

Theology on the Web.org.uk

Making Biblical Scholarship Accessible

This document was supplied for free educational purposes. Unless it is in the public domain, it may not be sold for profit or hosted on a webserver without the permission of the copyright holder.

If you find it of help to you and would like to support the ministry of Theology on the Web, please consider using the links below:



Buy me a coffee

<https://www.buymeacoffee.com/theology>



PATREON

<https://patreon.com/theologyontheweb>

[PayPal](#)

<https://paypal.me/robbradshaw>

A table of contents for *Bibliotheca Sacra* can be found here:

https://biblicalstudies.org.uk/articles_bib-sacra_01.php

ARTICLE VII.

BERNARD OF CLAIRVAUX AS A PREACHER.

FROM THE GERMAN OF DR. A. BRÖMEL, SUPERINTENDENT OF
THE DUCHY OF LUNENBURG.

BY PROF. H. E. JACOBS, D.D., PENNSYLVANIA COLLEGE, GETTYSBURG, PA.

No one can examine closely the life of St. Bernard without astonishment at the wonderful industry and influence which this man of always infirm health exercised, by preaching and by administering the affairs of the church, both in great and in small circles. From the chapel of the cloister in which he preached to the chair of the pope and the throne of the emperor, there was no rank with which he did not come into immediate spiritual contact. He was the mediator and peace-maker between popes and princes; with all the great men of church and state he had much to do; and to all he fearlessly proclaimed the truth. But from the bustle of the world he always withdrew himself again into his cloister to preach daily to his brethren, and to advance in holiness by the reading of the Scriptures, meditation, and the performance of such duties as were prescribed by the rules of his order. Thus prepared, he went forth anew to the work which the world, or the church outside of the cloister, imposed upon him. Everything, too, that he did, he performed with the same calmness of spirit. Whether he wrote against Abelard, the greatest dialectician of his age, of whom Bernard says that he knew everything in heaven and upon earth, except only himself, or contended against heretics, or by his prayers performed miracles in healing the blind and the dumb and the lame, or converted hardened sinners, or cared for the poor and despised, in presence of mind and the calm exercise of power, Bernard at all times remained the same. All this

he accomplished while in a constant struggle with unremitting disease, contracted, as he himself afterward lamented, by immoderate zeal in the mortification of his body. For forty years he exercised spiritual power in such a manner as to be the very soul of his age; and this with a clear confession he ascribes not to himself, but entirely to grace. When dying he prayed: "Dear Lord Jesus, I know that even though I have lived most perfectly, yet I have lived so as to deserve thy condemnation, but I comfort myself in this, that thou hast died for me, and hast sprinkled me with the blood from thy holy wounds. For I have, indeed, been baptized into thee, and have heard thy word through which thou hast called me, and promised me grace and life, and told me to believe; upon that I will depart hence, not in uncertain anxious doubt, and with the thought: Ah, who knows what will be the judgment of God in heaven concerning me!"

Twenty years after his death he was canonized by the Catholic church, and even the Lutheran church has joined in this testimony, and has always named him St. Bernard. Of course, he was a monk, and he praised monasticism as the highest grade of the Christian life; but he was also an evangelical Christian, who, after Scripture and Augustine, proclaimed the free grace of God in Christ Jesus as the only ground of all salvation. Luther, Carlstadt, Melancthon, and Calvin have praised him, and Flacius has included him in his *Catalog. Testium Veritatis*, among the witnesses to the Gospel truth. We have, however, mentioned all this only to raise the questions, How and what this man preached?

