich a pope, maad as heed of holi Chirche, is a fend in mannis bodi, and disturbliþ al þe Chirche. And siþ synne, among oþir þingis, is moost abhominable to God, and ypocrisie, among oþere synnes, is moost abhominable to treuþe, Crist clepiþ wiseli þis synne abhominacioun it silf. For synne, abhominable

and the most
selfish and
simoniacal.

By the 'abomi-
nation of deso-
lation' some
understand the
present pope.

^a *De Consideratione*, lib. ii. cap. 7. 'Simia in tecto; rex fatuus in solio sedens.'

to God, shulde be abhominable to men. And þis is a disconfort to þe goostli iþen of trewe men; for if we þenken how þat Crist helpide his Chirche goostli, and put his liif for his Chirche, to bringe it to fredom, it were a greet disconfort to se a fend sitte in Cristis stede, and live and do contrariouli to þe dedis þat Crist dide. For as a good heed doiþ confort to þe meyne of þis heed, so a foul, abbominable heed doiþ disconfort to his meyne. And so it were more disconfort to han sich an heed in þe Chirche, þan to have an heed of a dragoun or an eddir.

Þis witt undirstondiþ Crist bi þes wordis, as we supposen. And, bi oure protestacioun bifore^a, we wolen mekeli amende þis, or aþen-calle þis, if we ben tauzt þat it is fals. But quyk resoun, or auctorite, shulde meeve men to Goddis witt. As many foolis arguen here þat if Crist hadde þis witt he wolde have said more opynli to profit of his Chirche,—but here we seien þat Crist spekþ ofte, boþe in þe eelde lawe and in þe newe, derkli to many men, for þe profite of his Chirche. For, bi þe lore of Austin, Crist wole þat men have mede for to traueile for Goddis lawe, and to seke þe witt þerof; and men can not disprove þat ne sich witt, hid for a tyme, profitþ to Cristis Chirche, as dampnyng of men profitþ. But ȝit Anticrist grutchþ here, and seiþ, þis witt is not confermed bi holi doctours of Goddis lawe; whi shulde it not be dispisid for defaute of good ground? But here we seien þat many wittis, which ben hid in Goddis lawe, weren unknowun to þes doctours. Whi myzte not God hide þis witt, til þat þe malice of þese popes meevede men to undirstonde it? And here we axen of Anticrist, to what Crist spak þes wordis; and putte he his witt bi ouris, and disprove ouris if he can, and prove he his contrarie witt by resoun or autorite. Wel men witen bi bileve, þat siche popis synnen moche; and sich synnes, longe gedrid, moten algatis have a foul ende. Whi shulde not oure Lord Jesus

but this view is only put forward as probably true.

^a These words may perhaps merely refer to the language of the opening paragraph of this tract. But it seems at least equally likely that Wyclif meant to refer to the public protestation, which he made in 1378

before the pope's delegates, of his willingness to retract any errors that he might be proved to have fallen into. See Lewis' *Life of Wyclif*, p. 59.

telle profecie of pis synne? But 3it Anticristis clerkis grutchen agens pis witt seid here, and seien, þat Danyel þe profete þouzte noþing of þes popis; how shulde pis profecie be referred to þese men, siþ þis holi man Danyel was a profete of þe eelde lawe? But here þe fendis procuratour shewiþ opinli his folie. For Crist, þat mai neiþer erre ne synne, lymytiþ þis word to þe newe lawe; and siþ Danyel teelde of Crist, how þat he shulde be deed, whi myzte he not make profecie of þingis þat shulden falle to Cristis Chirche? Þus þe patriark Jacob prophecide of þe tyme of grace. And bishopis, but algatis þe pope, shulden knowe boþe Goddis lawes; and þis token þei beren on hem, whanne þei hilen hem wiþ hir mytir^a. And þus Crist and Danyel, of þe newe lawe and þe elde, tellen boþe pis profecie, but to what witt, oþer þan is seid?

Aftir seiþ Crist þat, *Þanne men þat ben in Jude, fle þei to hillis. And he þat is in þe hous, come he not down to take ouzt of his house; and he þat is in þe feeld turne he not azen to take his coote.* Þes wordis of Crist ben mysty, but þei ben ful goode, and ful of witt and counceil, whoso coude undirstonde hem. But preie we to Crist, wisdom of þe Fadir, þat he 3yve us witt of hem, if he like, to oure profite. But 3it we undirstonden þus, stondinge oure protestacioun, þat þese men ben in Jude þat ben prestis of Cristis Chirche; for Judea is confessioun^b, and þes preestis shulen principali confesse Jesus Crist in word and in liif. Þese preestis shulden flee to hillis, for to take ensaumple of holi preestis þat weren bifore, and lyveden pore liif of almesse, and speciali to þe hi3e hil, þat is Jesus Crist, how he livede pis pore lif, al if he were in þe hei3þe of hillis, and alle men shal flowe to him, as Ysaie seiþ.

Þe secounde part of þe chirche is seculer lordis, and þei ben

What is meant by men fleeing to the mountains.

Is. ii. 2.

and by the men that are in the house,

^a The two horns, or points, of the mitre, are emblematic both of the two testaments, and of the traditional horns on the head of Moses. According to Wezer and Wette (*Kirchen-Lexicon*), the form of episcopal consecration in the Roman Church contains the following passage:— 'Imponimus, Domine, capiti hujus antistitis et agonistae tuae galeam

munitionis et salutis, quatenus decorata facie et armato capite *cornibus utriusque testamenti* terribilis appareat adversariis veritatis.' The allusion to the 'lucidissima cornua' on the face of Moses follows.

^b St. Jerome explains Juda to mean 'laudatio, sive confessio.' See Gen. xxix. 35.

in þe over part of þe hous, for her worldli lordship. And hem falliþ to defend pore men from þeves and yvel wedris; but come þei not doun to take ouzt of her house, for þei shulden not falle from þe hiȝnesse of Cristis lawe, for noo worldli good þat Anticrist bihetiþ hem. And algatis þe emperour shulde stonde in þis purpos, for Crist seiþ singulerli to him þat is in þe roof. But God wolde þat lordis wolden do her dever here, and assenten not wiþ þe fend, ne come adoun fro Cristis lawe for no worldli wynnyng; for sich wynnyng were losse and harm to men þat comen doun.

Þe þridde part of þe Chirche is seid to be in þe feeld; for laborers comunli maken þe þridde part of þe Chirche. And turne þei not aȝen to kepe her worldli goodis for drede of Anticristis curse; for þat bringiþ in ofte blis. For þe Psalm of David seiþ; Þei shulen curse and þou shalt blesse; and Crist seiþ to hise apostlis, ȝe shulen be blessid whanne men shulen curse ȝou. And so sich cursing of popis is tokene of blessing of God. And if þe Chirche were wel enformed of þis sentence, wiþ hise labellis, men shulden not drede feyned cursingis, ne lette for hem to sue Cristis lawe. But blisse þat sueþ siche cursingis shulden make men hardi to sue Goddis lawe, for mede þat sueþ after þis cursing is þe moste mede þat man mai have.

But, for þis tyme is perilous, and many assenten to þe fend, Crist seiþ a maner of prophecie;—*Woo is to hem þat beren children, and to hem þat nurishen children, in þo daies of greet peril. But preie ȝe þat ȝoure fleying be not in wynter ne in Satirdai.* Wiþ þe protestacioun seid bifore, undirstonden men þis tixt þus. First, Crist telliþ þe perils þat shulden falle in þis tyme, how many men shulde go to helle for leevyng of Goddis lawe. For if ech man hadde a felowe, þat were as strong a man as is he, þat wolde smyte him to þe herte, and cast him aftir into deep water, þis were a ful perilous caas to men to lyve among her breþeren. But þis tyme is more perilous, for many foulen her breþeren wiþ synne, and putte hem to depe helle; but þis is more yvel þan þe firste. And þis telliþ Crist here, and Poul also, of þis perilous tyme þat shal come of þis synne, þat men shulen be lovyng hemsilf. And þis fleying falliþ in wynter to men þat ben among siche breþeren þat han her charite a cooldid,

and by those that are in the field.

Ps. cix. 26.

The spiritual perils of those that live in these days.

and wanten love of Goddis lawe, and tellen more bi þe popis lawe þan bi þe lawe of Jesus Crist.

The pope has no such prerogatives as are claimed for him.

