

FIVE MINUTE SERMON

BY REV. WILLIAM DEMOUY, D. D.

FIFTH SUNDAY AFTER EPIPHANY

THE PROPER INTENTION

"All whatsoever you do in word or in work, do all in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ, giving thanks to God and the Father by Him." (Col. iii, 17)

God has a claim on each and every one of our actions. Without Him we could not perform the least of the acts we are wont to do during life. Our whole sufficiency is from Him. The power to perform an action and the knowledge necessary to execute it properly come from the gifts with which God has adorned our being. As we had, therefore, our beginning from God, depend upon Him for our existence, and daily reap benefits from the blessings with which He has surrounded us, it is but just that whatever we do, we should do it so as to please God. We expect many blessings from Him—in fact, we expect Him to confer upon us the greatest of all blessings. We must, however, be reasonable in our demands and expectations. It is true that God gave us our existence and the powers we possess, freely and without the least merit on our part; but He intends us to have a blessing far surpassing any He has yet given us. However, He will not give it to us unless we merit it by our good life and daily actions. He is ready to help us to obtain it. We cannot gain it without His aid, since it far surpasses the merit of our human actions alone. His grace will fit us to receive it.

The work of gaining this greatest of blessings—the eternal happiness of heaven—is to go on during our whole life. It is true that it is gained sometimes only at the hour of death, but this comes from a special privilege of God. The ordinary way is by passing our whole life working for it. Unless we do this, we are continually running a risk and greatly endangering our chances for eternal salvation.

It is easy for us to work for God in our religious duties. As a general rule, they are performed solely for Him, or He is entreated to grant us favors we consider useful for our temporal and spiritual welfare. But, on the whole, we spend only a short interval of our day in the performance of strictly religious duties. Some people act thus because of duties of a secular kind—particularly the duty of gaining an honest livelihood—do not permit them to spend more time in religious practices; others because they are careless and indifferent. It is almost always true that people of the world who could give more time to God, fail to do so. God is jealous of our actions, however, and wishes to see everything we do done for Him. How sad and neglectful on our part would it be, did we stop at these duties we call strictly religious! In that case but little of the time God grants us would be given back to Him. No Christian so should live that it could in truth be said of him that he neglects God. Every action he performs, every moment of the day, should be offered up to God. Every minute spent rationally should be passed also for God. The man in the industrial plant, the machinist in the workshop, the laborer in the fields, the builder on the scaffold, the mother in the home surrounded by her children, the instructor in the schools—every one employed in any legitimate occupation, should spend all his or her time for God. Nor need any one think that this is difficult. In truth, it makes our work lighter and our duties more pleasant. It also will make us perform our work more conscientiously. Whatever we undertake, if we think that it is to be done for God, we will certainly try our best to do it well. We would not offer to God a task carelessly performed, or a work half done.

A zeal for God's service also will be the means of causing us to do only such things as would be pleasing in His sight. If we would take as our motto, "do all for the honor and glory of God," we should refrain from doing anything that would not be to His honor and glory. In this manner, our time would be well spent. Every day would be a day of grace for us. Life's journey would not be as difficult as it sometimes appears, for, though perhaps we would be gaining little from a worldly standpoint, we would realize that our merit before God would be increasing every moment. And to the earnest Christian, this is really the important thing—to sow seeds of eternal life. This present life is passing and whatever we do for it and for it alone, will pass along with it. What we do for it, however, and at the same time for God, will be lasting. It even may not produce any effect here for our earthly existence, but it never can fail to bring merit before God.

When we perform all our actions for God, we are only reciprocating His kindness. Anything that is done by God on earth or permitted by Him is for the good of man. It may not be best for the individual, but it is invariably of profit to the human race as a whole, or to the elect part of it. It may not profit man temporarily, but infallibly it will be for his eternal good. This is an undeniable truth. As God made the world for man alone, so also whatever He does in it is done

only for man—either for his temporal or his spiritual welfare, or for both. The man who does not profit by God's actions in the world is himself to be blamed for the loss he suffers thereby.

Let us all as Christians do whatever we do for God. All lawful actions can and should be offered up to God, no matter how secular they be. We owe everything we can accomplish to God for His innumerable benefits to us, to endeavor to repay Him for His never-ending favors in our behalf, and in order to have a security that some day heaven will be ours.

THE BIBLE

PROF. GOODSPEED'S NEW AMERICAN TRANSLATION

Professor Edgar J. Goodspeed who made the new American translation of the New Testament answers in the January Atlantic Monthly those who have criticized him for attempting to modernize the Bible. Prof. Goodspeed is not discouraged by criticism. He is an optimist, who finds consolation in the thought that "the most remarkable thing about the reception of the new translation is not the opposition it has aroused but the welcome it has received." After reading the specimens of the translation published in the newspapers most people will agree with him, not that the welcome received by the translation has been remarkable, but that it is remarkable that it should have received any welcome at all.

