

"THE UNFINISHED TOWER AND THE DEPRECATED WAR"

Chapter 12

Studies in the Gospels

by
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Luke xiv. 25-33.

Our Lord on more than one occasion during his earthly ministry found a multitude in his train; loosely attached to Him; but such as would inevitably have detached themselves from Him and fallen away, so soon as ever a day of temptation had arrived. Nothing could be further from his desire than such a following as this. 'They that are with Him are called and chosen and faithful' (Rev. xvii. 14); and such, and such only, will abide with Him unto the end. But not so these; to whom therefore He turned, and spake words repelling rather than inviting. They who would enlist recruits for the warfare of this world, commonly keep out of sight what of hard, painful, and dangerous the work to which they invite them will bring with it; but not so He, who desired that none should join themselves to Him without a clear knowledge beforehand of all to which they were engaging themselves. To a Paul, on the very threshold of his conversion, He will shew what great things he must suffer for his mane's sake (Acts ix. 16). Ezekiel at his first commission is told with the utmost plainness to what manner of men, to such as could be likened only to thorns, briars, scorpions, he is sent (Ezek. ii. 6). And to this multitude Christ addressed one of his hard sayings--one after the hearing of which we can hardly doubt that many went back and walked no more with Him (cf. John vi. 66). A sad consummation, yet better far than that they should throw in their lot with Him, afterwards to be offended, and to fall from Him, in that day of trial which was sure before long to arrive (Matt. xiii. 21).

We read then that *'there went great multitudes with Him; and he turned, and said unto them, If any man come to Me, and hate not his father, and mother, and wife, and children, and brethren, and sisters, yea, and his own life also, he cannot be my disciple.'* Let us here notice, by the way, the profound confidence in a guiding, interpreting Spirit, who should be ever at work in his Church, which these words of Christ reveal. Take them literally, and they stand in direct contradiction to the whole teaching of the rest of Scripture, in contradiction to the teaching of Moses, of the prophets, of the apostles, of Christ Himself elsewhere; they enjoin an immorality; they require of men to hate those whom it is their prime duty to love. And yet Christ spake the words notwithstanding, satisfied to leave to that interpreting Spirit to put them in harmony with all which elsewhere is commanded in the Scripture, or written by the finger of God on the heart of man.

But in other ways also the unparalleled boldness of Christ's teaching, the tremendous claims which He makes on those who offer to join themselves to Him, may well fill us with marvel and with awe. How intolerable the pride and presumption of any less than the greatest, lower than the highest, to impose the conditions of discipleship which He here imposes, to demand

of men the sacrifices which He here demands; and this, be it observed, not in the name of Another, whose messenger He is; but in his own; setting forth Himself the object to whom all this measureless devotion of all men is justly due, who, claiming it all, claims nothing but that which is his own by right. When I ask myself what are the proofs of Christ's divinity which the Scripture affords, when I enquire whether He did Himself there claim to be God, I find evidence of this not so much in texts where this in as many words is asserted--though these are most needful--but far more in the position toward every other man which He uniformly, and as a matter of course, assumes. What man, that was not man's Maker as well as his fellow, could have required that father and mother, wife and children, should all be postponed to himself; that, where any competition between his claims and theirs arose, he should be everything, and they nothing? that not merely these, which, though very close to a man are yet external to him, but that his very self, his own life, should be hated, when on no other conditions Christ could be loved. It is nothing strange or unreasonable that man's Creator, the author of his being, the supreme and absolute Good, should demand all this of his creatures (Exod. xxxii. 27; Deut. xxxiii. 9); but that Jesus of Nazareth should challenge the same unreserved devotedness on the part of all men, should require that every other duty of every other man should yield to the duty to Him, that every other love should subordinate itself to the love of Him; how could this be, except as He also stood in the place of God, and was God?

