《基督宗教與危機中的世界》課程

9/4 合一運動與世界危機 區可茵博士

16/4 靈性與危機 夏其龍神父

23/4 跨越、整全與分割 胡露茜博士

30/4 政經權勢與神學 葉菁華教授

基督徒的靈性生活如何面對危機?

Bible: in the world and not of the world allegiance and martyrdom ruler and being ruled - kingship and slavery colonialism and imperialism capitalism and exploitation materialism and atheism war and crime against humanity theory and practice: civil disobedience, revolution

若望福音 - 第十五章: 18-19

「世界若恨你們,你們該知道,在你們以前,它已恨了我。

若是你們屬於世界,世界必喜愛你們,有如屬於自己的人;但因你們不屬於世界,而是我從世界中揀選了你們,為此,世界才恨你們。

若望福音 - 第十七章: 14-16

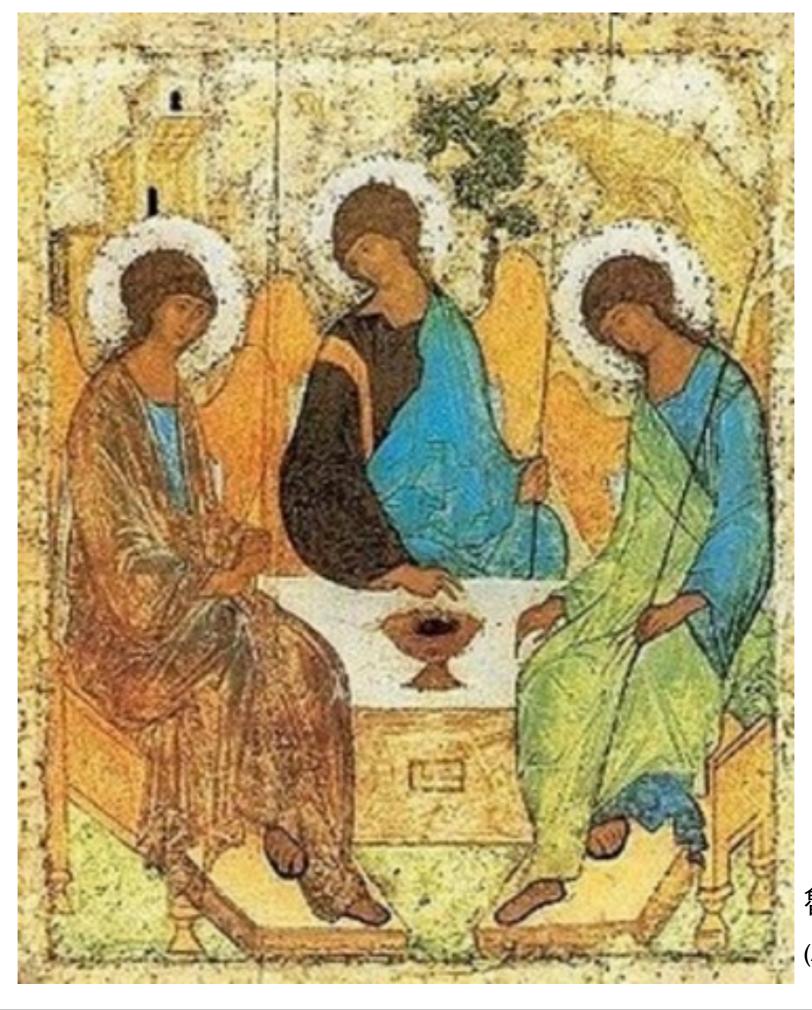
我已將你的話授給了他們, 世界卻憎恨他們, 因為他們不屬於世界, 就如我不屬於世界一樣。我不求你將他們從世界上撤去, 只求你保護他們脫免邪惡。他們不屬於世界, 就如我不屬於世界一樣。

若望一書 - 第二章:15-17

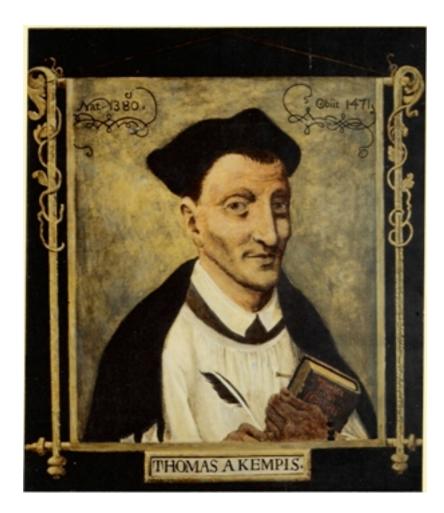
你們不要愛世界,也不要愛世界上的事;誰若愛世界,天父的愛就不在他內。原來世界上的一切:肉身的貪慾,眼目的貪慾,以及人生的驕奢,都不是出於父,而是出於世界。這世界和它的貪慾都要過去;但那履行天主旨意的,卻永遠存在。