First, we ask, How he preached? We answer: Not as we do at the present day; but if we make any comparison, as the ancient Fathers of the Greek and Latin churches, as Augustine and Luther. The form of his sermons was entirely free. He followed the example of no one, nor of anything, except the most general rules of rhetoric. Thereby he is less allied to us, with our specific homiletical rules, than he is to the ancient homilists, who allowed themselves greater free-

dom. Just as it seemed to him best to apply the truth of the gospel, so he preached. His sermons are of the most varied character. They include sermons preached on Sundays and on festival days, sermons on very diverse subjects, and a series of sermons on the Song of Solomon. Some of his sermons are very short, and others tolerably long; some are upon no text whatever, others are upon a verse, others upon several verses, and still others upon longer extracts, just as his time or inclination required. His best sermons are on the Song of Solomon. His language is Latin, and that too of the everyday life of that time; for it is difficult to accept the statement that he preached in French, and that afterwards he himself wrote out his sermons in Latin. The sermons bear no evidence of this. It is more probable that it occurred with him just as with the ancient Fathers, viz. his sermons were written out by others just as he delivered them. To infer from a letter of Bernard, *De Portis*, it appears that he dictated his sermons, at least those on the Song of Solomon, and thus published them. But this does not exclude other modes of preparation. His sermons themselves sometimes bear traces of his having only meditated on the subjects beforehand, and then spoken upon them freely; for at times much that is extemporaneous occurs. Once he speaks of those who are asleep, and excuses them because of the long vigils that had preceded; at another time, an explanation of which he had not thought before, suddenly occurs to him, but which he says that he will not for this reason omit; and he himself also says that his sermons were written out just as they had been delivered. If it be asked who his hearers were, the answer must be given that his audiences consisted almost entirely of men, and these most frequently monks of Clairvaux. But the renowned cloister was a centre of influence that extended far and wide. From all directions clergy and laymen streamed to the cloister. These certainly would not have all assembled, if it had not been for the purpose of hearing Bernard, who preached generally every day. Bernard himself tells this. He says that he could not preach to a

greater distance than when visits were made to Clairvaux, and that there were duties of love which he owed the company; and in another sermon, he says that he congratulates himself that an assembly of such honorable persons had come from a distance. A sermon on the resurrection he preached to abbots (*ad abbates*). But on other occasions his hearers were only the monks and novices. Yet even among these there were distinguished men, as he himself says, e.g. in a funeral sermon of a friend that he preached. We also know something of his distinguished scholars, who, because they continued to preach in his way, were heard more willingly by his hearers. He himself says that his hearers were well-versed in Scripture, and distinguished by their talents in oratory. Hence no mistake is made when it is thought that when Bernard preached in the morning before mass, and sometimes in the evening in the auditorium of his cloister, and excited the most earnest attention and profound emotion, he must have had hearers possessed of more or less scientific culture. And yet, before such an audience he preached the plainest sermons imaginable. He attempted nothing more than to explain clearly the word of God, and lead souls to the Saviour. In regard to the theme, and the division of the subject, which with us is so important that we think scarcely of anything else, there is in Bernard nothing remarkable. Although it is true, that in a sermon on the first Sunday in Advent he presents a very significant division; he asks: Who comes, whence he comes, whither, wherefore, when, and how? But in his other sermons there is no trace of such division. In the edition of Migne, they have indeed titles which designate their contents; but it is scarcely allowable to speak of a division of the subject, and a logical explication of the same in accordance with this division. Thus the title of the sermon for the Fourth Sunday in Advent reads: "Of the twofold coming of Christ, and the pursuit of the true virtues." But we find very little concerning the twofold coming of Christ; concerning the first coming nothing whatever, and concerning the true virtues only a

few words; and besides, the only true virtues mentioned, are poverty and mercy.

