300 Near (*Prope*)

“The Lord is nigh” to man, [Philip. 4:5].

First, so that he may guard him from evil. Just as the shepherd is near his flock, as a jealous husband. If therefore the wife guards herself from superfluities in the presence of her husband, how much more in the sight of God, Philip. 4[:5]: “Let your modesty be known to all men. The Lord is nigh.” But alas what is said in Isai. 57[:8]: “You have discovered yourself near me and have received an adulterer.”

Second, The Lord is near so that they may promote the good. Just as the head of the household is near the workers, the farmer near his cattle, so that he may exercise and encourage, the worker with the lord being present is not idle. Therefore, in the evening he seeks his wages, Rom. 13[:11]: “And that knowing the season; that it is now the hour for us to rise from sleep. For now, our salvation is nearer.”

Third, that he may hear the petitions. Just as the poor man is nearer to divinity, and the nurse is near to the child crying, Psal. [144:18]: “The Lord is nigh unto all them that call upon him … in truth.” As namely if they seek eternal truths, not transitory. Therefore Isai. [55:6]: “Seek the Lord, while he may be found: call upon him, while he is near.”

¶ It is necessary alas because in Jer. 12[:2]: “You are near in their mouth, and far from their reins.”

¶ Fourth, that you may help in necessities. Just as the father helps his son in his first attempt, not because here will immediately free him from abuses, but that he wants that he endures certain things, so that thus he might acquire praise, if however, he sees him in great danger. Thus, not immediately does God free his elect from an infinity of tribulations, but he waits so that they may acquire glory, but from the peril of damnation he will finally rescue them, Psal. [118:151]: “You are near,” namely, for rescuing those in tribulation.

Firth, that he may acquire the repentant. Just as it happened concerning the father and the prodigal son, Luke [15:11].

¶ He who ought to teach sometimes, it ought to be noted, that he stands near to guard his beard, otherwise it is in danger. We are in this world, just like swimmers in the sea, Psal. [76:20]: “Your way is in the sea,” where it is noted that if a man who in swimming has his head above the water he escapes whole. But if it goes under he is in danger, so it is if man has a free reason and does not seek God.