羅馬人書 - 第十二章:2

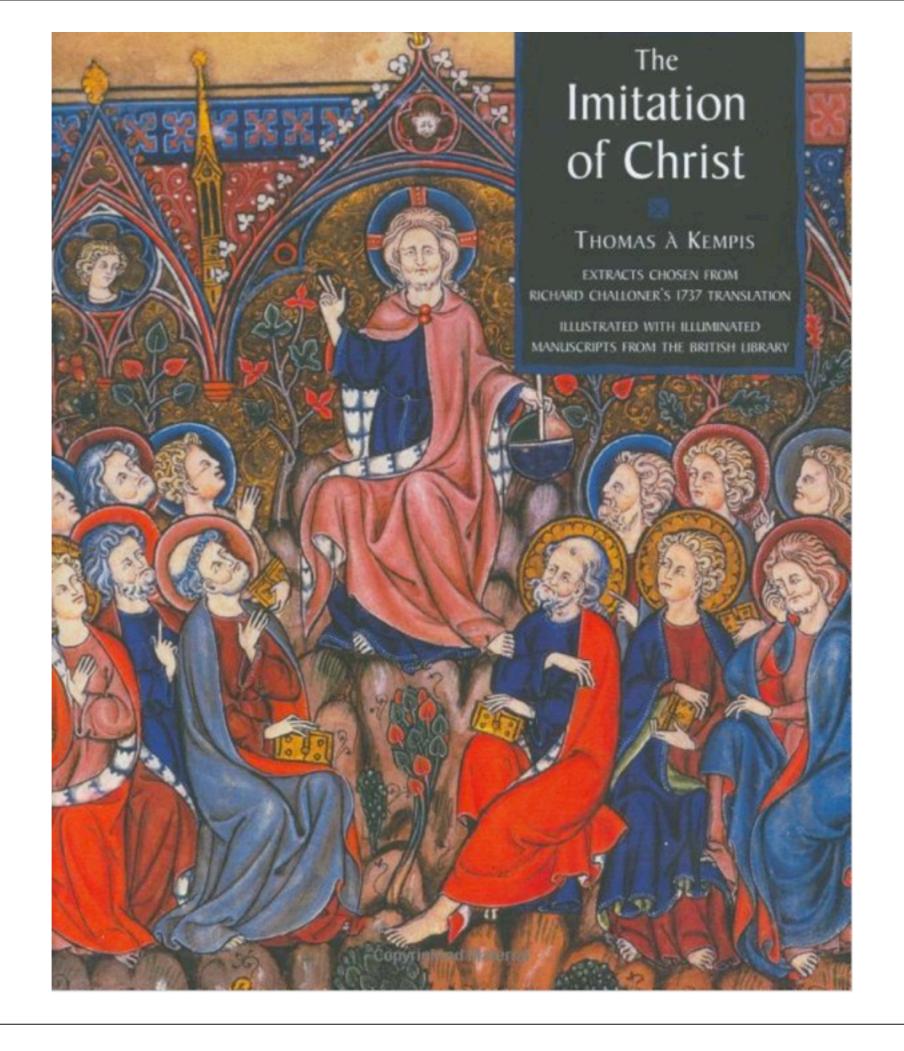
你們不可與此世同化,反而應以新的心思變化自己,為使你們能辨別什麼是天主的旨意,什麼是善事,什麼是悅樂天主的事,什麼是成全的事。



魯布烈夫 (Andrei Rublev,1360-1430)



遵主聖範(師主篇) The Imitation of Christ 托馬斯·肯皮斯(Thomas à Kempis, 1380-1471)





苦逆之益

時 或受苦遊誠 有 益也 其所遇苦逆可引己 心。使 知 所 居。 乃 竄流之 所。

所 不属望于世 立之意 亦當。 但 虚 或有不合己意之人。受之有益矣。雖 想我 不當以 我爲非則 亦我之益 也 所 爲之 毎 因

助 謙 怖 不敢 、發虛誇之心。 或有人輕訕我我則極便於求主知

內 我之證 矣。

須定 向主之心。 即不 去多求外 以寬己 心 也。 、有憂患 。 有

有 邪 念以苦之此 時 愈覺賴主為切 且覺離主之佑。 再 無 可自成 得

此 爲所受之苦。 卽 流 源矣 亦求救矣。 此 時 居

第二章

已 死。 脫 東網 更便得與主安坐也。 此 時 亦 明 知。 111 間

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無懼安全之處也

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CHAPTER XII

Of the uses of adversity

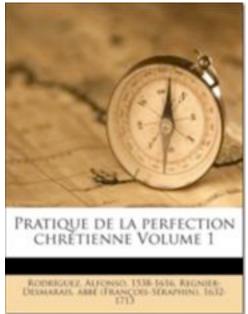
It is good for us that we sometimes have sorrows and adversities, for they often make a man lay to heart that he is only a stranger and sojourner, and may not put his trust in any worldly thing. It is good that we sometimes endure contradictions, and are hardly and unfairly judged, when we do and mean what is good. For these things help us to be humble, and shield us from vain-glory. For then we seek the more earnestly the witness of God, when men speak evil of us falsely, and give us no credit for good.