The chief matter that Bernard always has in view is the Bible. He seeks constantly to bring to the understanding of his hearers the realism of the words of the Bible; and hence, his sermons are far more than, to use a modern term, *Bibelstunden*. Now and then the contents of his sermons could not be reduced to a title, and the heading reads simply: "Of a Biblical Lesson." But if we speak of the realism of the words of the Bible which Bernard always had in view, we must thereby understand, of course, a very peculiar realism, which is often far more theosophic and mystical than biblical. He preaches not only of the threefold love of God, of the threefold nature of blessings, of a twofold baptism, but also of the life and the five senses of the soul, of the skin, the flesh, and the bones of the soul. But in addition to the profound mystical sermons, there are also very simple and clear moral sermons, e.g. of vigilant care of the thoughts, of the intellect and the will, of the threefold watchfulness, i.e. of the hand, the tongue, and the heart; of magnanimity, long-suffering, and unity, etc. We often meet with very excellent remarks such as we would not have expected to occur to a monk. The cloister brother speaks there of secret fleshly temptations, which could not be gotten rid of, could not be extinguished, but only suppressed. This stream of perverse, unbecoming thoughts, he regards briefly as the filth and dust of which man is made, and from which he cannot free himself. In the picture of the old man that Bernard sketches, every one recognizes himself, and learns that the old man is everywhere the same, both in monastic life and in the world, whenever he comes before self-recollection and into expression. Bernard painfully exclaims that we experience this daily.

As we have remarked that his sermons are *Bibelstunden*, in which he takes his own course, and only cares about explaining the text according to his understanding of the words, we must yet add that Bernard had gifts of oratory, and that

many sermons — e.g. those on the Song of Solomon — are distinguished for their oratory, and that many others — e.g. his funeral sermons, on account of their coherence, the depth of their thoughts, and the strong feeling of love and affection for the departed one which he calls forth — are among the very best that have ever been delivered. We mention here the funeral sermon which he delivered at the death of Bishop Malachius, that of his brother Gerard, and of “his sweet friend, Humbert of Clairvaux.” In these Bernard entirely discloses his character, as full not only of faith and hope in eternal salvation, but also of love and friendship and fidelity towards his brethren, and, in addition, of transporting eloquence. He so portrays his friend Humbert that we see him as though in a portrait, and this too even to the minutest lineament, e.g. even to the manner in which this serious man, who never laughed, drank his wine. But the highest tribute which he could pay to him, he says is this, viz. that his “sweet friend,” “the man after his heart,” as he calls him, had walked in the path of the Lord Jesus, and had not drawn his foot back, but bore in his body the marks of the Lord Jesus. This declaration is a model of a funeral sermon from the mouth of a friend. Besides, it must be noticed that Bernard says nothing of his departed friend but what an evangelical Christian could wish to be said at his own funeral. Of the Romish works which Humbert must certainly have wrought Bernard mentions not a single one.

A noticeable feature in his sermons is their great earnestness. Bernard lived in accordance with his sermons; yea, his sermons are only an expression of his life. As Bernard once replied to an ill-disposed man, who to reproach him praised his well fed horse, by pointing to his own emaciated neck, and thus made a great impression on the bystanders, so also he could always exhort his hearers: “Walk so as ye have us for an ensample.” His life was his best sermon. Accordingly, he sometimes addresses his hearers with great earnestness. He holds up before them the necessity of conversion, and says of himself that even he must be con-

verted. "If there were not for each one of us," he exclaims, "such a dark night, in case we were to live without God in this world, and to walk according to our inclinations, and to follow the allurements of the flesh, and to be obedient to worldly desires, and to present our members as instruments of unrighteousness, at what do we now blush, except concerning works of darkness?" Therefore he admonishes his hearers to change for the better. In his passion sermons he urges greatly to earnestness. "Let not the mystery of the present time," he exclaims, "pass by without fruit, for rich is the blessing." In his sermon concerning the resurrection to the abbots, he speaks very sharply of living and dead faith. "Where faith is dead, there Christ rests in the grave."