For, as þei seien untreuli, þe pope is evene wiþ Petir in power, but who shulde untrowe Petris sentence? siþ his writing is bileve. Men þat han love of Crist, and so hete of somer tyme, witen wel þat Petir hadde power and witt for to write bileve; and þis power and þis witt wanten to preestis after apostlis. For Poul hadde passingli þis power, for to knowe bileve of þe Chirche; for þis keye hadde Poul more þan Petir, or oþer þat Crist wolde not ȝyve þis witt; but power is evene in preestis to assoile men of her synnes. And so alle goode popis have evene power to teche þe wey to hevene, and to assoile men þat ben contrit, for God assoilþ alle sich first. And many pointis of Goddis privy witt hadden Poul and Joon, þat Petir wantide; and alle þes writeris of Goddis lawe hadden autorite of God to be scribis of Goddis word, þe which autorite wantiþ to preestis aftir. And so men shulden specific power and cunnyng þat ben in preestis; for in summe þe apostlis passen, and in summe þei ben evene wiþ oþir.

What is meant by men fleeing on the sabbath day.

And þes men fleen in Saboth þat tellen to mouche by þe popis lawe, and trowen to cerymonies þerof, as it were lawe of Jesus Crist. For it is knowun þing to men þat oure Saboth is turned to Sunday. And, as þei seien, þe pope ordeyneþ þat þus þe Saboth shulde be turned; and men of þe chapitre lawe chargen more traveile on þe Sondaie þan þei done a deedli synne, done þanne or in oþir tyme. Þes two men ben encombrid to helpe hemsilf to flee þis peril, þat wanten hete of charite and tellen to moche bi mannis lawe.

Heavy tribulations, arising from the false doctrines ascribed to the pope's authority.

And þanne shal be greet tribulacioun, what manere was nevere before fro þe bigynnyng of þe world, ne shal be done aftir. And but ȝif þes daies shulen be abreggid, þer shulde not be saved ech fleish, þat God haþ ordeyned to blis; but for chosen men shulen þes daies be abreggid. Here men þenken þat Crist spekþ of tribulacioun of soule, for men shulen be oblishid to þe peyne of helle for synnes þat þei shulden do; and vertues shulden be þinne sownen or usid in Cristis name. Bileve shal be exilid, and in stede þerof shal be take þis eresie, þat þe pope mai not synne; but whatever þat he feyneþ to bynde or unbynde, it shal

be so in hevене; for Crist mut nedis assente to him. And in stede of hope of blisse shulen men hope þis popis helpe, summe in fatt beneficis, and sum in gifte of croiserie, and sum in conformyng of þe pope, and sum men in cursyng of her enemyes. And al þis shal be bouzt, as who bieþ an oxe or a cow. And, as anentis charite, it shal be turned to love of money. And for sich hevy love of fleish and of worldli goodis, shal many men be killid and moo dampned to helle. Men han herd of batels bitwixe rewme and rewme, but so general strif^a as now is among many rewmes was nevere herd bifore fro bigynnyng of þe world. For al oure west lond is wiþ þat oo pope or þat oþir; and he þat is wiþ þat oon, hatip þe toþir, wiþ alle hise. And ȝit ipocritis feynen þat al þis is for charite; and þis ypocrisie is worse þan þat oþer synne bifore, for þis world growip in synne fro yvel to worse. But þis tyme shal be short, as Crist seiþ, þat mai not lye. For as alle moten nedis be saved whom Crist haþ ordeyned to blis, so þis tyme mote nedis be short, to helpe hem þat ellis wolden perishe, and so, not ech þat God haþ ordeyned to be saved shulde come to blis. And so God mut nedis ordeyne sum remedie in þe meenes; for as fier wolde ever brenne, standinge þe mater of fier, so synne wolde ever growe, but ȝif Crist wiþdrouz þe mater. And þus God mut nedis put fier and synne in helle, and departe hem from holynesse þat he haþ ordeyned on oþir side. And þus, siþ bileve techip men þat þese wordis moun not be fals, and Crist himsilf biddip men þat reden hem undirstonde hem, what men of riȝt bileve shulde not undirstonde þis gospel?

And Crist medlip medecine for þis tribulacioun, þe which expowneþ sum weye þe witt of þis gospel. For Crist seiþ, þat mai not lye, *þan, if any shal seie to ȝou, Lo, here is Crist, or þere, trowe ȝe it not.* And bi þes wordis þenken trewe men, siþ Crist tellip here ground of þis harm, and Crist tellip þat men shulen

^a 'The vanity rather than the interest of the nation determined the court and the clergy of France. The states of Savoy, Sicily, Cyprus, Aragon, Castile, Navarre, and Scotland, were inclined by their example and authority to the obedience of Clement the Seventh, and, after his

decease, of Benedict the Thirteenth. Rome and the principal states of Italy, Germany, Portugal. England, the Low Countries, and the kingdoms of the North, adhered to the prior election of Urban the Sixth.'—Gibbon's *Decline and Fall*, ch. lxx.

Distracted state of Europe owing to the schism in the papacy.

By those who say, Lo, here is Christ, or there, we may understand the adherents of the rival popes.

holde, summe þat here is Crist, and oþer men þat þere is Crist, in hem þat feynen hem Cristis vikeris shal al þis discencioun rise. For as Grekes han seid bifore þat þei han þe riȝt bileve, and in þe Chirche of Rome is errour, for synne þat rengneþ in þe pope, so seien þese Sarasynes þat Cristene men han fals bileve; and Jewis seien also of Cristene men þat þei ben fals, for þei trowun not in Crist, ne suen him as þei shulden do. For if þei wolden lyve in vertues, as Crist lyvede and tauȝt to lyve, þei shulden have pees among hemsilf, and oþir men wolden turne to hem. But now þe moste falshede and synne of þe world is in þe pope, þat feyneþ þat he is Cristis viker, and moost holy man þat lyveþ; and þus comeþ divisioun to þe laste, if God wole. For sum men seien þat here is þe pope in Avynoun, for he was well chosen; and sum men seien þat he is ȝundir at Rome, for he was first chosen^a. And no man of bileve, þat trowiþ þat Crist is al witti, shulde untrowe þat ne Crist telliþ here of þese dyvysiouns; and þat þe pope, þat feyneþ him viker of Crist, is a greet cause of alle þese divisiouns. And as he gabbiþ on Crist and him, þat Crist lyvede þus, and tauȝte him, and bad him for to do þus bi auctorite of Crist, þat defendiþ him from alle men, so Crist bad him to defende dowing of þe Chirche, and clepe it patrimonie of Crist þat was don on þe crosse. Sich blasfeme gabbingis, þat ipocritis maken aȝens Crist and his lawe, disturblen þe Chirche. And as Jesus in þe elde lawe was clepid passingli Crist, for he was a greet profete to help men and save men, so þes popis seien now, þat bi graunt of hem þei ben passingli Crist; for þei passen oþer preestis, as þe sunne doiþ þe moone. And so Crist seiþ soþli, þat many shulen come in his name and seie þat, I am Crist, and disseyve moche folk.

And Crist telliþ þus þe cause of þis word; *þer shulen rise, seiþ Crist, pseudo-Cristis and pseudo-prophetis, and þei shulen ȝyve grete tokenes, and woundris þerwiþ, so þat, if it mai be, men be brouȝt into error, ȝhe, þe chosen of God; but þis laste mai not be. Bi þese pseudo-Cristis, and bi þese pseudo-profetis, undir-*

By the false
Christs and

^a This passage proves the treatise to have been written within the pontificate of Urban, A.D. 1378-1389.

stonden men þes popis and her wyngis, for *pseudo* is a fals oon, ordeyned to peyne; and so þese popis and þese freres moun wel have þes two names. And herfore þe pope maynteyneþ þes freris as a fadir doip his child, for þei holden him up. And þis pope is patrone of alle þes newe ordris; and þei zeven perdone and leve to fize, and fizten hemsilf, and feynen þis bi Cristis lawe, and algatis pursuen men þat reversen hem. And moo feyned woundris of dremes^a and fals talis herde nevere man sowun, þan freris tellen here. And many men, þat bifore weren holde trewe men, drawun in her hornes for þes apostates. But everemore we ben redi to azen-calle þis glose, whoso preveþ þat it is fals, or ellis techiþ a beter. Wel I woot þat sich a fend mut algatis have helpe, þat bi ipocrisie shal disseyve þe peple. And betere he myzte not do þis, þan to feyne sich a power þat is unknowun in dede and in resoun. And þis power is moche of blis, as þis fend feyneþ, and groundiþ him nakidly of fals undirstanding of wordis of Crist, as trewe men moun wel wite. Lord! who knowiþ not þe fallace of þis fend, þat þis *pseudo* haþ power to do siche woundris? For Crist grauntide his children to have sich power, whanne he grauntide it bifore, and resoun approvede it. Sich fallace of þese fendis shulde ech man knowe, and trowe þat, if þei reversen Crist, Crist zeveþ hem not þis power; and trowe more to juste dedis þan to bullis in þis mater. And Crist spekþ of þes tokenes, and eke of þes woundris; for sich dremed tokenes shal disseyve many men, and sich feyned woundris, 3he, after þe dai of doom, disseyven þes foolis þat trowen þat þe pope is God. For, certis, God myzte not graunte þis perdone, as þis *pseudo* feyneþ; but þus ben Poulis wordis soþ, þat Anticrist sittþ in þe temple of God, and feyneþ him more þan Crist; for Crist grauntide nevere, ne myzte graunte, sich perdone.