2. Therefore ought a man to rest wholly upon God, so that he needeth not seek much comfort at the hand of men. When a man who feareth God is afflicted or tried or oppressed with evil thoughts, then he seeth that God is the more necessary unto him, since without God he can do no good thing. Then he is heavy of heart, he groaneth, he crieth out for the very disquietness of his heart. Then he groweth weary of life, and would fain depart and be with Christ. By all this he is taught that in the world there can be no perfect security or fulness of peace.

http://www.gutenberg.org/ebooks/1653.html.noimages

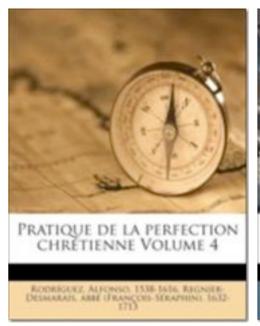
Rodríguez, Alfonso, 1538-1616 崇修引

The practice of Christian Perfection







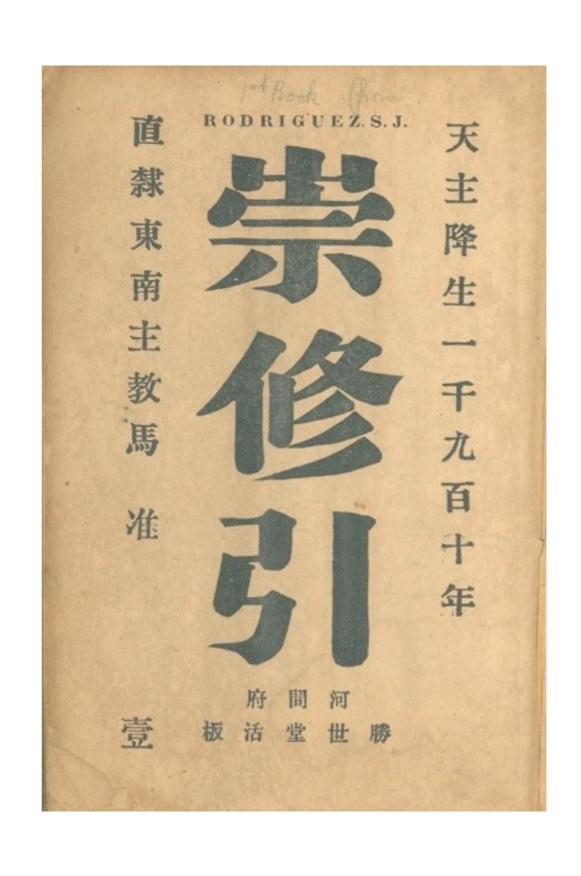




http://archive.org/details/practiceofchrist01rodr http://archive.org/details/practiceofchrist02rodr http://archive.org/details/practiceofchrist03rodriala

"The Practice of Christian and Religious Perfection", published at Seville, 1609. This work is based on the material which he collected for his spiritual exhortations to his brethren, and published at the request of his superiors. Although the book thus written was primarily intended for the use of his religious brethren, yet he destined it also for the profit and edification of other religious and of laymen in the world. Of set purpose it avoids the loftier flights of mysticism and all abstruse speculation. It is a book of practical instructions on all the virtues which go to make up the perfect Christian life, whether lived in the cloister or in the world. It became popular at once, and it is much used today by all classes of Christians as it was when it first became known. More than twenty-five editions of the original Spanish have been issued, besides extracts and abridgements.

More than 60 editions have appeared in French in 7 different translations, 20 in Italian, at least 10 in German, and 8 in Latin. An English translation from the French by Fr. Antony Hoskins, S.J., was printed at St. Omer in 1612. The book has been translated into nearly all the European languages and into many of those of the East.



宗徒給教 是暗義如 過是我能做 聖經上說義人該 第七章 飢 友 貴德篇 渴 們說若說我有成全的 一件事就是忘下過去 的意思都是勸我們發奮修德不住的往前進步。 若無若虚進修妙法 加 增他 的義德聖人該 的。 **德行我不敢自信我可以自信的不** 但想未來的 加 增他的聖德這兩句話。 勉力追趕我的 四十 保禄 終 也就 向。

沒有 沒有 自 己 為得 所行的 己有 做 天主給 他 成 的 -時候。 樣。 全 的 把自 切 心裏 德 善 預 行。 己 功。 備 叨 所 能 的 愧。 行 修 光 如 未 榮。 的 行 同 請 -的 切 看 _ 德行。 善 條 聖 善 功。 保祿 功沒有 却 都 常 抛 大 聖 常 在 背後。 擱 -人。 樣。 在 為勉勵自己 眼 心 以 前。 不 總 想。 勉 說 力 口 不 他 做 不 音。 去。 進。 敢信。 把 如 同