But these are thoughts which, followed out as they deserve, would lead too far from the subject immediately in hand. Christ has spoken of the absolute renunciation of all, even of a man's own life, that last citadel of selfishness, as he who ought best to know, had long since proclaimed (Job ii. 4), that citadel, where it may still make itself strong when every outwork has been abandoned¹--He has spoken of this as the condition without which no man could be his disciple. But this self which needs to be renounced is oftentimes a very subtle one, the self of him who proposes to serve God, but to serve Him in his own strength, and not in God's; and thus to have wherein to glory; who may have renounced much, but has not renounced a vain confidence in his own powers, and that these will enable him to carry to a successful end a service thus undertaken. Christ uses two similitudes, borrowed from two enterprizes, the one grave to a private man, the other even to a king; by aid of the first he warns his hearers, and in them all who should come after, of the shameful close which may attend a service in this spirit begun; while in the second He points out to all the only wise course for the avoiding of such perils as would thus lie before them. This is the first:--*'For which of you, intending to build a tower, sitteth not down first, and counteth the cost, whether he have sufficient to finish it? Lest haply, after he hath laid the foundation, and is not able to finish it, all that behold it begin to mock him, saying, This man began to build, and was not able to finish.'* And this the second: *'Or what king, going to make war against another king, sitteth not down first, and consulteth whether he be able with ten thousand to meet him that cometh against him with twenty thousand? Or else, while the other is yet a great way off, he sendeth an ambassage, and desireth conditions of peace.'*²

The comparison of the Christian life, sometimes that of the individual, sometimes that of the

1 As Gregory the Great here says well, and in the very spirit of his great master Augustine (*Hom. xxxii.*): *Nec tamen sufficit nostra relinquere, nisi relinquamus et nos.*

2 *Ἐν δέκα χιλιάσιν.* See for the same idiom, indeed for exactly the same words, 1 Macc. iv. 29; and with the *συμβαλεῖν εἰς πόλεμον* compare *συμβαλεῖν εἰς μάχην*, Josephus, *Antt.* vi. 5. 2.

collective Church, to the carrying up of a building is frequent in Scripture (Matt. vii. 24-27; Ephes. ii. 20-22; 1 Cor. iii. 9; 1 Pet. ii. 4, 5); and not less frequent the likening of it to the waging of a war (1 Cor. xvi. 13; 1 Thess. v. 8; Ephes. vi. 11-17; 2 Tim. ii. 3, 4; iv. 7). But the fitting in of these words to their place here, the making them to illustrate the matter directly in hand, is not so easy as is often carelessly taken for granted. Indeed the current interpretation of this passage is far from satisfactory; and we have only to look a little closely at it to perceive the very serious difficulties with which it is encumbered. I believe, indeed, that by that interpretation words among the most profound and far reaching which our Lord spake upon earth, are made to take comparatively a slight and trivial meaning. That interpretation may be stated as follows. Christ would have the candidates for admission within the inner circle of his disciples to consider diligently with themselves, and accurately to weigh, whether they have strength and means to carry them triumphantly through the arduous enterprize which they meditate; and if, as the result of this calculation, they discover that they have not, then to renounce the enterprize altogether; and not, as some foolish builder, to begin the tower of the Christian life, which they will prove unable to crown and complete; like some rash king, to challenge to the conflict powers, the powers, that is, of the kingdom of darkness, which are twice as strong as they are, with which therefore they cannot hope to wage a successful war.

This explanation labours under a double defect. In the first place, according to all the other teaching of Scripture, the disciple who indeed builds and completes the tower, is not one who has counted the cost, and found that he *has* sufficient; he whose warfare is crowned with victory is not he who has calculated the opposing forces, and found that those at his command are more and mightier than any which can be brought against him; but he rather who, having counted the cost, has found that he has *not* enough, that the outlay far exceeds any resources at his command, that he begins and must continue a bankrupt to the end; having nothing in himself, that so he may possess all things in God; who, having taken the measure of his own forces and of those of the adversary, has understood that this warfare is one not to be waged at his own charges, has learned to cry, 'Who is sufficient for these things?' and sought to a mightier for aid. All other Scripture teaches us, in the glorious words of Charles Wesley's hymn, to be 'strong in self-despair,' and not in self-confidence; that emptiness is indeed the one condition of fulness; that, however sad a thing it may be in this world to end with being a bankrupt, in the spiritual world it is the best thing which can happen to begin with being such; a man's poverty being there his riches, and his weakness his strength, and his ignorance his wisdom; for such are the strange paradoxes of the kingdom of heaven.