And Crist telliþ after þe ende wherfore he telliþ þis prophecie. *Lo, seiþ Crist, I have bifore seid to 3ou.* Herfore, if men seien to 3ou, *Lo, þis Crist is in desert, wole 3e not wende out to se him, ne to trowe in him.* And if men seien of anoþir, *Lo, þis Crist is in a privy place, as in a castel, or chambre, trowe 3e not herto.*

false prophets
are meant the
two popes and
their sup-
porters.

^a See *ante*, page 166.

Good men,
whichever pope
they recognize,
refuse to in-
terest them-
selves in the
quarrel be-
tween them,

And here trewe men þenken þat Crist 3yveþ a good rule to avoide sich feynyngis. Whanne þat þei shulen come, trowe men not to hem, but take hede to her groundinge; and, if þei prove not þat it is bileve, loke þat þei avoide it on a war manere. As sum men seien here, þat þei wolden fayn trowe þis, if þei wisten þat it were bileve, or her wittis tau3te hem þis, or resoun approude it; but þei seen noon of þes þree, and so þei dar not assente to þis, lest þei be ledde in falshede a3ens þe reule of Crist. And of þis men han two oþer reulis, þat helpen hem in þis liif. Oon, þat wheþer pope men nennen, þei bileven not þat he is Cristis viker, and so þei wolen neiþer fi3te ne flite in þis cause þat is uncertein. But as Grekis and oþir strangeris ben here in pees, and leeten foolis fi3te, so trewe men ben here in pees, and neiþer wolen fi3te here ne dispende. For þis were a fendis cause, to fi3te and prove þis to be Cristis viker; siþ Crist wolde not þat men fou3ten for him; and who woot wheþer þis be a fend?

and will have
no dealings
with friars,
and set at
nought their
anathemas.

Þe þridde reule þat men usen here, [and] puttij many men to reste; þei delen not wiþ þes newe ordris, but supposen hem heretikes, be þei mounkes, be þei freris; for þei grounden hem not on resoun, but þei ben newe bineþe bileve, and suspect for many causis. And so ben alle þes prelati3 þat han possessions in þe name of Crist. And neiþer cursingis ne blessingis of sich ben chargid of þese trewe men. And if þei hadden many felowis to holde þis, and þinge þat sueþ, it were a weie to bringe in þe firste ordenance of Crist. For Crist biddij us not bileve to sich preestis whatever þei seien. How shulden men 3eve hem goodis or commune wiþ hem in word or dede? And Crist biddij of himsilf þat men shulden trowe to hise workes. And þus men shaken freris away as Etnycus^a or publicans; and algatis siþ þei wolen not 3yve her feiþ undir her comun seel, and putte it bi oure elde feiþ, þat trowij þat þe sacrid hoost is Goddis bodi in forme of breed, as Crist seiþ.

But, for Crist haþ teeld in maner of his comyng to þe laste doom, he tellij more of þis laste comynge, how it shulde be swiftli. *As þe li3tynge comeþ out fro þe east, and apperij unto þe*

^a 'Ethnicus' in the Vulgate, Matt. xviii. 17.

west, so shal be comyng of mannis sone to þe dai of dome. And wherever þe bodi be, shulen þe eglis be gedrid. And anoon, after tribulacioun of þo daies, shal þe sunne be maad derk, and þe moone shal not 3yve hir lizt, and sterris shulen falle fro hevene, and vertues of hevene shulen be mooved. And þanne shal seme a tokene of mannis sone in hevene; and þanne alle þe kynredis of þe lond shal sorew for her synnes; and þei shulen see mannis sone comyng in þe cloudis of hevene wip a moche vertue and wip majeste. And he shal sende hise angels wip a trumpe and a greet vois; and þei shulen gadere Cristis chosene from four wyndis of hevene, fro þe hizeste place of hevenes unto þe eendis of hem. Of þe fige tree lerne 3e þe parable, Whanne þe braunche of it is tendre, and þe leeves brode, 3e witen þat somer is niz. So and 3e, whanne 3e shulen se alle þese þingis, wite 3e þat þe comynge is ny3 in 3atis. Sopli, I seie to 3ou, þis kynrede shal not passen til alle þingis be doon. Hevene and erþe shulen passe, but my wordis shulen not passe aweie. Of þat dai no man woot, ne þe aungels of hevenes, but þe fadir aloone. But, as it was in daies of Noe, so shal be comyng of mannis sone. For as þei weren in daies bifore þe greet flood, eynge and drinkyng, weddinge and takinge to wedde, to þat daie þat Noe wente into þe ship, and þei knewen not til þe flood cam, and took aweie hem alle; so shal be þe comyng of mannis sone to jugement.

Þes wordis ben treuli undirstonden of þe dai of dome, but 3it þei ben ful derk, as oure Lord wole measure hem. It is seid comunli þat Crist shal come doun in haste, in cloudis of þe eir, as he wente up in cloudis. And here men douten comunli, wheþer þat Crist shal come into þe valey of Josaphath or into opir place of þe eir. And it semep þat Crist wolde þat þis witt were þus knowun to men, þat wherever his bodi were, shulden be gedrid men þat shulden be saved. And þes men ben clepid eglis, for her hiz lyf in hevene; and it is likly þat þis shal be in þe eir, and dampned men in erþe. And Crist shal come in his bodi, wip tokenes of his passioun; and þei moun be in sotil bodi, and after be severid as he wole. Greet multitude of aungels of hevene shal come wip Crist to þis doom, and alle þe spirits of men in hevene shulen take hem able bodies. Þis trumpinge shall be moving togidere of bodies of men fro eest, west, north,

The day of judgment.

and south, as Crist himsilf haþ ordeyned. But muse we not wheþer þis trumpe shal be of bras or of silver, or it shal be an horn, and be left here in erþe. Sich wordis ben soþeli spoken here, to make men drede þe daie of dome; for he is not on Goddis half þat dredip not þis jugement.

Fantastic interpretations need not be adopted.

It semeþ bi þis text of þis gospel, þat soone aftir þe hizeste of Anticrist shal be þis daie of dome, wiþ signes þat Crist tellip here. But we dar not take of þis text, þat fiftene ȝeer bifore shal be shewid fiftene tokenes to warne men of þis dai; but alle þe signes þat Crist tellip here mai be in an hour or lasse. Þe sunne mai be derkkid heter bi fumes þat shal cleer þe erþe, and ȝit it mai be briȝter, aftir þat þe prophete seiþ. Þe moone mai be to men in erþe al derk, or hid to hem, and ȝit aboven, in cleer liȝt, be briȝt, as þe prophete seiþ. Þe fallinge of þe sterres fro hevene mai be visious in þe eir, þat bodies glorified shulen shewe in comynge doun to dampned men. Movyng of vertues of hevenes, shal be of God in hise aungels, þat shulen gaderen þe bodies of men, and teche men whiche þei shulen have. And muse we not wher alle men shulen be of oo stature þanne, or wheþer ech shal have þat bodi þat he hadde here in erþe. We ben sikir of bileve, þat it shal be at þat dai as it is best for to be, or as men shulen willen þat shulen be saved; and among dampned men shal be sovreyne riȝtwisnesse. And muse we not wheþer al þe filþe þat now is in þis world shal be þanne gaderid in helle, and medlid wiþ fier to punishe men. Þes foure wyndis þat Crist spekij of moun be foure mevyngis of þe eir, in which mennis bodies shulen be moved, to ech man to take his bodi. And þis mai be souner doen þan it is spoken now of us blaberers. And alle þe meedful þouȝtis of hevenes, þat goode men hadden, shulen be gaderid, and also veyn þouȝtis of oþir men; and þe fruytis of þes þouȝtis shulen be meritis or demeritis. And riȝt as God makij al in mesure, so speciali it is of þes men. For if a fige tree be shapen here to his fruyt and to his eende, moche more is mankynde shapen to þe ende þat God haþ ordeyned. And so, whanne saved men ben redi in noumbre and in qualitees, shulen also dampned men ben redi to take þe ordenaunce of God; for þis tyme mai laste no longer, ne þis dome be deferrid.