的 進。 保 功都該忘下就是昨天繼行了的好事。 若過於識 給 都 我 勸 們 足 我 並 們 便 的 效法 這 不 想 個 前 墨 表 進了。 保 樣。 滁 眞 這 是 聖熱羅足 個 修 好 德 表樣。 前 也不該記 莫 進 他 說。 的 我 們 念 們 都 個 在 說。 不 極 心。 但 人 妙 把 但該 不 的 識 從 法 足。 想 前 子。 現 行 在 的 能

全 這 地步. -天所 能 行 的 善 功。 所 能 修 的 德 行。 時 時勉 力去做。 如此方能 造 到 成

自 由 人以上若有了這 人之常情莫不 己 有了驕 想 行。 的 的長 我 不 就 缺 喜 傲把先 便 的 樂。 忘下 覺 德 所 有 行. 以 是 前 個 自 於 我 輕 的 己 番 們 我 想 善 看 的 的 們 愛 喜 憂苦所 功都敗壞了。 別 短 的 想。 人 憲 處 若 事。 的 魂。 想 就 不 心。 免不 可 以 我 愛 先前 有 我 們 想 大害處 了 們 憂 的 震魂怎樣 做 起 苦事 不愛想不 的 騎 善 聖 傲 想起從 功。 伯 的 也 念 爾 愛 的 就 頭。 納 想 前 負 把自 無 缺 多 窮。 做 可 說。 少 缺 的 取 己 的 善 少 了。 加 德 若 多 功 因 在 但 行。 少 來。 朋 但 想 的 不

祭鳌引 貴德

> 四 ---Ξ

益處驕傲有多大的害處任憑人有多大的功德塘 也 了義人那 天主因為 聖經上記載 人罷那 不像 跟 財 前去。 物。 腔子 獻 現 時 也 給 個 在 我 的 發利塞俄 此 不像 驕 吾主耶穌給宗徒 不敢擡頭望天低着頭兒 天 有一 處 傲。 主十分之一那個 別人 的這個布彼 個 進 了聖 發利 本是善人。 一樣。別 堂到了祭臺 塞俄覺着自己做了許多 們 加 人 說這個布 如 諸 偷 時 盗不義姦 今却成了惡人. 是的。 候。 用手槌 布彼加 跟前挺 我 彼加諾 一主日守兩次 詸 着 人妻女 身立着。 胸 閃 不住一 請 膛 的善功洋 本 在 是罪 說天 看謙 向天主說。 我 一邊兒不敢上祭 不 遜有多 主呀。 個職 人. 大齊。 像 如 他 洋得 可 傲 今 我 我 大 的 却 憐 所 是 意。 成 我 有 的。

中 個 傲 的 魔鬼 傲。 頭 就全失了 的 常 詭 把我 計。 所。 的 以 魔 好 處 鬼願 擺 在 意 眼 害 前。 我 我 們 們 的 若 功 常 德。 常 念想我們 想 法誘 感 的 好 我 處。 們 便 趣

勞苦。 若但 不 再說。 息了這樣 那 想 過去 怎 想 發奮前 人覺 引 剩 麼大怎麼 的 貴德篇 下 着自 六 的 進 -想。 己無 七 了。 那 百里說。 多也 醫 是 三四百里 必 如 功 就要找 要懒 無 -嗐。 個 德。 我已 惰 便有了精 人。 繼 個 走 的。 容 安身之地逍遙 經走了六七百 干 易 還肯發奮前 里 發 神。 地 衢 若 的 前 不 遠 進。 行 想 路。 若覺着自己 自 麽。 里 那 已經走了 的遠道了。 在了我們 人若 剩 下的 十五 但想 六七 = 功 從 可 四 全 修 以 前 百 百 德 受 歇 里。 里。 備。 的 息 但 他 就

說還 前。 七百 時 效法那 都 的 清了 雨。 放 是 如 不 在 此 欠 黑 得 夜 眼 脹 债 安他 少。 欠 白日。 前。 沒 债 目。 的 有 若 的 人。 打 不 算 還 但 必 常 念 人。 着 定全心 有 若有 的 打 想 怎麽 些 算 如 已經還了 此 微 着 人 一還清 多。 的 全 怎麽 欠 力。 我 功 人 了繼 奉事 還清 的那 們 德。 家 欠天主 怎 -好。 能 天 了 干 \equiv 放 主 脹 四 兩 心 的 徳 目。 百 銀 結 呢。 賬 行 兩 子。 也 修 目。 得 但 總還了三四 總該 放 尚 到 念 紬 心。 想 四 未 把這 全 我 沒有 還萬分之 地 們 步。 未 在 還 百 耀 還 天 兩。 的 主臺 的 可 那 --他 還 六 心