This is one blemish, and a most serious one; but there is another behind. Granting that this objection could be set aside, is it conceivable that Christ should counsel in such a case, and having made such a discovery, not so much as to begin the too costly tower, but to leave it altogether unattempted;³ or, more marvellous still, not so much as to provoke the too potent foe, but rather to make terms with him, to engage not to molest *him*, if he will not molest us, whom to defy to the uttermost is our first duty and only safety (1 Pet. v. 9; Ephes. vi. 11-16), whose works to destroy was once the work of Christ in his own person, will be his work through his Church to the end? What sort of peace would that be? Can we imagine that the Lord would give the allowance of his word to such abject resolves as these? for what, after all,

³ As Maldonatus asks well, who sees the difficulty, but not the way out of it, Deinde quomodo nos Christus dehortaretur ne Christiani efficeremur? Quomodo cum Diabolo, cum quo, susceptâ lege Christi, bellum gerere parabamus, pax nobis facienda est?

are they who leave off to build, who, in place of challenging, make conditions with the enemy, but the Demases who forsake not Paul only, but Paul's Lord, having loved this present world (2 Tim. iv. 10); who, when tribulation comes or even threatens, straightway are offended and fall away (Matt. xiii. 21); who see the wolf coming and flee (John x. 12)? 'The fearful' of Rev. xxi. 8, the 'traditores,' the 'turificati,' in the early days of the Church's suffering, all these did in that sense count the cost, and give over to build; having challenged the king of the dark kingdom, shrunk from encountering him in battle. But can we suppose that Christ had a word of allowance for these? that they could plead that they were acting on his advice? and yet, adopting the common interpretation, how could we avoid so doing?

But it is not so. These sayings of our Lord contain a far different lesson from this, one in far closer agreement with the other teaching of Scripture. What that teaching is, the words with which Christ follows up and applies all which He has here said, sufficiently declare: '*So likewise, whosoever he be of you that forsaketh not all that he hath, he cannot be my disciple.*' In that '*forsaketh*' (*ἀποτάσσεται*), or '*renounceth*,' '*biddeth good by to*,' '*taketh farewell of*,' lies the key to the whole passage. Christ sees the multitudes addressing themselves to his discipleship with one manner of furniture and preparation for it; such as He knows will utterly fail them, when the stress of the trial comes; He warns them of their need of quite another. It is the poor, those who, counting up their means, discover that they have *not* enough to carry through and complete the work, and that of their own they never will have enough, and who therefore renounce all that they have, it is these, and not the rich, not, that is, they who walk in a vain conceit of their own riches (Rev. iii. 17), who are able to finish this tower.⁴ How it fares with the others, what a swift and shameful coming to the end of all their fancied resources inevitably awaits them, how total a bankruptcy, this Christ puts vividly before our eyes in the verses which follow (ver. 29, 30). He gathers up in these the world's judgment upon them who, professing to forsake it, were yet of it all the while, and who sooner or later reveal that they were so. The world cannot pardon that they should ever have affected any higher service than its own; and, even while it receives back its prodigals, receives them with taunt and with scorn; the salt which has lost its favour is trodden under foot, not of God, but, doom more ignominious far, is trodden under foot *of men* (Matt. v. 13). Nor are worldly and wicked men the only mockers. The scorners here include, as more than one in olden times has urged, not these *men* only, well pleased when any scheme of higher service, such as threatened to put them and their meaner lives to rebuke, has come to nought; but fallen spirits as well, the angels to whom men are a spectacle (1 Cor. iv. 8); who, so far as they can rejoice in aught, rejoice in dishonour done to God; and who, being first our tempters, are afterwards, when we have succumbed to their temptations, our mockers and scorners as well.⁵ '*This man*' (the contempt makes itself still more felt in the original), '*began to build, and was not able to finish.*'