And þanne þes blasfeme prelatis and tirauntis, lordis of þis world, shulen lurke for drede of her synnes; but þei shulen rekene ful evene wiþ Crist. And þanne shulen men wel wite þat þes popis and her wyngis speken not al gospel in magnifying of hir power; for þanne shulen alle indulgencis and cursingis be weyed wiþ Crist, more or lasse, aftir þat men have loved or hatid his lawe. And siþ we have þe same lawe, þat evermore shal stonde wiþ us, he is an over greet fool þat musip on newe lawes made of men, or dredip to stonde here for a treupe; for þere shal ful redresse be made. And herfore Goddis law clepip þis dai þe dai of þe Lord, which is God; for no man mai lette, at þat dai, riȝtwisnesse to be redressid. And þis is dai of þe marche^a, þat al shal be aftir þe jugis wille; and so kynrede þat shal be saved shal laste wiþ hem þat shal be dampned til þat al þis þing be fulfillid; for Cristis word mai not passe away. Hevene and erþe mai be changid, but Cristis sentence mut nedis stonde; and it mai noþing be chaunged for þat þat God haþ ever ordeyned.

Knowinge of þe dai of doom, what tyme it shal evene be, is approprid to þe Godhede; and so þe Trinite woot it wel; but first þe Fadir woot þis, as he is first of þe þree persones. And it stondip wiþ þis witt þat Cristis manheed, and aungels boþe, knowen þis dai but bi Goddis grace. And it semep þat Crist wolde seie þat þis dai shal be hid to þe comune of men, unto þe tyme þat it falle; for þus it was of Noes flood, as Crist tellip wiseli. Alle þes þingis þat we han spoken in longe tyme mai be soone fillid, for Crist is swifter in hise werkes þan oure tungis ben in her speche. Here it is peril for to adde or to bregge fro Cristis wordis; and þefore men shulden be war þat expownen Cristis lawe. For it is open heresie to graunte or denye þat þat Crist himsilf reversip. For whoso seip þat þis Lord is fals, he synnep hugeli aȝens him, siþ he faillip þus in bileve. And so sumwhat is seid here bi supposing or gessing, and sumwhat bi bileve, and sumwhat bi quyk resoun.

But over þis, Crist tellip in comun how þis jugement shal be, and devyðip al mankynde in þre partis, as he doiþ ofte. *Þanne shulen be two in þe feeld; þe toon shal be taken and þe toþir left.*

^a This word appears to be merely the French *marché*, market.

At that day the falsehood of popes and prelates shall be exposed.

The time of the last judgment known primarily to the Father only.

The different dooms of those employed in the same pursuits.

Interpretation.

Two femalis shulen be grynding at a queerne ; þe toon shal be taken and þe topir left. Two shulen be in þe bedde ; þe toon shal be taken and þe topir left. It is seid comunli, þat Crist partip here mankynde in þree partis ; and ech of hem Crist dividip in two partis ; þe oon part shal be take to hevене, and þe topir part shal be left to peyne. Sum men ben ordeynours of mennis state here in erþe ; and þes men ben in þe feeld ; and sum men of þes shulen be saved, and sum men of hem shulen be dampned, after þat þei have served here. Þe secound part is lower, þat is bitokened of wymmēn ; and þis part is laboreris, and opir þat traveilen in peyne. And sum of þes shulen be saved, as innocentis and trewe workmen, and sum men of þes shulen be dampned, as þes þat ben not baptisid bi bapty m of þe Holi Goost, and ben unworþi to be saved. Þe þridde part of mankynde is divided in two partis. Sum men lyven contemplatif liif, as þese þat resten in her bed, and have oile of hevenli þingis ; and al þes shal be saved. And sum men lyven a þouzful liif, and resten in þeir bed fro workis, but þei þenken not on hevenli þingis, or ellis hem wantip devocioun. And siche ben many calkelatours, and astronomye and opir sciencis. Þe firste of þes ben taken to hevене, and þe topir ben left to helle.

And herfore Crist *biddip us wake, for we knowun not what houre oure Lord is to come. Þat þinge wite 3e wel, þat if þe hosebonde man wiste what hour þe þeef were to come, certis he wolde wake, and suffre him not to myne his hous. And þerfore be 3e redi ; for what houre þat 3e gesse not, mannis sone is to come. Who, gessist þou, is trewe servaunt and war, whom his Lord hap put above his meyne, þat he 3yve hem mete in tyme ? Blessid be þat servaunt, whom, whanne his lord shal come, shal fynde so doinge. Sobeli, I seie to 3ou, for upon alle hise goodis he shal putte him. But if þis yvel servaunt shal seie in his herte, My lord makip dwelling for to come ; and if he gynne to smyte þe lordis servauntis þat ben wip him, and if he ete and drynke wip drunken men ; þe lord of þat servaunt shal come in þe dai þat he hopip not, and in hour þat he knowip not, and shal departe him, and he shal put his part wip ypocritis ; þer shal be wepyng and gnasting of teep.*

The good and the evil servant.

A dreadful text for bad prelates.

Þis laste word, unexpowned bifore, is dredeful to prelati s.

For as þe servant is blessid of God þat feediþ goostli his sugettis, so þat prelat is cursid of God þat faillip in þis foode. And he smytiþ hise breþeren þat dwellen servantis wiþ him; for alle men here in erþe ben togider Goddis servantis; and he smytiþ hise breþeren oo manere or opir. For alþif summe woode preestis leeven for to preche, and han joie to fiȝte, boþe in her owne persone, and to lede men to fiȝte, neþeles oþer prelatis smyten her breþeren goostli, not oonli for þei spoilen her goodis and lordshipis þat þei shulden have, but þese meblis of pore men þei ravishen from hem, and hiden hem; and algatis þei smyten þe soule, whanne þei done injurie to men, whanne þei wiþdrawun preching and service þat þei shulden do. And so þer worldli liif, þat lettip sich service, is moche worse þanne a strooke upon þe cheke wiþ an hand; for þe face of þe soule is more worþe þan þe face of þe bodi, and so smytinge in þe soulis face is worse þan bodili smytinge. And þus biddiþ Crist, If a man smyte þee in þe goostli cheke, for love of þe bodili cheke, ȝve him þe toþer; for losse of bodili goodis is lesse þan losse of goostli goodis; and þus many bishopis smyten her sugettis. And þes foolis weenen þat þei do wel in dowing of her chirches; but love of worldli goodis haþ maad hem over drunken, for her wittis ben undisposid to perceyve hevenli goodis. And alle þese drunken prelatis sein in her hertis þat Crist dwellip longe bifore he come to þe dome; and þefore in þe meene tyme þei shulen lyve as þe world axip, and take gladnesse of þe world aftir her astaat. Certis, þes ipocritis ben out of bileve; for þei shulden trowe þat her spirit shal ever be; and siþ þe dai of doom mote nedis be sum tyme, þei mut come to rekenyng, as Crist tellip here. And dwellinge of þis juge tellip þat her peyne is more; for a darte þat comeþ of fer smytiþ more grevouseli. And þis daie comeþ as faste as ony tyme mai come; for no tyme mai come swiftilier þan comeþ ech tyme. Oo tyme comeþ bifore anoþer, but noon faster þan oþer. And him faillip bileeve, as beest, þat takip not þing but þat is now. And herfore seiþ Moises: Biside us is þe dai of losse, and tymes hasten to be present. For siþ al tyme þat shal be is present to God, wite we wel þat þe dai of dome comeþ certainli and swifli. Þese prelatis of þe world eten and

drynken wiþ drunken men; for þei kepen to have no ser-
vauntis, but men þat ben riche to þe world; ne have speche
wiþ oþer men, but wiþ rich men and worldli. And herfore
þe fadir of þe freris techiþ hem to wexe riche, and to feyne
her povert in ech persone, but to grounden richesse in þe
greet persone^a, and þere þei resten more falseli and more
sinnfulli aȝens Goddis lawe þan if þei weren in a simple persone.
And alle þes men ben drunken; but more þes ipocritis þan
oþir. And þis drunkenesse of hem makþ hem not to hope
comyng of þe dai of dome, ne our of her deef; and so þis tyme
moot nedis come unwarly to hem. And at þe day of dome
shal God departe þis prelat fro men þat shal be saved, as kidis
ben departid fro sheep; and his part of þe jugement shal be
wiþ ypocritis. For al if alle dampnede ben ipocritis, ȝit ypo-
cristie is more in preestis, þat feynen her staat hier þan it is in
worldli men; and herfore of her owne mouþ þei shulen be
dampned depper þan oþer.