計 再 看 頭 出 外還家的 下的路 程。 人。 打算着 盼 家的 早 心 早 切。不 到 家遺肯 留心算計 走 到半路 走 過 去的路 上 便止 程。 住 但 麽。 留 是 心 必 算

走過 本 家。 走 地。 -走不 直 不 去 也 盡 到 的 到 家方肯 頭 道 到 是 兒。 路。 水 枉受了 家。 也 不 歇 能 斷 都 辛苦。 息 得 不 乎 不可止住 天 中 的。 用了。 堂 我 若 的 們 不 原 到 福 在 還該 世上 家。 樂。 來 在 天 半路上 堂 發 都 是還 奮 的 前 福 止 行。若 樂。 家 住。 就 的 在半路 人。 雕 在 然已經 天堂就 路 頭兒 上 上 止 是 走了千 住。 等 我 着 從 們 百 前 我 的

伯 用 的 盡了 爾 與 引 納 財 貴德篇 帛 力 多 心 量. 可 勸 無 罄。 以 謀 我 算 買 越 們 天堂永 着 雕 效法 怎 的 買賣 麽 鍰 遠 多 赚 越 的 錢。 說那 福 好。 常 樂。 娜 做 不 我 不 買 們 足。 辛 賣 也 不 苦。 的。 怕 效 太 也 任 憑 多。 不 法那買賣 德 怕 怎 + 危 麼 行善 七 險。 得 費 利。 人。 功。 盡 廿 原 怎 了 心 是 麽 發

苦受勞為 天天長 進 加 耀 增 好。 我 們 的 德 行 善 功。 着 我 們 的 謙 遜 忍耐。 及别的 -切 善 德。

歡。 **徳行** 照。 這個 用 白 用 的 過 -日得 這 話。 凡 個 這 做 個 命 我 得 個 買 了大 機 了 們 賣 利 比 會。 你 力 的 喻。 的 利黑 量。 便 _ 機 鋤 比 能 件 所 會。 我 喻。 夜 得 不 能 也 們 真 睡 狠 愛 行 不 勉 是 覺。 做 肯 大 的 力 天 心裏 的 的 善。 失 行 造 輔 我 事。 不 善。 地 也 益。 這 可 們 到 設 覺着快 再 便 不 也 死 的。 說。 是 行。 該 不 -買 比 用 懈。 個 活。 賣 個 方。 -你 極 我 人 謙 若 總 看 好 們 有 遜 有 的 那 的 主願 忍 -人 機 買 比 日之內從早 耐 說 會。 賣 喻。 越 T 的 為 人。 吾主 多。 好 增 常 -心 機 句 長 常 聊 裏越 會。 你 我 眼 穌 至 你 不 們 光 也 晚。 喜 若 愛 的 四 曾

管別 喜。 自己 犯 麽。 看起 着這 若多 你 别 的 一發了財。 様 罪。 來。 次遇着 也 人 人 引 做 亂 失 我 我 別 好 貴 們葬 我 什 利。 說。 也 機 心裏 麽 他 該 某 會。 不 的 呢。 也 難 找那 順 人 便 便喜歡。 凌 心 嗐。 不 過。 不 心 了。 我 愁。 謙 我 辱 能 的 因 們 只 事。 如 了 遜 得 什麼神益 爲 要 不管別 若 多 忍 何 我。 果然 你 能喜 是某 次修 耐 七慢凌辱 因 的 如 歡 機 人 人 了謙遜忍耐 此。 那 的 不幾 呢。 有 會 是最容 買賣 總 心 你 了 裏 慢 쀙 是。 幾 不 也能常 輸贏 凌 說這 豊 是是 乎 易着 辱 有 空 的 個 某 機 過 德 何 人煩惱的。 話。 享平安之 會 如。 人 了 行。 四 也該喜歡 神 别 你 得罪了天主別 來 看買賣 益 人得 到。 天 反 麽。 你 福。 我 利 縣 便該喜歡。 人。 若遇 就 他 避 反 沒 也 只 的 要 有 理 不

崇修引 貴德篇·

喜歡世上還有什麼事能擾亂我們的心呢。

無可喜樂。 然別 魂這 時 是 不了自己 何 睡 靈 的 滤。 覺。 的 -再看 事 件 俱 或 大 做 事。 能 是 事。 的 那 不 得靈 除 說 也該 買 做買 好也 此 話 賣 魂 以 行 怎 如 賣 無可 外。 的 此 走。 樣 的。 益處。 別 總 用 賺 是 後悔這 的 心 該 錢。 怎 事 原 繿 尋 就 麽 件。 來 是。 我靈 怎 樣 我 -樣 的 件事做壞了雖然 概 天起 們 做。 魂 都 在 的 那 心 世上不 不 來。 益 裹 足 處。 不 賺 掛 若 論 錢。 奥 心。這 是為 果然 飯 做 就 什 那 睡 別 麽 别 如 裏 覺。 -的 件 的。 此 事。 去。 行 事 事 只 用 或 我 動 做 做 是 心。 是 們 言 得好。 好 不 奥 爲 談。 論 飯。 修 也 靈 德 何 或 忘