Such uncompleted buildings, open to all the winds and rains of heaven, with their naked walls, and with all which has been spent upon them utterly wasted, are called in the language of the world, which often finds so true a word, This man's, or that man's, Folly; arguing as they do so utter a lack of wisdom and prevision on their parts who began them. Such, for example, is

4 Gregory the Great (*Hom.* 37): Hoc enim inter terrenum et cæleste ædificium distat, quod terrenum ædificium expensas colligendo construitur, cæleste vero ædificium expensas dispergendo. Ad illud sumtus facimus, si non habita colligamus; ad istud sumtus facimus, si et habita relinquamus.

5 Gregory the Great (*Hom.* 37): Ipsos irrisores patimur quos ad malum persuasores habemus.

Charles the Fifth's palace at Granada, the Kattenburg at Cassel. They that would be Christ's disciples shall see to it that they present no such Babels to the ready scorn of the scornful; beginning, as though they intended to take heaven by storm, to build up a tower which should reach even thither, and anon coming to an end of all their resources, of all their zeal, all their patience, and leaving nothing but an utterly baffled purpose, the mocking-stock of the world, even as those builders of old left nothing but a shapeless heap of bricks, to tell of the entire miscalculation which they had made. Making mention of 'a tower,' I cannot but think that the Lord intended an allusion to that great historic tower, the mightiest failure and defeat which the world has ever seen, that tower of Babel, which, despite of its vainglorious and vaunting beginning, ended in the shame and confusion of all who undertook it (Gen. xi. 1-9).⁶

It is well worthy of remark, and indeed I have briefly remarked already (p. 183), how greatly our Lord loves to bring out some truth which He would very earnestly enforce and commend to men, by two successive images; like, and yet unlike; approaching it from different quarters; the second oftentimes going deeper into the heart of the matter than did the first, at all events presenting it in some aspect under which the first did not, perhaps in the nature of things could not, present it; the two in this manner mutually completing one another. It is thus for example with the parables of the mustard-seed and the leaven (Matt. xiii. 31-33); the former setting forth the outward development, the second the inward operation, of the truth; it is thus again with the Hid Treasure and the Pearl (Matt. xiii. 44-46), the first putting before us one who unexpectedly lights on the kingdom of heaven, the second one who has found, but who before was engaged in the seeking of, the same. So too, as we have seen, the new wine in the old vessels is something more, and contains a profounder lesson, than the new patch upon the old garment (Matt. ix. 16, 17). Another example we have here of the same, where the king, measuring beforehand his own forces and the forces of the adversary whom he is tempted to provoke to the conflict, tells us something which the builder, sitting down to count the cost of the tower which he is planning to erect, would not have told. There is sometimes a further gain in a duplicate illustration such as this; and such gain in the present instance we have.