If we compare Bernard with Augustine or Luther, it is manifest that he had not the great genius, the creative originality of thought, the spiritual knowledge of Scripture (especially of Paul) which these had. He possessed, indeed, all this, but only in a lower degree. Bernard was just as truly a Christian, a man who joyfully had surrendered, and daily surrendered, all things. He also did not possess the productivity of Augustine and Luther. New thoughts did not proceed from him. Generally he had only a certain amount of thoughts that were already the property of the church, and were appropriated by Bernard only because they had entered his heart, and thus become his true property. On this account, his sermons have not the freshness, clearness, and power of those of Augustine and Luther. Much of this may, of course, be attributed to the fact that Bernard was not only himself a decided monk, but that he also constantly preached only to monks. The great sphere of domestic and family life, of marriage and the education of children, was entirely beyond the horizon of the monks. Hence his sermons suffer generally from their abstract character. What a monk who is a Christian has to say to other monks who are also Christians, this is all that Bernard preached. He was without a congregation; he had before

him only a particular division of the congregation, and this division, alas, the most entirely separate from others that can exist. With the exception of their humanity, these monks had nothing whatever in common with others; there was nothing in the rules of their order that pertained to ordinary Christians. Even the Bible was written not only for all men in general, but especially for men in their individual relations, husbands and wives, parents and children. Bernard could not, therefore, preach to the monks the entire Bible in its particularity. He could only select what is general, what is necessary for each one alike and in general. Great surprise has often been excited when persons have learned that a monk preached to monks, as Bernard did, through the Song of Solomon. The expressions of conjugal love, which Bernard always transferred very quickly to a spiritual sphere, had still a side incomprehensible to the monks, even though they are not to be regarded as something different.

Yet the sermons of Bernard often have a coloring that is very full of life. Not only that he understands and connects the entire Bible (yet, of course, often too much in his own way), so that it is manifest not merely that he himself lives and moves in the Bible, but also that he draws from its fullness for his hearers; not merely that Bernard was a believing and earnest Christian, who always with great fervor and impressiveness appeared upon the pulpit as the pastor and abbot of his brethren; even his manner is often animated and attractive. In accordance with his customary disregard of art, he proceeds right into the heart of his subject, and often does this with great vivacity. In the introduction to a Christmas sermon he says: "The voice of joy resounds upon the earth, the voice of rejoicing and salvation in the tabernacles of sinners. To them belongs the word, the word of consolation, the announcement full of glory, worthy of all acceptation. Exult, ye mountains, and all ye forests clap your hands before the sight of the Lord; for he has come. Hear it, Heaven; understand it, Earth; be astonished and

praise, all that is in the earth; but more than all thou, O man; Jesus Christ is born in Bethlehem. Born is the Son of the Highest — born before all time; the Word has become a child! Who can be sufficiently amazed?" In the same tone he exults throughout the entire sermon.

Often, too, as in Augustine, apostrophes occur. Thus, in the funeral sermon of his friend Humbert, he abruptly apostrophizes death. "Thus, therefore," he says, "thou separatest, O bitter Death, O cruel beast, O most bitter bitterness, O terror and horror of the children of Adam! What hast thou done? Thou hast slain. But what? In reality, only the flesh; for over the soul thou hast no power. It flies to its Creator, for whom it has so long aspired. But even the body thou shalt restore. The Only-begotten of the Father will seek Humbert, and glorify him; and thou, O Death, as a fool, shalt be kept back. When Humbert is in eternal life, thou shalt die eternally." So he also addresses Eve, and tells her that the serpent is defrauded. In the midst of a sermon he prays: "Come, Lord Jesus, come, and with thy power cast him out whom we have imprudently admitted." In the midst of a sermon he suddenly stops, and exclaims: "How long shall I disguise the fact that the fire which I conceal within me is consuming my sad heart! Until now I have employed violence against myself, that thereby suffering should not seem to gain the victory over faith"; and then he tells his hearers that his brother Gerard is dead, and preaches a funeral sermon.