克 該 什 態 己。 麽 文都 動。 但 魂 靠 受辱 得 發大 或 看 是 辣 利。 就 但 財。 受 也 勞。 買 經 勸 得 販 賣 默 我 大 用 -色 什 們 想。 心 利。 這 麽。 貨 效法買賣 盡 物。 自 那 -腓. 己 類 -方 鍰 的 的 不 人。 善 得 本 多若願 分. 說 利。 功。 買賣 做這 就 該 往 人若常住 演 意 各 那 樣 習 賺 -方去。 錢 的 克 善 勝 多。 我 總 在 功。 誘 繼 是 感。 們 -該 個 能 壓 爲 隨 修 地 修 伏 德立 方。 德 機 私 始 愁。 行。 應 終 功。 苦身 也 的。 不 不

倫叉怕 m 且 的 引 得 火 財 燒。 汞 帛 不 旣 天 不 不 失天主願 能 同 世 安 享。 上 又不 的 意 財 帛。 我 能 世 久 上 享。 的 天 天 財 堂 堂 帛。 的 的 得 財 財 着 帛. 帛。 難。 斷 並 五 失 不 不 + 着 如 命 容 我 此。 易。 欲 叉 做 得 出 怕 即 奇 賊

貨 德

看 殺 隱 個 行 嗐。 麽還這 的 看這 我 娼 修 還 龔 事業等 地 呀。 婦。 院 IE 用 獄。 羞 個 粉 長 可 110 麽 但 北 娼 殺 白 配 羞。 他 願 冷 我 婦. 我 黛 博 真正 淡 意 救 為 呀。 緑。 有。 貪 懈 我 人 討 他 打 死 可 -念。 們 升天堂還出 的 人 扮 天 亡。 愧。 不 如 的 徒 的 同 比 世 背 同 喜歡這樣費 弟急 幾 極 我 俗 用 那 其 個 們 人 心 世 忙 華 徙 貪 貪 積 俗 力。 弟。 間 麗. 生 圖 人貪圖 儹 如 老 龎 往 命 有 天 此 心。 師 亞立 害 博 還 堂 景 我 有 的 出 世上 的 -況. 爲 什 山 財 見。 力. 財 怎 悅 麽 府去 帛。 不 眞 帛 的 樂天 能 爲難 禁 比 JE. 呢。 財帛那樣用 教我不傷 總 我 的 可 聖 主反 的 痛 羞。 們 伯 -事。 進 哭 真 貪 爾 不 龐 城。 流 圖 正 納 心。 如 博 淚 遇 可 有 多 心。 當 他。 說。 說。 益 見 歎 我為 愧。 初 他 你 嗐。 了 的 息 聖 拉 羞 德 什 說。

方濟 事 苦。 他 便 天 主還 心 各 貢 沙 着 用 叨 勿 愧 我 图 心。 羞 說。 也該 在 饱 可 日 的 歎。 本 有 了不 他 害 開 得。 做 教 羞 買 去。 的 我 賣。 意 們 看 思。 見 比 見 世 我 賣 知 道害羞。 俗人 買 傳 楊 船。 聖 過 在 数。 方 H 他 繼 子。 光 以 榮天 能 做 先 買 早 穀 主。 賣。 已 發奮 更 到了 比 不 前 我 進. 勞 裹. CHAP.VII That a good Means of attaining Perfection is to think continually on what we are deficient in - without thinking on what we have acquired.

Let him that is just become still more just, and let him that is holy become still more holy. St Jerom and venerable Bede tells us, that our Saviour in saying, Blessed are those who hunger and thirst after justice, for they shall be filled, wished to teach us, that we must never think we are just enough, but must always aspire to greater justice, as St John recommends in the above passage. To this effect, St Paul proposes to us an excellent means, he himself had made use of. Brethren, says he, I do not count myself to have apprehended. But one thing I do; forgetting the things that are behind, and stretching forth myself to those that are before, I pursue towards the mark for the prize of the supernal vocation of God in Christ Jesus. If, then, the apostle of the Gentiles, the vessel of election, does not believe himself perfect, who will dare think himself so? He believes not that he has attained perfection, but endeavours all he possibly can, to acquire it. For this purpose, he forgets all he has done, and only looks to what he is deficient in, and it is to obtain this, that he excites and encourages himself with all his might.

All the saints have very much extolled and earnestly recommended this means as having been prescribed and recommended by the apostle. Hence St Basil and St Jerom teach, that whoever wishes to be a saint, must forget what he has done, and constantly think on what he has still to do, and that he is truly happy who advances daily, and who never thinks on what he did yesterday, but what he has to do to-day in order to make new progress.