6 A characteristic passage in Jeremy Taylor's *Sermons, Of Lukewarmness and Zeal*, contains no direct reference to these words of our Lord, yet such can scarcely have not been intended: 'So have I seen a fair structure begun with art and care, and raised to half its stature; and then it stood still by the misfortune or negligence of the owner, and the rain descended, and dwelt in its joints, and supplanted the contexture of its pillars; and having stood awhile like the antiquated temple of a deceased oracle, it fell into a hasty age, and sunk upon its own knees, and so descended into ruin; so is the imperfect, unfinished spirit of a man; it lays the foundation of a holy resolution, and strengthens it with vows and arts of prosecution, it raises up the walls, sacraments and prayers, reading and holy ordinances; and holy actions begin with a slow motion, and the building stays, and the spirit is weary, and the soul is naked, and exposed to temptation, and in the days of storm takes in every thing that can do it mischief; and it is faint and sick, listless and tired, and it stands till its own weight wearies the foundation, and then declines to death and sad disorder, being so much the worse because it hath not only returned 'to its first follies, but hath superadded unthankfulness and carelessness, a positive neglect, and a despite of holy things, a setting a low price to the things of God, laziness and wretchlessness: all which are evils superadded to the first state of coldness, whither he is with all these loads and circumstances of death easily revolved.' Shakespeare too must have had this passage in his eye when he applies this comparison to one who undertakes greater changes in the State than he is able to carry through:

'Like one that draws the model of a house
Beyond his power to build it; who, half-through,
Gives o'er, and leaves his part-created cost,
A naked subject to the weeping clouds,
And waste for churlish winter's tyranny.'

2 Henry IV. Act 1. sc. 3.

Any misgiving as to the correctness of the interpretation just put upon the first similitude must, I am persuaded, disappear with a careful study and comparison of the second.

That in the sphere of things natural the course which Christ here recommends is the only wise one, this is self-evident. Any other would be fraught with uttermost hazard, with almost inevitable ruin, to him who pursued it. War indeed is sweet, as the ancient proverb assures us, to those who have never tried it;⁷ and examples out of number of kings who, committing themselves to an unequal struggle, have drawn down ruin on themselves and on their kingdom, history sacred and profane will alike supply. Cræsus in profane history, Amaziah (2 Kin. xiv. 8-12) and Josiah (2 Kin. xxiii. 29, 30) in sacred, will suggest themselves at once; while within the last three years we have had a more memorable example of the catastrophe which may follow than any among all these. Hezekiah, on the contrary, wise betimes, and knowing how much overmatched he would prove in conflict with the great king of Assyria, sends an ambassage, while the other is yet at a distance, desiring conditions of peace: 'I have offended; return from me; that which thou puttest on me will I bear' (2 Kin. xviii. 14).

But it is with the spiritual counterpart of this wisdom that we have here to do. The exposition which I have felt bound to reject, that, I mean, which makes the king who might come with his twenty thousand against him who with ten thousand should imprudently provoke a war, to be the devil, altogether paralyses ver. 32; for what can be the meaning of sending an ambassage to him, and desiring of him conditions of peace? How can we conceive, as has been urged already, counsel such as this issuing from the lips of the Lord? Lange, who clings to the common interpretation, can only evade the difficulty which it offers in this way: 'peace here, according to the sense of the image, can only mean a truce, and the request for peace only the avoiding of a *premature* conflict, to which the Christian as yet is unequal.' It is a still poorer escape to urge, as does Calvin, that all parts of such a parabolic saying as this must not be pressed, that in the interpretation some, being the drapery and not the very image of the truth, may be very well allowed to fall away. This in itself is most true; yet what part could be pressed, if this, in which the whole teaching evidently culminates, might not be so?⁸

How profound, on the contrary, is the lesson here, when we recognize in this king who might come against us with his twenty thousand, with a might altogether overpowering ours, no other than God Himself. He is a true fighter against God, a θεομάχος quite as truly, though in another way, as the openly ungodly, who would fain *be* anything in his sight, who, face to face with God, would assert *himself* at all; who does not renounce all that he hath, and, as that which is the dearest to him, and cleaves closest to the natural man, his own righteousness the first of all.⁹ The book of Job will supply the amplest and richest materials for the illustration of

7 Γλυκὺς ἀπείρω πόλεμος.

8 Gerhard (*Harm. Evang.* 120) in like manner owns that not merely we must not press this part of the similitude, but in the application go quite counter to it, which it is difficult to think was the Lord's intention: Tantum hoc observemus in hac militiâ, quo a propositâ parabolâ discedimus: ut quandoquidem hic hostis nunquam nobis honestas pacis conditiones proponit, nos etiam nunquam cum ipso paciscamur, nec ullam pacem vel otium ab ipso expectemus, quamdiu mortalem hanc vitam in his terris degimus.