Lord! who mai be depper dampned þan shulen be þese
false popis? For þei seien þat þei ben moost blessid, and ȝit
þei grounden alle synnes of þe Chirche; for þei consenten to
werris and to wrong liif of seculers; and alle þe synnes þat
prelatis done þei autorisen, as heedis þerof. And oþir meede
han þei noon, but worldli goodis getun bi symonie; and þes
goodis shulen not helpe hem at þe dreedful daie of doom.
And þus þese newe ordris ben groundid in ypocristie; for alle
her signes serven of nouȝt, þat þei han over Cristis reule, but
to crie her holynesse over oþer worldli men. And siþ þei
myȝten be as hooly wiþouten sich feyned signes, eiþer þei
moten in hoolynesse passe disciplis of Crist, or ellis her signes
ben false, and hemsilf ben ypocritis. And herfore Crist clepiþ
so ofte þes Farisees, ypocritis, and seiþ here þat false prelatis
shal have her part wiþ ypocritis. And so it is licli to men þat
þes ipocritis shal be deppist dampned.

Oþir wordis of þis gospel ben expowned in oþer places. But
here men grutchen aȝens þe witt þat here is ȝovun to þis gospel,
and speciali herfore, þat it sowneþ aȝens þe pope, and so aȝens

^a Wyclif employs the phrase 'greet persone' in the sense in which we
now say 'corporation.'

The popes
and the friars
are going the
way of per-
dition.

Arguments
of the papal
theologians.

hooli Chirche, as heretikes casten to distrie it. For if þer were noo pope, and þe Chirche were not dowid, how shulde þe Chirche stonde oþerwise þan heþene men? Also, Crist ordeynede Petre to be, aftir him, heed of þe Chirche; how shulde þis bodi be wiþouten heed, siþ Crist and Petre weren heedis þerof? Also Crist, bi graunt of his word, mai not forsake his Chirche; and so he mut governe it in bileve and oþir pointis; but siþ himsilf comiþ not doun aftir his assencioun, he mut nedis have a viker, to rule þe Chirche after him. Also, þe more part of þe Chirche, boþe lerned men and lewid, wolen assente to þis sentence; who shulde þanne denye it? siþ þat God meeveþ þe peple to consente to þis sentence.

Here men seien mekeli, and taken God to witesse, þat her entent and her wil were þat þe Chirche stood wel; but þei supposen as bileve, þat bowing fro Cristis lawe and breking of his ordenaunce, doiþ harm to þe Chirche. And þus her entent and wille were, þat þe Chirche stood bi Cristis ordenaunce; and þei weren out of bileve, and blasfemeden aþens Cristis witt, þat dissentiden herfro, or seiden þat it is now betere. And herfore pore preestis seien þat turnyng fro Cristis lawe doiþ harm to þe Chirche more þan oþir þing; and þus her entent were to sue Crist as þei moun. And þus þei wolden þat dowing of þe Chirche were away, wiþ þes newe ordris, and al newe þing þat is not groundid in þe ordenance of Crist; and aftir þis þei moten speken alle þingis þat þei seien.

As to þe firste, trewe men seien þat as longe as Crist is in hevene, þe Chirche haþ þe beste pope, Crist, þat is heed of alle seintis. And distance, more or lesse, lettij not Crist to do hise dedis, for he bihetij þat he is wiþ hise alle daies to þe ende of þe world; and he ordeyneþ Cristene men to profite here as him likij. As anentis þis dowinge, men trowen it is veynious; for poverte and wanting of sich goodis was tauzt of Crist, and not þis dowing. And in tokene of þis þing, in Cristis tyme and long aftir þroof þe Chirche and growide brood; but siþ it haþ unprivun. And wite al freris, wiþ oþir ordres, wheþer þis experience be trewe, and þei shulen nede, bi her bileve and her owne liif, seie þe soþe. And so, siþ vertues and bileve ben hid in mannis soule, and in hem stondiþ þe edifynge þat Crist

Reply.

The Church needs no other head than Christ.

telliþ moost bi, þan shulde þe Chirche of Crist be severid fro heþene men; but now men ben heþene in soule, and oure ordre stondiþ wiþouten, in signes; and þis is more horrible þan if mennis skyn were taken of hem.

Peter was a captain in the Church, not its head.

To þe secounde resoun þat is maad, trewe men seien on þis manere. Þei graunten þat þe Chirche bineþe haþ an heed, þat is Crist, heed of aungelis and of men, alle þat weren, or shulen be saved; and we doren not putte two heedis, lest þe Chirche were monstrous. But wel we witen þat Crist wolde ordeyne ever more oon beter þan anopir to wende to hevne bi his lawe, as he dide Petir for a tyme; and if he ordeyne many felowis to helpe Peter, as he dide Poul, so mouche more ben men holden to God. And þis reversiþ not his ordenaunce; for ech apostle hadde in his contre pleyn power, wiþ helpe of Crist, so þat noon hadde nede of Petir, to renne and be confermyd of him. And if ony seie þe reverse, lete him prove it bi autorite; for resoun faillþ in þis mater, to prove þis þing þat men dremen. And so Petir was not heed of þe Chirche, but a capteyn of þe Chirche. And certis werriouris wolen scorne þis resoun, þat if a man be capteyn, he is heed. Petir was capteyn for a tyme, and aftir him was Poul capteyn; and þer was noo striif in þis, which of hem shulde be capteyn; for hem fel noo worldli wynnyng, but more traveil axiþ more blis. And so, if men wolen not be apis, but speke bi ful similitude, þei moten maken pore staat of þe Chirche, as it was in Petris tyme, and in þat forme þat Crist chees Petir, chees an able man as was Petir. But al þe world wole skorne þis skile, þat if Crist, boþe God and man, chees Petir bi pure Goddis lawe, þanne þe cardinalis aftir shulden cheese a feend bi pure mannis lawe. Certis, neiþer þese cardinalis cheesen oon able as Petir was, ne ordeyne him to be pore, as Crist ordeynede alle hise apostlis. And where Crist seiþ, in his Fadir, who was moost able of his apostlis, þes cardinalis loken bi her lawe who is moost myȝti to þe world; and þus þese two elecciouns goen even bi contrarie weies; and over lewid is þat lawyer þat seeþ not þis diversite.

The mode of choosing popes is such as to inspire no confidence.

To þe þridde seien trewe men, þat þe first word and þe secounde ben soþe; but þes blynde bussardis moten knowen first what is Cristis Chirche. Þere ben þree Cristis chirchis;

oon þat haþ vencussid, and is above; anopir þat slepiþ in purgatorie; and neiþer of þes axiþ sich a pope; but þe þridde is fizing here; and þis wiþ opir axen Crist her heed. And which of þese is moost pore, moost meke, moost servisable, is capteyn of hem bi þe jugement of þe Heed above. And þus shulden men leve worldli pryde and worldli lawis in þis mater, and triste algatis to Goddis lawe, and traueile not to chese sich a pope; for þis name is new foundun, and ablid wiþ chesing of him^a. And þus, for alle þes wanten ground, Cristene men shulden dispise hem; siþ alle þes cheseris cannot telle wheþer þei han chose a fend, or wheþer þei ben partis of holi Chirche, or þe pope þat þei chesen. And so it were a greet folie to traueile for to chese þus, siþ þei witen not wheþer þei plesen God, or done azens him and his Chirche. And þus to traueile in sich doute, where men myzten sureli traueile in certein, were folie wiþouten ground, and nevere bedun of oure Lord. And þis moveþ many men to fle alle sich eleccions, siþ þei witen not wheþer it plesse God. And men trowen þat þis movede Petir, wiþ opir apostlis of Jesus Crist, to chese Mathi bi lott, as telliþ þe book of apostlis dedis; for þei witen nere wheþer it were good þanne to leeve þis, and seie her Pater Noster; but no man shulde do oujt, but þing þat he were certein inne. For as it is folie to chese þe worse, so it is folie to chese þe uncerteyn. Þese cheseris wolen be even wiþ Crist; þefore her folie doiþ hem harm. And so þe Chirche shulde be wel governed, if it tristide hooli in Crist, and made not sich elecciouns wiþouten his revelacion. But now men wolen governe þe Chirche wiþouten autorite of Crist, and bi her newe lawis cheese oon heed, and do her dedis; and þus Crist wole chese a viker, al if alle þes goen down to helle. And anentis þes newe lawis and ordinance of þe pope, it were beter þat þei slepten and restiden in Goddis lawe. For alle þese popis, wiþ her cardinalis, kan unneþis undirstande Goddis lawe; how shulden þei maken uncertein newe lawis, þat Crist shulde bidde? For certis, if þei don aujt þat Crist doiþ not bifore hem, þei worchen ajen Crist þe fendis work, to her harm.