But St Gregory and St Bernard descend more to particulars, and say, that this means prescribed by St Paul, consists of two principal parts. The first is to forget the good we have done, and never to look back at it. Certainly we stand much in need of this warning in particular; for it is very natural in us to cast our eyes on what is pleasing, and to turn them away from what may be displeasing. Hence taking pleasure in looking at our improvement, and the good we fancy we have done; and on the contrary, feeling it painful to think on our spiritual wants and poverty, we are inclined to dwell rather on the former, than on the latter. St Gregory says, that as a sick man in a burning fever, is always searching for the coolest and softest part of his bed to find a little ease, even so human weakness ordinarily fixes its eye on the good it has done.

But St Bernard says, that there is extreme danger in this. For if you look only to the good works you have done, you will readily yield to vain glory, preferring yourself to others; you will not endeavour to ascend, believing yourself already arrived at a high degree of perfection. In a word, you will begin to grow tepid, and from tepidity falling into negligence, you will quickly bring on your ruin. The example of the Pharisee in the gospel shows us plainly what must befall those who act in this manner. He casts his eyes on the good works he had done, and then enumerating them, he says, I thank thee, O God, that I am not as the rest of men, extortioners, unjust, adulterers, or such as this publican. I fast twice in the week: I give tithes of all that I possess. And the publican standing afar off would not do so much as lift up his eyes to heaven: but striking his breast, saying, O God, be merciful to me a sinner. I declare to you, says our Saviour, this man went down to his house more justified than the other. Thus we see the one by humbling himself was justified, while the other by his criminal presumption drew upon himself the sentence of his condemnation and of his death. This is the plan the devil has formed against us. By always representing to us the good we have done, his design is to instil into us an high esteem of ourselves, and a contempt of our neighbour, that by yielding to pride, we may bring on our own condemnation.

There is still another danger, as St Bernard says, in looking back on the good we have done. For we will, in consequence, make no effort to advance; we will grow cold in the business of heaven, and at length fancying that we have done enough, we will think only on resting ourselves. As travellers when they begin to grow weary, look behind and consider the journey they have made; just so when those on the road of perfection begin to get tired, they look back to the journey they have made, and imagining they have advanced a great deal, they content themselves, and through shameful sloth, stop half way.

In order to avoid these inconveniences, we must always think not on what we have already done, hut on what still remains to be done. For the former tempts us to stop, while the latter incites us to go on with our work. This is the second branch of the means the apostle teaches us - to have our eyes fixed on what we are deficient in, that we may be encouraged to attain it. St Gregory explains this by several familiar comparisons, and says, that as a man who owes a thousand crowns does not think his debt discharged by his having paid three or four hundred, but still reflects on what he is still to pay:

and cannot be at ease till he has fully satisfied his creditor: so we who are deeply indebted to Almighty God ought not to reckon upon what we have paid, but always consider what we are still to pay in order to satisfy the debt that remains, and mind nothing else than applying ourselves continually to find out the means of doing so. Again as men on a road, who travel with a firm resolution of arriving at their journey's end, never look back to see how many miles they have already gone, but consider how far they have yet to go, and think of nothing else till they arrive at the destined place: in like manner, we, who are travellers in this world, and purpose to go to heaven, our native country, ought not to consider how far we have gone, but how far we have yet to go, and how to get thither. When a man, adds he, undertakes a journey to any place, it avails him nothing to have gone a great way, unless he continues to go on till he comes to his journey's end, because it is only at his arrival there, he can expect the recompense of all his labour. It is therefore of no avail, that you run well at first, if you get tired in the middle of your course; and hence the apostle counsels us - Run so as you may carry the prize.

Never look back upon the space you have left behind, but keep your eyes fixed upon the goal you aim at. Consider that it is perfection you ought to aspire to, and think how far you have yet to go to arrive there, and, in consequence, you will make haste still to advance; for, as Chrysostom says, a man never ceases to run whilst he thinks he is not yet arrived at the end of his journey.

St Bernard says, that we ought to imitate merchants, who though they have acquired considerable property and encountered much hardship and pain, yet so far from being- content with their gain or discouraged by their losses, constantly endeavour to acquire additional property as if hitherto they had neither done nor gained any thing. It is in the same manner, says he, we ought constantly endeavour to increase our store, and to enrich ourselves in humility, charity, mortification, and in all the virtues; and, in a word, like good merchants for heaven we ought make no account of the slight pains we have hitherto felt nor of the riches we have acquired. It is for this reason our blessed Saviour, in St Matthew, compares the kingdom of heaven to a merchant, and commands us, To traffic till he comes.