As he was himself so well acquainted with the theologians — e.g. St. Augustine — that he was able to contend with Abelard, as he was himself acquainted likewise with the classics, so he advises his hearers also to apply themselves to acquiring knowledge. "There are some," he says, "who strive after knowledge only for the purpose of selling it for gold and honor; but there are also some who strive after knowledge that they may edify thereby, and this is love and prudence." He guards against impractical science and unapplied knowledge. Knowledge that one cannot communicate

is to him only a burden. "A pious teacher of the church," he says, "pities those who despise the knowledge of how we should live, just as he also pities those who know enough, and yet live wickedly." Mere knowledge, acquired only for the purpose of knowing something, is shameful curiosity; the striving after knowledge only for the purpose of gaining information is shameful idleness. All knowledge should serve only for the edification of one's self or his neighbor. He cites the expression from Persius i. 27, where all knowledge from which one's neighbor derives no benefit is censured. But to him the highest knowledge is self-knowledge, without which no one is saved. The next in importance is the knowledge of God. In comparison with this twofold knowledge all other knowledge is indifferent. And of these highest forms of knowledge these sermons are full.

A peculiarity of Bernard, as of all the great preachers of old, is the subjectivity that enters into his sermons. Bernard is very remote from the objectivity which presents in the foreground only the word of Scripture and the office of the preacher, so that the preacher himself is heard only as an instrument that proclaims the word and the office. It is he himself, with all his experiences and struggles and victories, that preaches. He speaks of the time before his conversion and of his conversion. "He had sought," he exclaims, "one whom his soul could love," and adds, "ye have had the same experience." Throughout all, it is manifest that it is his very self that has passed through and experienced all, and now is preaching. We feel the whole time that the faith is his faith, and the Saviour is his Saviour. And he preaches in order that others also may attain such experiences. "Oh that I could seize all who without cause are my enemies, and lead them to Christ," he exclaims in the midst of a sermon.

We ask yet, what is briefly the contents of his sermons? With the exception of the worship rendered to Mary, every evangelical Christian will read with pleasure the sermons of Bernard. God's word and Augustine were the chief sources of his culture. Hence he speaks of God, just as Augustine

does. "To learn to know God is sweet," he says, as well as does Augustine. But all love of God is manifest, and abides in Jesus. To learn to know Jesus, to love Jesus, to enter into most intimate fellowship with Jesus, is to him the highest attainment of the entire Christian life. "Love Jesus," he prays, "and with his sweetness expel the sweetness of the world, just as one key forces out another." "But if you believe in Jesus, do also his works," he admonishes. "Give ear, ye earth-born, ye sons of men, give ear, ye who live in the dust, awake and praise him who has come as the physician of the sick, as the Redeemer of the sold, as the way for the erring, as life for the dead. He has come who casts into the depths of the sea all our sins." Jesus is with him the central luminary of all Scripture, and of his entire theology. Concerning the miracle of the birth of Jesus Christ, he says so much that is profound that we imagine that we are listening to Luther. His love to Jesus is so ardent that he can scarcely express it in the rich imagery of the Song of Solomon. "He kisses me with the kisses of his mouth," is the key-note of his meditations. Jesus holds the sleeping bride, the soul, in his arms, and prevents any trouble and disquietude from disturbing her. "From very joy," he says, "I do not comprehend how it is that Majesty does not disdain to enter into confidential and sweet fellowship with our weakness, and that God does not deem it unworthy of himself to bind himself in marriage with the soul wandering far from him, and to render to it the love of a bridegroom, who is captivated by burning love." The love of the soul to its heavenly Bridegroom, is with Bernard a dying love: "O that I," he exclaims, "may often yet die this death, that I may be insensible to the death-bearing flatteries of a luxurious life, that I may be unaffected by the incitements to sensuality, by the flames of avarice, by the goads of anger and impatience, by the terrors of sorrow, and the pains of care!" But if this be mysticism, which is almost sick from love, yet there are also passages in Bernard, than which there are none finer in Tauler and Arndt, or even in Augustine and Luther. Al-

