

it in custom. And if he may get it thus, [then that he aye meek himself down and thank God], for it is of his gracious gift and not of man's travail. [Lo! this form is properly that a man thinketh himself ever in God's presence.] Nevertheless if all this seem hard and impossible to thee, [as it is to any man that hath been long blind in sin], nevertheless set it in thy meaning that thou wouldest not seek nor do but that which were worship to God, profitable to thee and to thine even-christian, shameful, painful [and travail-some] to thine own flesh; that us grant Jesus Christ. Amen.



ST THOMAS ON ST JOHN'S GOSPEL

JESUS answered and said to him: If any one love me, he will keep my word. And my Father will love him: and we will come to him and will make our abode with him. (John 14, 23.)

These words of our Lord, beginning: 'If any one love me' explain why our Lord was to reveal himself to his disciples but not to the world. He shows first of all how the disciples were already well-disposed to receive a manifestation.

There are two dispositions in man which are a suitable preparation for a manifestation from God. The first is charity, the second is obedience. The words: 'If any one love me' apply to the first. If man wishes to see God, these three conditions are necessary.

1. He must approach God. 'And they that approach to his feet shall receive of his doctrine.' (Deut. 33, 3.)

2. He must lift up his eyes heavenwards, intent upon seeing him: 'Lift up your eyes on high and see who hath created these things' (Is. 40, 26.)

3. He must be at peace and still, for the things of the spirit cannot be perceived unless we withdraw from things of earth. 'O taste and see that the Lord is sweet.'¹ (Ps. 33, 9.)

Now charity fulfils these conditions for it unites the soul of man to God. 'He that abideth in charity, abideth in God and God in him.' (I John 4, 16.) Charity raises him to an intuitive perception of God. 'For where thy treasure is there is thy heart also.' (Matt. 6, 21.) Hence a saying goes: 'Where thy love is, there is thine eye also'. Charity also inspires us to withdraw from worldly affairs. 'If any man love the world, the charity of the Father is not in him.' (I John 2, 15.) Whereas on the other hand, if any man loves God perfectly, the love of the world is not in him.

From charity proceeds obedience, thus our Lord continues '... he

¹ Cf. Ps. 45:2, 'Be still and see that I am God'.

will keep my word'. St Gregory says: 'the proof of love lies in the works. Never can the love of God suffer idleness; if it is true love, it does great things. If it refuses to make any effort, then it is not true love.' For the will especially when it is concerned with the end, moves the other powers to their arts: for a man cannot be at peace unless he is doing that which will bring him to his end, particularly if he wills it intensely. When therefore the will is wholly fixed on God, who is the end, it moves all the other powers to carry out the things which lead to him. The will is fixed on God by charity and therefore it is charity which makes us keep the commandments. 'For the charity of Christ presseth us.' (2 Cor. 5, 16.) 'The lamps thereof are fire and flames.' (Canticle of Canticles 8, 6.) Then by obedience man is fittingly prepared to see God. 'By thy commandments (which I have kept, that is to say) I have had understanding.' (Ps. 118, 102.) 'I have had understanding above the ancients.' (Ps. 118, 100.)



SERMON FOR LÆTARE SUNDAY

BY

JOHN TAULER

Tempus meum nondum advenit.

My time is not yet come.—John 7, 6.

IN the same chapter from which we have drawn the text of our sermon we also read that our Lord said to his brethren: 'Go you up to this festival day: but I go not up to this festival day', a little before he had said these words: 'My time is not yet come, but your time is always ready'.

Today, therefore, we have to consider what is this solemnity or festival day to which our Lord orders his disciples to betake themselves and for which the time is always ready.

There is the perpetual solemnity of eternal life and that life is rightly called *blessed* for it is the truest, the supreme and the final solemnity. There God will show himself, no longer through a veil (*in aenigmate*), but openly, face to face; but this solemnity is not for the present time, whilst we are clothed in our mortal flesh.

There is another solemnity which we are permitted to celebrate even in this life and that solemnity is like a prelude, a foretaste of the eternal solemnity. It consists in the interior enjoyment, the awareness of the divine presence in the soul. This is the time that is always ours; the time to seek God, to sigh after his presence,