9 Bengel: Hæc igitur rogatio pacis exprimit odium animæ propriæ [ver. 26], quo quis, omni suite abnegatâ, meræ se gratiæ committit. Ædificator pecunias, belligerator copias, discipulus parentes et caritates omnes abnegat et impendit. Illi habent apparatus positivum, hic negativum. Maldonatus, who has almost always something valuable on the harder passages in Scripture, sees clearly that the king coming with his twenty

these words; these words in return doing much to explain that book. The patriarch himself was sorely tempted to be such a fighter against God, with his ten thousand to challenge Him who would come against him with his twenty thousand. Early indeed in that terrible and decisive struggle of his life he has glimpses more than one of the madness of provoking to the conflict of righteousness such an Adversary; as, for instance, when he exclaims, 'How should man be just with God? If he will contend with Him, he cannot answer Him one of a thousand' (ix. 2, 3); and again, 'If I wash myself with snow-water, and make my hands never so clean, yet shalt Thou plunge me in the ditch, and mine own clothes shall abhor me' (ix. 30, 31); but at other times he is very far from having renounced all that he has; thus see xxiii. 3-5, and indeed that chapter throughout, with much in his other discourses rashly spoken by him. It is only at the last that he altogether does so, lays his hand upon his mouth, confesses that he has nothing with which to answer God (xl. 4), and abhors himself in dust and ashes (xlii. 5, 6); demands, that is, conditions of peace, and, having demanded obtains them (xlii. 7-17). St. Paul would have been another such fighter against God, if those things which he once counted gain he had resolved to count gain to the end; if, refusing to submit himself to the righteousness of God, he had stood out upon a righteousness of his own (Phil. iii. 3-9). But he also on the way to Damascus learned better; and when, with his face to the earth, he asked, 'What wilt Thou have me to do?' he, too, was exactly falling in with that which Christ here declares to be the only wisdom for every man; he was demanding conditions of peace from that far mightier King, with whom it is impossible for flesh and blood, for sinful man, to contend.¹⁰

We may take an example from the opposite side. The Pharisee in the parable (Luke xviii. 9-12), when he enumerated the long catalogue of his virtues, was precisely one who was refusing to forsake all that he had, rather was hugging this all as closely as he could. He was calculating his means, and finding that he had enough to finish the tower; he was mustering his forces, and so disastrously overrating their strength, that he did not fear to set himself in battle-array against Him, who resisteth the proud, and giveth grace only unto the humble. The publican, on the contrary, in the same parable, avowed that for the carrying up of the tower he had *not* enough; he had nothing; that this was a war in which he could not so much as look his

thousand cannot be Satan, with whom we never must have peace, nay rather a πόλεμος ἄσπονδος: but only doubtfully suggests that by him God Himself may be intended: *Mittere vero legationem et rogare quæ pacis sunt non est a diabolo, hoste capitali nostro, pacem petere, quocum perpetuum nobis bellum gerendum est, nec pacem unquam licet pangere. Nam et in pace vincimur; hoc enim pejus et turpius; quod in bello quidem, ut milites decet, repugnantes atque resistentes, in pace volentes, sine vulnere, sine sanguine, superamur.*