^a That is,—derives the powers which are associated with it merely from the election itself.

The argument from numbers futile, since the majority of men are fools.

To þe fourþe resoun, men answeren and seien þat þese men witen not wheþer ony man of Cristis Chirche wolde assente to þis court; and if ony wole assente, grounde he him and answeere here, how he woot þat God wole þis, or contrarie þat he doip, and how myzte þis be wiseli don; for certis þis fool woot nevere. And siþ þer ben fewe wise men, and foolis ben wiþouten noubre, assent of more part of men makip evydence þat it were foli. For as multitude of wise men is confemyng of her dede, so more multitude of foolis is evydence þat þei done yvel. And licly þis court wolde dampne men þat speken þus aþens hem; but Crist wolde save hem to blis, if þei suffriden þis in pacience. And þes foolis cannot seie wher mo men ben wiþ us in þis point; but of aungels be we certein; and licli mo men of Inde, of Sarasyns, and of Grekes, and of Jewis, and goode Cristene men, wolden seie þat þis sentence were soþe. And however þat men seien, Cristis lawe and resoun wole not faile; and so, if men seken wel, men shulden fynde þat it mai not be proved þat it is resonable to have sich a pope. For noþing shulde prove it but oon of þes þree,—over list undir- standing of wordis of Crist,—evydence of mannis lawe, þat erriþ þus in chesing,—or custume, wiþ opynyoun of a mouche peple. But noon of þes mai prove ouzt, al if þei moun blynde men. Þe first haþ noon evydence; zif Crist chees Petir and succes- sours of him to lyve aftir Cristis lawe, þanne þe cardinalis shulen chese whom ever hem likip to lyve contrarie liif, and do how- ever hem likip. As anentis þe secoude, it were a foul þing to prove errour bi errour, where is a greet diversite; and þerfore þes spekeris shulden justifie first mannis lawe, and after shewe þe sufficience of þe similitude. Þe þridde maner of proof is knowun to feble; for many shrewid custumes and false mennis opynyouns proveþ not her entent, but tellen more errour; as, if Iyndis or Sarasyns, Grekis or Jewis, han þis opynyoun, it is not þerfore soþ.

And here moun be skilis maad to prove þis sentence. Crist ordeynede not in þe Chirche, but þat þat he witnesside in his lawe; but Crist witnesside not in his lawe sich chesing of þe pope; þanne Crist ordeynede not in his Chirche sich chesing of þe pope. And nepeles men seien here, þat in vertue of þe

The election of a pope, not being grounded on Scripture, can not be an ordinance of Christ.

pope hangij al holi Chirche bi power þat Crist haþ ʒovun him. For if ech prest in Cristyndom ʒyve fourtie daies to pardone, þe pope mai ʒyve more wiþouten mesure to þe same men. And so þe popis power passij al þe remenaunt of þe Chirche; and sich a vertue in governaunce moste Crist nedis have expressid; for Crist tellij þinge in his lawe, as it is needful to þe Chirche; as sumwhat he tellij expresly, and sum in general wordis. And þus witnessij Austin þat al treuþe is in Goddis lawe. And þis resoun bi himsilf ʒyveþ bileeve to many men. Also, Crist ordeyneþ noþing but resounable; but þis staat of þe pope mai not be groundid in resoun; þerfore Crist ordeynede not þis staat fulli. For if we taken hede to þingis þat touchen þis staat, we moun fynde fulli unskil in ech of hem; and we ben certein of bileve, þat Crist ordeynede nevere eende but if he ordeyned meenes needful for þat eende.

And here seien men of þe contrarie part, þat þe pope mai not synne, fro þat he be chosun. But Scarioth, þat Crist chees, and synnede til þat he was dampned, reproveþ þis heresie bi itsilf aloone; siþ cheesing of Crist passij cheesing of þe cardinalis; for Crist ʒaf Judas grace for a tyme, and so moun not þes cardinalis. And Petir, capteyn of apostlis, synnede ofte tymes; siþ he conceilide Crist not to be slayn, and þerfore Crist clepide him Sathanas; and aftir, in Cristis passioun, Petir bostide falsly, and aftir smoot of Malcus eere; and þerfore Crist reprovede him. And ʒit denyede he Crist cowardli, at þe word of a womman. Lord! siþ Petir synnede þus in þe presence of Crist, whi mai not þis pope synne þat wantij helpe þat Peter hadde? And we reden in bileve, þat after comyng of þe Holi Goost, Petir synnede notabli in governeile of þe Chirche; and þerfore Poul aʒenstood him in his face, for he was reprov-able. And among alle heresies þat Anticrist haþ brouʒt inne, þis is oon of þe moost, þat ech pope is confermyd, and mut nedis be blessid, bi chesing of þe cardinalis. For he haþ more temptinge to synne þan han oþer men; and siþ he is not God in erþe, hise enemyes mai overcome him; and þat he showij in his liif, however men fagen þat anointen him.

Also, it were a greet folie, men to take charge on hem þat were boþ perilous, and God puttide it not on hem; siþ God

The doctrine of the pope's impeccability must be repudiated.

No wise man would undertake a responsibility so vast

and dangerous
as that under-
taken by a
pope.

chargiþ men wiþ service as mouche as þei han power to; but þus takip [þe pope] þis unfoundid staat; and þerfore Crist ordeynede it never. Þe pope takip on him power and cunningg, for to governe al þis world, boþe in spiritualte and temporalte, as moche as falliþ to wynne hevene; but ȝit he leveþ to preche þe gospel, and þat is moost þat Crist bad ever. And herfore Crist bad Petir þries to fede his lambren and hise sheep; and noo drede Crist undirstood of foode of poverte and of mekenesse. For, as Petir telliþ aftir, he haþ neiþer gold ne silver.

It is impossible
that he can
make a right
use of the
immense pa-
tronage which
he claims.

If we goen speciali bi many dedis of þe pope, we moun wel see opinli þat him failiþ power and witt to do þes dedis wiþout errour; but how shulde Crist enjoynne hem þus? And bigynne we at elecciouns or provysyouns of þe pope. He seiþ þat he shulde make hem generali in Cristyndom; but Crist cheese nevere apostle to him, but if þei camen to his presence, and he made hem able bifore to do þe office þat he enjoynede; as Crist ablide Scarioth sumwhat to do wel his office. Lord, wheþir ech pope aftirward passiþ here Crist wiþoute mesure! Poul seiþ, þat Anticrist hiþeþ him moche above Crist; but wel we witen þat þis boost is fals, and comeþ of þe fend. For þe pope woot not þe perillis þat comen to his owne persone; how shulde he knowe þe persones able þat he siþ nevere in fer contres? and siþ Crist and Petre diden not þus, whi shulde þe pope presume þis? his owne synne were ynowþ, if he took no more on him. But coveitise semeþ þe cause, and not merit to alarge his blis. And siþ Petir hadde Poul to felowe, and oþir apostlis, wiþ Clement, whi shulde not þis pope have felowis and helps, as God haþ? Poul seiþ þat Petir and oþirs ȝaven him good felowship; but it passiþ felowship oo pope to distrie anoþir, and alle men þat holden wiþ him, and þerto feyne a croiserie. Lord, wheþir þis pope mai not synne in governance of so mouche peple! certis þanne is he God, and present þourȝ al þis world. And þanne he passiþ Jesus Crist, þat wente ofte, and not in veyn, to be present in many places, aftir þat his manheed axide. Alle þes shewen þat coveitise moveþ þe pope to do þus, for he wolde not have a felowe, and take part of his wynnyng; and so pride and coveitise blynden þe pope in his liif. And so men bigilen him þat seien þat he is moost blessid fadir,

for pryde and coveitise meven him to blasfeme in Jesus Crist, and forsake Cristis lawe, and take anopir as Anticrist, and to drede not þe dai of doom, as men þat ben out of bileve. And it were al oon to men to truste in him and leeve Goddis lawe, and oblishe hem to a fend, and serve þis fend and forsake Crist. But God seiþ, But cursid be he þat affieþ him þus in man, and puttij fleish his laste strengþe, as þis fleish were his God; for no man shulde affie to man, but as help to Goddis lawe. And if he reverse Goddis lawe, triste to it, and leve þis fend.