And the better to explain this example proposed by our Saviour himself, you must observe what great care the merchant always takes not to lose any opportunity of gaining - Let your conduct be the same as his. Lose no opportunity of making some new progress in virtue, and as St Ignatius says, Let us encourage one the other never to lose any degree of perfection, which, by the mercy of God, it is in our power to attain. Suffer nothing to escape without endeavouring to derive some advantage from it. An angry word is said to you; you are commanded to do something against your will; An opportunity of humbling yourself is offered — from all these things, if made proper use of, you will derive considerable advantage. We ought to seek after occasions of this nature, and purchase them at any price; and as a merchant never lies down with more satisfaction than after the day on which he made several good and advantageous bargains: so a religious ought to think that he never succeeds better in his profession, and ought never to go to bed with more comfort, than after the day whereon he met with many occasions of exercising his humility and patience. A merchant is no ways troubled at the losses of another, nor is he angry with him upon this account, but thinks and often reflects with joy on his own particular gain:

in like manner, a religious ought never examine whether another did well or ill in giving him the mortification he received, nor be angry with him for it, but he ought, to rejoice at the particular advantage he derived there from. If we acted in this maimer, we would not so readily lose our peace of mind on such occasions. For when those very things which of their own nature are capable of depriving us of it, and exciting discontent in us, are the only things we seek after and desire, what can happen, that can ever disturb our peace, or cause us any affliction of mind?

Consider, moreover, with what great care and industry the merchant applies to every thing which can promote his own interest; how he thinks of nothing else, and how ardently he undertakes any affair wherein there is the least appearance or hope of gain — whether he is at table; whether he lies down or gets up; whether he is asleep or awake; in fine, wheresoever he is, or whatsoever he does, that affair alone engages his thoughts and allows him not to enjoy repose. In the same manner we must proceed in the affair of our salvation, having our mind and heart entirely engaged with it;

and we should be ever attentive to derive some spiritual profit from every even the least occasion that presents itself. This is the thought which should always accompany us, at table, at our going to bed, and getting up; in all our actions and in all our exercises, at all times, and in all places during our whole life. This is our only business. If we do this well, we need desire nothing more, and in fact, it is not worth our while to trouble ourselves even for a moment about everything else. To all this St Bonaventure adds, that as a good merchant never finds in one country all he wants, but often travels into different countries to find many things; even so a religious ought to seek for his spiritual advancement not only in prayer, meditation, and interior consolations, but also in resisting temptations, in mortifying bis senses, in suffering injuries, pain and labour, and in discharging his duty on all occasions that present themselves.

If we seek, in this manner, after virtue, we shall be rich in a short time. If you seek for wisdom, says Solomon, as men seek for riches; and if you dig for it, as you would to find a treasure, you shall then know what is the fear of the Lord, and you shall learn the true science of God.

What God demands of us here, says St Bernard, is not much; since for gaining the treasure of true wisdom, which is God himself, he requires no more exertion on our part than is usually made to gain earthly riches which are subject to a thousand accidents and whereof the enjoyment is so short and so troublesome. To keep, then, a proportion in things, were it not proper, that as there is an infinite difference between spiritual and temporal goods, so there should also be as great a difference between our manner of seeking the one and that of our seeking the other. It is also a great shame and confusion to us, that worldly men desire those things that are pernicious to them with more earnestness than we desire those things that are of the greatest advantage, and that they run faster to death, than we do to Life.

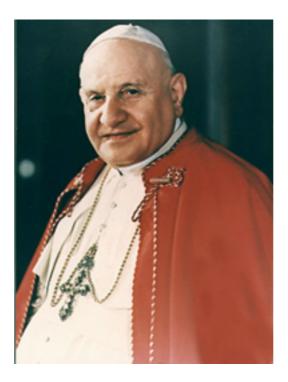
It is set down in Ecclesiastical History, that the holy Abbot Pambo going one day to Alexandria, and meeting with a courtezan very finely dressed, began to weep bitterly, crying out several times: Alas! what a wretched man I am!

And his disciples having asked him, why he wept so bitterly? he answered; would you not have me weep to see this unfortunate woman take more care and diligence to please men, than I do to please God; and to see her take more pains to lay snares for men, in order to drag them into hell, than I use endeavour to gain them to Jesus Christ, and to conduct them to heaven? We read also of St Francis Xaverius that he was ashamed and extremely troubled on seeing that merchants had arrived before him in Japan, and that they had been more diligent to sail thither to sell their merchandise, than he had been to carry thither the treasure of the gospel or propagate the faith, and to increase the kingdom of God. Let us adopt the same sentiments, and be filled with a holy confusion, on seeing, That the children of this world are wiser and more careful in the concerns of this life, than we are in the affair of heaven, and let this prevent us from remaining any longer in our sloth and tepidity.

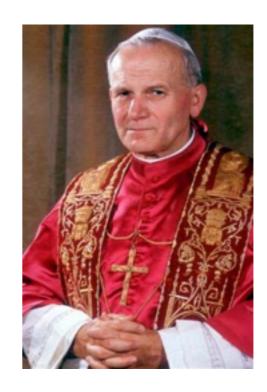
教會社會訓導



良十三世 (1878-1903 在位)



若望二十三世 (1958-1963 在位)



若望 保祿二世 (1978-2005 在位)