¹⁰ I know none in the ancient Church, and only Bengel and Stier among modern interpreters, who have grasped the meaning of this portion of Scripture with at all so firm a hand as Gregory the Great has done. It is the more remarkable that he has done so, seeing that his exegesis is for the most part so dependant on that of Augustine. I have already quoted words of his on the only way in which the necessary cost for the building of the tower is to be got together. He too has apprehended rightly what so few have apprehended, namely, that the king who might come against us with his twenty thousand, with whom therefore it is our only wisdom to make terms betimes, is not Satan, but God; thus *Hom. 37 in Evang.:* Rex contra regem ex æquo venit ad prælium, et tamen, si se perpendit non posse sufficere, legationem mittit, et ea quæ pacis sunt postulat. Quibus ergo non lacrymis veniam sperare debemus, qui in illo tremendo examine cum Rege nostro ex æquo ad iudicium non venimus? quos nimirum conditio, infirmitas, et causa inferiores exhibet . . . Quid ergo agendum est, fratres, nisi ut dum nos cum simplo exercitu contra duplum illius sufficere non posse conspicimus, dum adhuc longe est, legationem mittamus, et rogemus ea quæ pacis sunt? Longe enim esse dicitur, qui adhuc præsens per iudicium non videtur. Mittamus ad hunc legationem, lacrymas nostras, mittamus misericordiæ opera, cognoscamus nos cum eo in iudicio non posse consistere, pensemus virtutem ejus fortitudinis, rogemus ea quæ pacis sunt. Hæc est nostra legatio, quæ Regem venientem placat.

mightier Adversary in the face; and therefore exclaiming, 'God be merciful to me a sinner,' he threw down his arms, and sought, while there was yet time, '*conditions of peace.*'

Let me observe, before quitting this matter, that there is a certain fine irony in our Lord's falling in so far with man's dream of being something and being able to hold his own even in the face of God, as to speak of him as a king over against another king, king against king--in his so far falling in with man's dream of self-righteousness, and estimate of his own powers, as to speak of the ten thousand which he could bring against the twenty thousand of God, as though he were only overmatched in the proportion of two to one; while, indeed, a day will arrive, when he who in Christ's school has learned anything which he ought to learn, will be ready to cry, 'I cannot answer Thee one thing in a thousand.'

I ought not to leave unnoticed that some modern Roman Catholic expositors, and some medieval interpreters as well, have sought in the following way to escape the difficulties which cleave to the common interpretation of Christ's words. They have urged that these sayings are *not* addressed to the whole body of disciples or candidates for discipleship, but only to as many as might be meditating whether they should undertake or not the so-called 'counsels of perfection.' These are warned that they should accurately consider beforehand whether they have strength sufficient for the fulfilling of these; and, if they discover that they have not, should not so much as attempt them.¹¹ All this, as may be seen in words quoted below, is ingenious enough;¹² and undoubtedly some difficulties would so be evaded; but such an explanation contains no help for us, who believe that *all* Christians are invited to be perfect, as their Father in heaven is perfect (Matt. v. 48), and who further can trace no intimation that these exhortations were addressed to a select few, an inner circle, but on the contrary a statement than which none could be more distinct, that they were spoken to 'great multitudes' (ver. 25).

11 So Bernard (*De Convers., ad Cler.* c. 21): Utinam turrim inchoaturi, sedentes computarent, ne forte sumptus non habeant ad perficiendum. Utinam qui continere non valent, perfectionem temerarie profiteri, aut cælibatui dare nomina vererentur. Sumptuosa siquidem turris est, et verbum grande quod non omnes capere possunt.

12 Cajetan: Significatur regis nomine professorus statum perfectioris vitæ. Bellum adversus alium regem est perfectior vita ad superandum mundum, quantum ad licita communiter aliis, puta, habere agros, vacare humanis negotiis, et reliqua hujusmodi, hominibus quidem licita, apostolicæ autem perfectioni interdicta. Et describitur mundus duplicatâ potentiâ adversus profitentem vitam perfectiorem, quia et pugnat communi impugnatione, trahendo ad illicita communiter omnibus, et pugnat speciali impugnatione, trahendo ad interdicta apostolicæ vitæ. Si enim, consideratâ proprii animi dispositione, imparem se videt tanto prælio, sapienter prævenit, rogans ea quæ pacis sunt, non aggreditur statum perfectioris vitæ, contentus statu communi.