though to him the entire goal of the Christian life is justification, sanctification, the communion of life with Christ, yet he is also conscious that all union with God, both in this life and in the life to come, depends absolutely only upon God's grace. Of course justification, as Luther has set it forth from the Epistles of Paul, Bernard teaches with as little clearness as Augustine. Both hold the same, but only in the germ. Bernard says: "As much as is in him, he requires of us nothing more than that we acknowledge our unrighteousness, and he will justify us gratuitously, in order that grace may be praised. And those whom Christ has to-day justified, he will to-morrow glorify; for we have received not glory for glory, but grace for grace." But with Bernard everything lies in faith; for Christ does not dwell in those hearts, he thinks, in which vigor of faith is wanting; "the just shall live by his faith" (Heb. ii. 4). In these short words Luther's entire doctrine of justification lies implicitly. That by the vigor of faith man is justified and receives Christ into his heart, was certainly also Luther's belief. He regards trust in one's own wisdom and self-will as directly opposed to this surrender of the individual to the power of faith in Jesus. Selfishness is to him a sin. "What is it that God hates or punishes but self-will? Self-will is a cruel beast, the meanest animal, the most rapacious wolf, the most raging lion. The self-willed do not know the righteousness of God, and strives to establish a righteousness of their own; they please only themselves, and are great in their own eyes. Such leprosy can be washed away only in the waters of the Jordan." Bernard knows also the precious efficacy of the Holy Ghost in the hearts of men. But in his view all the efficacy of the Holy Ghost is bound to the word. "The soul," he says, "should abide by the word, and return thither if it be driven therefrom. It should be reformed by the same, and be conformed to the same. In this conformity the soul is married to the word; in it the soul has a unity of being with the word, which manifests itself as such to the will. In the word the soul learns the love of God, and is married to God.

What is more grateful than this conformity, what is more grateful than this love, in which the soul is not content with human instruction, but confides in the word, steadfastly clings to the word in the most intimate communion, thoroughly investigates the word, and in all things asks of it counsel? Thus arises the union of a spiritual, truly holy marriage. Thus bridegroom and bride come together." It is manifest that Bernard here points beneath the word, with the deepest significance, to Christ himself, the Bridegroom of souls. But as Bernard lives in this communion with God, it is also perfectly certain to him that he should love his neighbor and hope for eternal blessedness. To one who is justified everything should be full of love and full of meekness. "Have only love, and do what you will," he says after Augustine. In your deeds nothing will be wanting, provided only that brotherly love is not wanting. "I know no better advice," says he, "if you are endeavoring to teach your brother, by your example, what he should do and should not do, than to pray for him that you not only may give him no offence, but also strive as far as you can, as an angel of peace, to take away offences from the kingdom of God, and to entirely remove the occasion for offences. But as those who do not understand Greek also do not understand one who speaks Greek, so the speech of love is a foreign tongue to one who does not love."

With equal firmness, Bernard teaches the hope of eternal salvation. He was perfectly sure of it, and it was well that at that time the decrees of the Council of Trent were not extant, or Bernard would have entered into a grievous controversy in his sermons on the sure hope of salvation. "The soul of the prophet," he says, "longs for the first coming of Christ, in which it sees its redemption. But much more does the flesh long for the second coming of Christ and its glory. For then will all our wishes be fulfilled, and the earth will be full of the glory of the Lord." "Hasten," he exclaims, "my brethren, hasten; not only the angels, but the Creator of the angels, awaits you. The wedding is ready, the house

is not yet full. Therefore, because the wedding is ready, and the entire multitude of the heavenly assembly longs after us and awaits us, we will not walk in uncertainty." In his sermons in commemoration of the saints, Bernard is especially earnest in describing the blessedness of the life to come. He looks upon the saints in their present employments, just as the Lutheran Phil. Nicolai does in his *Freudenspiegel*, and narrates to his brethren what he has seen. "Free from all troubles, in the sweetness of their souls they pass in review their years; they rejoice in the days wherein they have been humbled, in the years wherein they have seen evil. With delightful wonder they contemplate the dangers which they have escaped, the sorrows they have suffered, the struggles in which they have been victorious, and for these await the blessed hope and the appearing of the glory of the great God and their Saviour, who will awaken and restore again their bodies, which will be glorified like his own body."