If we taken heede to opere werkis þat ben feyned of þe pope, we moun se liztli how þei croken fro Goddis lawe to þe fend. For if he assoile or 3yve pardon, opir maner þan Crist wole, certis he feyneþ him to be God, and blasfemeþ in Jesus Crist. For no man mai for3yve synne but if Crist for3yve it first; and prestis ben aftirward Cristis vikeris to telle þe wille of Jesus Crist; and if þei sillen þese indulgencis, and gabben þus upon God, þei chaffaren wijþ Goddis power, and gabben as fendis on her God, for þei seien þat Crist assoilij, and 3it þe synne leveþ worse þan it was. And þis moveþ many men, siþ þei witen not whanne Crist assoilij, to speke upon a condicioun, and suppose aftir signes. And þus marchaundise of shriftes and graunting of indulgencis shewen opinli of þe pope þat he passiþ þe drede of God, for he wole graunte for a preier þat himsilf makij two þousind 3eer^a, and for Cristis Pater Noster he wole not graunte half a dai. What man shulde trowe to þis, al if þe graunt be to a kyng? for siþ it is mesurid bi graunt of Crist, if þis graunt be ou3t worþ, Crist loveþ more his Pater Noster þan opir preieris þat man can make; and if þei comande aungels here to bere mannis soulis to paradis, þis comaunding is not worþ but if Crist comande bifore. Sich biddingis in prelatis shewen pride of Anticrist; for wherbi shulde þis man wite þat he haþ power to bidde þis? Petir, and opir seintis, hadden revelacioun of God, þat Crist wolde þat it were so, as opin miraclis shewiden to men; but dombnesse of þes signes tellij us þat þes wordis ben fals, and croking fro Cristis liif unto þe world techij men þat þese wordis ben feyned, for pride and for coveitise. And sich fals

Abuses connected with the grant by the pope of pardons and indulgences.

^a See *ante*, p. 302.

feyning on God durste þe fend never take on him, ne seie þat he myzte not synne ne varie fro Cristis wille. For þe fend wole seie noþing, but if he have some color þerto, and suppose þat sum man wole bileve þat bi þis colour; but what colour moun men have to trowe to siche indulgencis? For it were opin heresie to trowe þat Crist acceptiþ so persones, and leste þe goodnesse of his preiour for novelrie of mannis preyour. Anoþer side it were heresie to trowe þis but if Crist grauntide it. And so sich grauntis meeven men to trowe a fals as bileeve, and to trowe in sich falshede, and to leeve þe love þat Crist haþ ʒovun.

Other forms of the same abuse: re-served cases.

But o good such speche doiþ, as ech fend mut nede do good. It holdiþ many men at hoom, and lettþ to traveile fer for pardon, siþ a man mai in oo daie gete here many þousynd ʒeer, and so hope þat he shal not come to purgatorie bifore domesdaie; and aftir þis shal noon be purgid, but eiþer be in helle or in hevене. But al þis doiþ harm and good, as it conteyned boþe good and ivel; but þe good is groundid of God, and þe ivel of þe fend. For þe fend, þat is kyng above alle children of pride, haþ tauzt his viker bi a proud noumbre, to bigile men lyvyng here, first to ʒyve beneficis, and make suget to him lerned and lewid. And þe first part is .not groundid, but as Jobis wiif badde him blis God. Þe gospel telliþ how oon preiede Crist to parte þe heritage bitwixe him and his broþir, but Crist forsook þis, and seide, Man, who made me juge over ʒou? And God wolde telle in his lawe what jugement þat Crist hadde ʒovun, if Crist hadde jugid in þis caas. For worse jugementis ben writun, and þus if Crist leste to juge bitwixe two men of worldli goodis, his viker shulde leve to juge al þis world, where jugement is more perilous, and witt wantiþ to juge wel, and al oþir þingis failen. For þe pope knowiþ neiþer þe place ne persone þat he avaunsiþ, but he oblishiþ þe clerk to him, and takþ part of his spoiling, and nedþ þe peple to do her almesse to a fend þat harmeþ hem. And þus seiþ Robert Groostheed þat þese bullis ben heresies^a, for þei ben false looris, contrarié to holi

^a The writer appears to refer to Matthew Paris, who under the year 1253 relates a conversation which took place between Bishop Grosse-

tête, then on his death-bed, and his physician, Friar John of St. Giles; in the course of which the Bishop proved that both the act of the pope

writ, and stifly defendid; for þei ben cursid þat letten hem; but þis curs is falseli feyned, as many oþir ben for moneie. And so coveitise of þis viker wiþ harm of þe clerk and of þe peple, ben þe fruyt þat comeþ of þis zifte; and þis auctor wantiþ not part. And þus fals zifte of pore mennis almesse makijþ þe pope to gete many wises; for boþe he getiþ moneie, and love, and obliþing wiþ feyned lordship. But, for him þinkijþ þis to litil, he blyndijþ more eelder men wiþ shrift and assoiling and wiþ pardon þat he grauntiþ. Þe Glose^a seiþ þat Innocent was auctor of þes shriftis þat ben brougt inne. And þis pope kepijþ to him certein caas fro oþir preestis, as he kepijþ power to him to 3yve pardone wiþouten noumbre; and al þis bringijþ in wynnyng, siþ þei wolen not traveile freeli.

But to conferme þe popis power ben maad many popis lawis, and sharpli executed bi wynnyngis and bi censuris. Þe doctours of þis lawe ben avansid to grete beneficis, al if þei can not on Goddis lawe more þan oþir lewid men. And in chapters and in consistories liggijþ wynnyng, to plete here, and cursingis wiþ oþer censeris pilen þe peple, and geten in moneie. And þis executing of þis lawe lettijþ to knowe and kepe Goddis lawe, for if al þe occupiying þat men han aboute þis lawe were dispendid aboute Goddis lawe, so mouche shulde

Extravagant
importance at-
tached to the
canon law.

in appointing, and that of the friars in conniving at, unworthy clerks, involved the guilt of heresy. In a letter to pope Innocent IV, given in Brown's *Fasciculus* (Appendix, p. 400), and also quoted by Matthew Paris, Grossetête thus speaks of the scandalous papal provisions which were then so common:—'Hæc autem quæ vocantur provisiones non sunt in ædificationem sed in manifestissimam destructionem; non igitur ea potest beata sedes Apostolica; etenim caro et sanguis, quæ regnum Dei non possidebunt, eas revelavit, et non pater Domini nostri Jesu Christi, qui in coelis est.'

^a It would seem that a want had been felt in the party of which Wyclif was the head, of a good Commentary in English on the New Testament. A writer, who describes

himself (Bodl., 143, Prologue) as 'a caityf lettid fro prechyng for a tyme,' undertook to supply this want, for the Gospel of St. Luke; this he accomplished by making an abridgment of the *Catena Aurea* of St. Thomas Aquinas, with some additional matter collected by himself. This 'glose,' it would seem, judging from the manner in which it is referred to in the text, had become a work of established reputation. The passage cited occurs in the exposition of Luke xvii. 11-19, and runs as follows:—'Pope Innocent þe þridde made a lawe þat ech of ever eijer kynde knowleche alle his synnes onys in þe 3eer to his propir preest.' (Bodl., 143 and 243; but in the latter the passage is incomplete.)

Goddis lawe betir be kept, and þis were mouche to Goddis worship, and profit to mennis soulis. And so þis lawe of Anticrist, wiþ execusion þerof, doiþ dispit to God of heven, and moche harm to mannis kinde; for pees and rihtwisnesse and helpe of soule shulden better be nurishid bi Goddis lawe. For kepe men wel þe ten comandementis, and alle þes shulen more largely come. And ȝit þes heretikes stryven þat þis lawe is betir þan Cristis; for þe pope ordeyneþ discretli more punishinge for hem þat breken þis lawe; and þus Cristis lawe is put abak, and Anticristis lawe magnefied.

The Church is over-governed by the pope, to the prejudice of human freedom.