With all due allowance for the translator's good intentions, a careful reading of his defense of his translation, and his statement of the reasons that impelled him to publish it, confirms still further the conviction that the American translation of the New Testament is not destined to meet what the translator feels is a real need of American readers, "an American translation, of the same kind as the Greek in which it was written, and in English familiar in America."

The Bible is not an ordinary book. It is the inspired word of God. Hence, what the reader needs is not to forget that he is reading a translation, but to remember that he is reading the word of God. An accurate rendering of the exact meaning of the New Testament is what the reader wants to feel sure of, rather than to be impressed with the fact that "the New Testament is not a collection of disjointed texts, but a library of coherent and powerful books." Just here is where Professor Goodspeed's version fails. The reader can never be sure that he is not reading the ideas of Professor Goodspeed instead of the inspired word of God. For the professor admits that all the modern translators like himself can do is to try to do the best of his ability to interpret the Bible for his readers. He writes, "The modern translator takes up the soundest obtainable text of the original Greek, saturates himself with the language of the contemporary papyrus documents, and with the aid of the ablest modern lexicons, grammars, translations, commentaries, and special treatises seeks to understand without bias or prejudice, just what each sentence of the Greek New Testament was intended by its author to mean. This meaning he then to the very utmost of his ability strives to cast into modern English of the same kind as the Greek he is translating."

What is the soundest obtainable Greek text? What canons of criticism does the translator follow in determining what each sentence was intended by its author to mean? How can we be sure that the ability of the translator is such that he can cast this meaning into modern English of the same kind as the Greek? There are uncomfortable questions that suggest themselves to the reader, and make him feel that in reading the new American New Testament he is not reading the New Testament itself, but Professor Goodspeed's own personal interpretation of the New Testament.

Of course it may be argued that such objections can be urged against every translation of the Bible, for there is no complete original text of the Bible in existence. The complete Bible exists only in versions and translations. How then can anyone be certain that he is reading the real Bible? The objection is valid. It was for this very reason that the church from the earliest ages has jealously guarded the Bible and has striven to preserve and maintain the purity of its texts. Even in St. Jerome's day in the fourth century there was no complete Bible officially accepted by scholars. And so the Church through the Pope, commissioned St. Jerome to translate and collect the sacred writings into an official version. This official version called the Vulgate has been accepted by the Church as the official authentic version in Latin and guaranteed by the Church. But it was not produced by one man in a few years, after cursory study of ancient languages. It is the result of centuries of investigation and research, of consultation and conference, of deep meditation and silent prayer, all performed under the guidance and with the aid of the Holy Spirit.

It took Professor Goodspeed but a few years to translate the New Testament. St. Jerome spent a lifetime making his translation. When that translation had to be revised scholars worked forty years to give us the Clementine revision. Pope

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Plus X. appointed a commission under Cardinal Gasquet to revise the Vulgate again. Scores of scholars who have spent their lives in Biblical research have been ransacking the libraries of Europe for years, collecting, and comparing manuscripts and texts, in order to give us an accurate authentic, genuine text of the Bible. Yet this age of rapid progress of advancing science and new discoveries has apparently convinced the Chicago professor that he can do alone in a few years, what learned exegetes have been laboring a life time to accomplish.

Celerity is seldom the parent of accuracy. It often begets error. And the New Testament from Chicago, in spite of its author's protestations cannot be accepted as a correct New Testament. The Bible is a difficult book to understand, all vainglorious theories of private interpretation to the contrary notwithstanding. The Constitution of the United States is also difficult to understand. It might be simplified for the unintelligent reader, but it would be robbed of some of its meaning in the simplification process.

Better by far to consider the Bible as the Catholic Church considers it as the inspired word of God, and guard it against the callous hands of any unauthorized translator, than to consider it merely as a masterpiece of literature and to try to clothe its sublime utterances in the motley garb of popular phraseology. And better too to elevate the people up to the understanding of the New Testament, as the Church does, than to try to debase the sacred writings to the level of the popular parlance of the day, in order "to point a moral or adorn a tale."—The Pilot.

JESUIT'S DEVOTION TO LITTLE FLOWER

A striking instance of devotion to the Little Flower of Jesus in the Life of Father Frederick Ruppert, S. J., who lost his life shortly before Christmas on the Alaskan missions is related by friends of the dead priest who are at Woodstock College, the Jesuit house of studies for the eastern province.

When rector of Loyola College, Los Angeles, California, he was unable to negotiate the purchase of land for new buildings. In complete faith in the intercession of Blessed Teresa, Father Ruppert cast a picture of the "Little Flower" on the site desired while walking by one day. The owners, up to that time utterly unwilling to dispose of their holdings, came to terms within the next three days.

Oh, blessed, blessed Eternity, and blessed are they who rightly ponder it! All we do here for a brief, uncertain time is but as child's play. It were less than worthless, save that it is the passage of eternity.—St. Francis de Sales.



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Huron & Erie	\$26,822,000	\$1,655,000
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