We, of course, cannot leave Bernard without noticing the dark sides which are to be found in his sermons. Bernard was a monk. We all know that it was the opinion of the Romish church that the highest degree of the Christian life could be attained only in the cloister. With this the entire life of the people at that time coincided. He who could not be a monk wished to be buried at least in a monk's cowl. Monasticism was the fairest blossom of church life, about what the conventicle was in the time of pietism. The more severe the rules of the cloister, the higher was the cloister in their esteem. Yea, even when this delusion was in many ways already dissipated, Luther expressed his thoroughly earnest disposition towards God by entering a cloister. We must take into the account, then, that the fact that Bernard was a monk, was a tribute which the times demanded of him; yet he was very earnest in efforts to reform monasticism. He saw the pride and hypocrisy and love of glory in the monks, i.e. in their clothing, and attacked them severely on this account. "Humility in furs," he exclaims to his monks, "is better than pride in a cowl." And at another time he

says: "The kingdom of God is within us, and not outside of us in dress and food." On this account, if there is in Bernard much that is of interest only to a monk, it yet is sure that in Christ Jesus his soul was free from all the bonds of a false, self-devised spirituality. According to his body, Bernard was a monk; according to his soul, a Christian. On this account the monk comes to light so rarely in his sermons. It is only in the sermons on the festivals of the saints that the monk mounts the pulpit, *ex officio*, as it were; but in other sermons he does not appear, or only very rarely. But even when the monk does begin to preach, the Christian is always by his side, and moderates the folly of the monk. "We must fast," the monk says; but the Christian adds, "only to prepare ourselves for heaven." Bernard always conceives of fasting after a spiritual manner. To him fasting has no other end than to teach us to say: "My heart is ready, O God, ready for adversity, ready for prosperity, ready for that which is low, ready for that which is high, ready for all that thou hast commanded." Fasting is therefore only a preparation; that which the prepared soul is to receive, the writing that is to be inscribed on the cleansed tablet, Bernard seeks entirely in God's word. Fasting was to him a good bodily discipline, as our catechism calls it. Besides, with respect to Bernard's relation to the saints, it is to be observed, in the first place, that the saints whom he honors are actually worthy of honor; and, in the second place, we must keep in view the fact that he represents the saints in such a way that it really becomes a pleasure to follow them. For example, let us consider only the sermon preached by Bernard in honor of St. Victor. Bernard commends him for having held his body in subjection, for having been temperate, chaste, taciturn, of a pure heart, for having slept less and prayed more, for having occupied himself day and night with the praise of God. "Let us," says Bernard, "learn of him to be of a mild and meek heart. Let us aspire after his liberality to the poor, his amiability to his friends, his patience with sinners, his kindness towards all. Let us consider his life as a rich

banquet, at which we should all be seated and entertained; for he is a rich man at whose table angels and saints are alike refreshed. At this table something is offered each one that can be of profit to him." But if Bernard calls St. Victor a mediator between heaven and earth, no one need take offence at this; for, in a certain sense, all holy men are mediators between heaven and earth. And when Bernard portrays St. Victor in glory, as one who after the sorrows of the body has been transferred as a meritorious soldier from the scene of war to the eternal rest, where he who wept by the rivers of Babylon drinks now, with the woman of Samaria, of the water of eternal life, who will take offence at this? But now Bernard forsakes Scripture, and the monk alone shines forth in him. He says that the expanse of heaven swells also the heart, rejoices the spirit, does not estrange it, does not dampen the emotions of the body, but only increases them. In the light of God the memory will be brightened, not dimmed; in the light of God we will be taught what we do not know, but we will nevertheless not forget what we do know. "As the angels know and help us," he continues, "so the saints in triumph feel not their own pains, but only ours. They are in connection with us, because they once belonged to us. Hence St. Victor does not forget the cry of the poor." Yet it naturally follows from this that St. Victor ought also to be prayed to. Although Bernard does not say this, and call upon us to do this, yet he does it himself. He exclaims: "O victorious soul, who as a sparrow hast flown above, and hast escaped from the snares of the world, look down upon our imprudent souls that are still entangled in the snares of the world, that we may be delivered by thy aid. O thou meritorious warrior, illustrious Victor, look down upon thy weak fellow-soldiers, who, still amidst the swords of enemies and in spiritual misery, are occupied with thy praise. O Almighty Father, we, thy estranged sons, have sinned against thee; but we glory in Victor, who when he overcame his passions also overcame thy wrath, and can effectually restore us to thy grace. O Jesus, thou Conqueror, we praise thee in our