Þe fourþe good feyned of þis viker is governaile of þis Chirche. For riht as an abbot reulij his covent, so þe pope reulij al þis Chirche, and techij hem how þei shal rise and ete, and how þei shulen bidde her bedis, and sacramentis wiþ oþer doutis þis pope declariþ whanne it is nede; and so he is more nedeful þan þe abbot to his covent, or þe lord to his comunes, as Crist is moost nedeful of alle. In þis fourþe is mouche errour, and turning fro Cristis lawe; for Crist nedide not his apostlis to rise ever more at mydnyȝt, ne to faste as men done now, ne to be clopid as þese newe ordris; but al þis is brouȝt in bi þe fend, and fredom of Cristis ordre is left. For Crist wolde þat siche serimones weren taken of him bi mennis free wille, aftir þat þei weren disposid to kepe hem, eiþer more or lesse; but kepinge of Goddis lawe Crist wolde þat it were groundid in his ordre. And Crist wolde teche, as nede were, chaunging of oure serimones; for, as God telde Adam and Joseph, bi litil and litil, what þei shulden do, so Crist wolde telle men of his ordre how þei shulden worche and serve him. For men shulden ever þenke on God, for Crist mai not faile to hem; and þus men seien þat Bartholemew knelide an hundred tymes on þe nyȝt and an hundred tymes on þe dai, and bad hise bedis to Jesus Crist. Wheþir Bartilmew seide þanne his Pater Noster, or what preieris, reden we not, but we trowen not þat he seide his matynes, ne kepte ever more þis liif. And oþir apostlis varieden wel, aftir þat Crist tauȝte hem; and I am certeyn þat Crist wole ȝit, if men serven him as þei shulden. For Salisbiry uss, ne ȝorkes use, ben not nedeful to come to hevене; but as ech cathedral chirche haþ an use biside þe

pope^a, so Crist wolde teche ech Cristene man how he shulde preye and serve him, but if his synne were in cause. And þus sich lymytinge of cloþis, of fasting, and of preiyng, doþ harm to Cristis Chirche, for it distrieþ Cristis fredom, and bostij of nede of þe pope, and puttij men out of bileve. For if þis were nedeful to Cristis ordre, þer shulde not þus be many ordres; sij alle freris monkes and chanouns han oon ground in holi writt; and so alle preestis in þe world shulde holde þe use of þe Court of Rome. And 3if þou seie þat special patrouns oblischen men to siche þingis, teche where þei hadden witt or power to oblischen men on þis maner. Wel I woot þat boost is feyned, and moneye 3ovun for to dispence and assoile men of synnes, þat ben entrikid wiþ sich ritis. And so þis, wiþ oþir dedis, smatchij coveitise of þe pope.

And þus it is of cardinalis, of archebishops, and of bishops, of erchedekenes, and of officialis, and oþir servauntis þat ben newe foundun. Alle þese ben to charge of þe Chirche, and fruyt of hem is moche synne. Preestis and dekenes weren ynow3, if þei wolden mekeli doen her office, and holde hem apaied wiþ Cristis poverté; but Cristis lawe is al reversid.

And as anentis sacramentis, wiþ telling of doutis in Goddis lawe, þe world haþ maad þis court unable to knowe ouyt of þis mater. For when Crist tellij in his gospel þat þe oost, whanne it is sacrid, is Cristis bodi in figure, and veri breed in his kynde, freris seien now þat it is nou3t, or an accident

No orders of clergy are necessary except priests and deacons.

False doctrine held at Rome on the Eucharist.

^a Portions of four of these Uses (those of Sarum, York, Hereford, and Bangor) have been printed by Mr. Maskell in his *Ancient Liturgy of the Church of England*. Of the Lincoln use, mentioned in the preface to the Prayer-book, no copy according to this writer, either in print or in MS., is known to exist. As Lyndwood (quoted in Gibson's *Codex*), writing about 1440, declares that in his time the Sarum use was followed through almost the whole of the province of Canterbury, it seems possible that when Wyclif speaks of each cathedral having a different use, he refers to differences of chant-

ing only, not to such more important differences, in the wording and arrangement of the prayers, &c., as properly constitute a distinct use. Or, again, by a 'cathedral' he may have meant a metropolitan church, assuming the Sarum use to be that of the southern, and the York use to be that of the northern, metropolitan province.

Professor Stubbs suggests that Wyclif may be merely referring to local peculiarities of service, in honour of local saints, as of St. Hugh at Lincoln, St. Wilfrid at Ripon, or St. Ethelbert and St. Thomas at Hereford.

wipouten suget; and, as þei sclaudren, þe court seiþ þus, and oþir ground han þei noon. But it was seid in eelde tyme, bifore þat þe freris comen inne, þat as Crist is God and man, so þis oost is breed and Goddis bodi, but on divers manere; as Baptist was Ely and not Ely. Ne Goddis bodi is þe beste þing þat is in place of þis oost, for þere is þe Trinite, þat is betere þan Goddis bodi; and Cristene men axen not what is þere, but what is þat as Crist spekij. And þus, bitwixe þe pope and freris, feiþ of þe gospel is putt abac, and newe þing is feyned boþe azens resoun and feiþ and mannis witt, wip al proof; and unneþis dremyng mai maynteyne it. Þus wole þe pope declare Goddis lawe and susteyne pees.

Papal dispensations and grants.

Þe fiste office of þe pope is to dispense with his lawe, and to graunte privylegies to men þat ben worþi to hem. But certis, among oþir goodis þat þe popis lawe doiþ to men, it makij hem perplex, and bindij her conscience wip feyned bondis. For as fendis in apostlis tyme feyneden mouche helpe in greet templis, whanne þei ceessiden to punishe men þe which þei bonden bifore, so feyneþ Anticrist to do privylegiis to men, whanne he releesiþ his owne bondis, þat weren put to harme oþir men. And so alle þes privylegiis ben cacling of malice þat is mystaken azens God and his Chirche, and so þei ben not prevylegiis, but ceessinge of malice þat God suffrij. And þus it is of alle privylegiis of bishopis and of abbotis, þat þei singen wip myters or crosis glitiryng wip gold; for in suche privylegies þe fend 3yveþ power to do more azens Crist and azens his symple peple, and robbij hem more gredili of goodis þat þei shulden lyve bi. And so alle sich privylegiis tellen two pridis and two coveitises; o pride of þe pope, and anoþir pride of þe prelat, for he wolde passe oþir for pride of þis liif. And two coveitisis ben medelid here togidere; oon is in þe pope, þat whanne a prelat dieþ þe pope wole have his stente of alle þat fallij to his hous. And bi þis privylegii þis prelat boostij above oþir prelatis, and seiþ þat he is more worþi, for þe pope haþ þus lokid to him; not lokid to his mekenesse, but to his Luciferis pride. And so alle dedis of þe pope, and prelatis þat ben under him, sownen to pride and coveitise and not to mekenesse and povert of Crist. And so þes fyve pointis of þe pope

ben medlid wiþ ipocrisie, so þat summe mai be wel done, and alle mai be falseli doen.

And in noumbre of þis falshode is founden a newe gile, þat whoever interpretiþ þe popis dede to yvel entent or yvel witt, he shal be punishid as an heretike þat defameþ þe hooli fadir. And ȝit haþ God ordeyned helpe, to departe þes popis in two, for her malice shulde be more knowun; for departing litliþ strengþe. And Crist biddiþ here Cristene men not trowe if þat oo pope be closid in castel, and þat opir walke in wildirnesse; for neþer of þes is groundid in God. And siþ men tellen þes wordis bineþe bileve to wite þe soþe, he is unskillful þat dampneþ men for desir to knowe þis gospel, for wel wete we þat it is soþ, and haþ good witt who so knewe it; and we wolde fayn knowe þe riȝt witt, and leeve þis witt if it were fals. And þus men hopen leuefulli þat þat is aȝens Goddis ordenaunce; mouche more men moun suppose of workes þat þe pope doiþ, þat he is an Anticrist, and shal be dampned deepe in helle. And if þei grutchen aȝens þis, telle þei betere witt of Cristis wordis, and grounden hem bi sum resoun, and we wolen mekeli leue þis, and trowen to witt þat þei tellen. if þei done þus as þei bihoten. But þat man is cursid of God þat wole dampne men in þis wille, siþ Cristis lawe biddiþ men to seke þis witt and defende it. And siþ men þat expownen falseli Goddis word ben suffrid of þe pope, more ^a men þat expownen wiþ drede on þis manere shulden be suffrid. But þe fend mai dampne men, but not ravishe her hope in Crist.

Here endiþ þe gospel of Propre Sanctorum ¹.

¹ In A the following words, in red ink, are added as a colophon;— Here enden þe sermons on þe gospels of þe Propre Sanctorum, and bigynneþ þe þridde part, þat is þe sermons on þe Ferial gospels, bigynnyngre first at þe Wednesdai gospel in þe firste woke of Advent bifore Cristemasse.

^a The sense requires 'much more.'

Severities of the papal court against its opponents and impugners. The schism providential.