Victor, because we know that thou hast conquered in him. Son of God, grant that before thy countenance he may always think of us, and present our cause before thy strict tribunal."

Yet false as all this is, it is a small matter when compared with his errors concerning the worship of Mary. Although he guards against even this point, and controverts, for example, the immaculate conception of Mary, which had been taught even at that time, yet in the worship of Mary he still follows the course of his church. He prays very confidently and without doubt to her, just as also to the Lord Jesus. Mary is to him the feminine, more nearly related saviour, who has more sympathy with poor erring man. With the exception of his position concerning the conception of Mary, he is entirely devoted to her worship. This veneration incited him to write for Mary. His occupations, indeed, did not altogether allow it, he says; but the little leisure which he steals from sleep he will not allow to pass away, and he will do that to which his disposition has so often urged him, he will write something to the praise of the Virgin Mary. "Mary," he says "still remains beautiful in body and soul, so that the gaze of the citizens of heaven is directed upon her, and the heart of the King turns toward her, so that he sends forth his messengers from heaven," etc. From fear of speaking unadvisedly concerning what is most holy, we keep silent concerning that which follows. He means, of course, that all that he says to the honor of Mary should contribute only to the honor of the Lord Jesus, according to the passage, "A wise son maketh a glad father" (Prov. x. 1). Yet it is readily seen that this passage dare not be applied to the adoration of Mary.

Without any limit, he follows the inclination of his heart to adore Mary with all possible epithets. He calls her our lady, our mediator, our advocate. He prays to Mary: "Reconcile us to thy Son; commend us to thy Son; represent us before thy Son; intercede for us with thy Son." The Son is to intercede for us with the Father, and Mary to inter-

cede for us with the Son. That we have an Advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ (1 John ii. 1), who ever liveth to make intercession for us (Heb. vii. 25; Rom. viii. 34), Bernard knew just as well as we; but yet he followed the romantic course of his church, and addressed, at least in his sermons on Mary, the feminine saviour, Mary. But fortunately this aberration occurs scarcely ever in his other sermons. It is only in his sermons on Mary that he thus addresses and praises her. With our whole heart we reject this error, and belong to a church which to the present day has kept such errors far from her; yet still greater is the error of those who call upon neither Mary nor Jesus Christ, but only upon an imaginary universal Father; and yet with these we must live, at least externally, in one church.

ARTICLE VIII.

THE SABBATH: THE CHANGE OF OBSERVANCE FROM THE SEVENTH TO THE LORD'S DAY.

BY REV. WILLIAM DELOSS LOVE, D.D., SOUTH HADLEY, MASS.

In a previous Article on the Sabbath we have seen that there was a possibility, and even probability, of a change of observance from the seventh to some other day of the week. We now resume and proceed with the discussion.

5. The Lord's day in the new dispensation was the chief of all days with the apostles and early Christians, and was their special day for rest and religious worship.

(1). The Lord's day during the Apostolic age. (a) Christ, in the first instance, gave great significance and emphasis to his resurrection day, by appearing five different times to his disciples during its hours,—to Mary Magdalene (John xx. 14-17), to the other women (Matt. xxviii. 9, 10), to the two disciples on the road to Emmaus (Luke xxiv. 13-31; Mark xvi. 12), to the apostle Peter separately (1 Cor. xv. 5), and to ten of the apostles collected together (Mark xvi. 14; Luke