Worcester F 80 Distinctiones

164 Christ taught Obedience (*Obedienciam docuit Christus*)

Christ taught obedience by a double example of coming to the world, John 6[:38]: “Because I came down from heaven, not to do my own will, but the will [of him].” Remaining in the world, Phil. 2[:8]: “Becoming obedient unto death.”

¶ Going from the world, Matt. 26[:39]: “Not as I will, but as you will.”

¶ And thus obedience is the ladder to paradise of which there are seven steps. For a man ought to obey gratuitously without any recalcitrance. The example of Paul who said, Acts 9[:6]: “Lord, what will you have me to do.” Simply without simulation.[[1]](#endnote-1) The example[[2]](#endnote-2) concerning David, Psal. [72:23]: “I am become as a beast before you.” Cheerfully without murmuring. The example in Simon of Cyrene who carried [Matt. 27:32] in compulsory service quickly without procrastination.[[3]](#endnote-3)

¶ The example of Peter and Andrew who with a single voice they followed, [Matt. 4:19-20]. Usefully without reckoning.[[4]](#endnote-4) The example of Peter,[[5]](#endnote-5) who said, “I am ready to go with you, into prison,” Luke 22[:33]. Humbly without pride. The example of the disciples who did all things when they said [Luke 17:10]: “We are unprofitable servants.” Perseveringly without hesitation.[[6]](#endnote-6) The example of Christ, Phil. 2[:8]: “Becoming obedient unto death.”

¶ Therefore,[[7]](#endnote-7) obedience is like a ship sailing to heaven. For although a man is in a ship resting, however by the motion of the ship he goes forward, Prov. 31[:14]: “She is like the merchant's ship.”

¶ By the same reason being obedient is compared to the horse rider who goes forward with another’s motion, Can. 1[:8]: “To my company of horsemen, have I likened you, O my love.” And even[[8]](#endnote-8) it is like a key opening heaven. In the figure of which Christ gave to the obedient Simon “the keys of the kingdom of heaven,” Matt. 16[:19, 17]. And he blessed him saying, “Blessed are you, Simon Bar-Jona. For before he had cursed the disobedient man, Gen. 3[:17]: “Cursed is the earth in your work.”

¶ Third it is just like the bird ascending to heaven which goes forward with two wings, namely, poverty and chastity, Apo. 12[:14]: “There were given to the woman two wings,” etc., that is, to the obedient are given poverty and chastity.

¶ Again, six things move a man for obeying of which the first is price of the thing like gold is chosen before copper, 1 Kings 15[:22]: “Obedience is better than sacrifices.”

¶ Second is the commandment of God, Deut. 26[:17]: “You have chosen the Lord to obey.” Psal. [118:4]: “You have commanded your commandments to be kept most diligently.”

Third, is the example of Christ. For the good ought to be followed. According to the Philosopher, in the *Topics*,[[9]](#endnote-9) because the good and wise man

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chooses what is most powerfully to be chosen, Phil. 2[:8]: “Becoming obedient unto death.” Rom. 15[:19]: “By the obedience of one,” etc.

¶ Fourth, it is a detriment to what is opposed, just as theft because of the gallows, Deut. 17[:12]: “Refusing to obey the commandment of the priest, that man shall die the death.” The example is our first parents.

¶ Fifth, there is the reward of the kingdom, Deut. 11[:26-27]: “Behold I set forth in your sight this day a blessing and a curse, a blessing if you obey.”

¶ Again, obedience is the highest in merit. In the sign of which Christ set Simon before the others, who is interpreted as obeying. So also, to the obeying. The example of Jos. 10[:14]: “There was not before nor after so long a day.”

¶ Second obedience is near to God. In the figure of which Christ freely[[10]](#endnote-10) reclined in the house of Simon, Luke 4[:38]. And Christ loved all those who dwelt in Bethany which is interpreted as the house of obedience, John 11[:18].

¶ Third it is near to heaven in whose figure Christ ascended “to heaven” from Bethany, Luke 24[:50-51].

¶ Again,[[11]](#endnote-11) there are three things which help obedience and promote, namely, sway humility, Phil. 2[:8]: “He humbled himself, becoming obedient.”

¶ Second,[[12]](#endnote-12) there is frequently accustoming oneself, as is evident in an untamed horse, Prov. 21[:31]: “The horse is prepared for the day of battle.”

¶ Third,[[13]](#endnote-13) there is the superior modestly commanding. The example in God who prohibited only one tree, and conceded the others, Gen. 2[:9].

¶ Again,[[14]](#endnote-14) we ought to obey three kinds of precepts, because there is the precept of the judge through nature, Tob. 4[:16]: “See you never do to another what you would hate.” And Matt. 7[:12]: “All things therefore whatsoever you would that men should do to you.” Second,[[15]](#endnote-15) the precept enjoined by the scripture, Exod. 20[:3-17 where the ten commandments are placed. Third,[[16]](#endnote-16) the precept inspired by grace, Matt. 22[:14].

1. Cf.William de Lancea, *Diaetae Salutis* 4.2 (8:286a): Secundus gradus est obedire simpliciter sine simulatione. [↑](#endnote-ref-1)
2. Cf. William de Lancea, *Diaetae Salutis* 4.2 (8:286a): Tertius gradus, obedire hilariter sine murmuratione; exemplum de Simone Cyrenaeo, qui portavit in angaria, id est, in dolore crucem Christi, ut habetur in *Matthaeo* [27:32]. [↑](#endnote-ref-2)
3. Cf. William de Lancea, *Diaetae Salutis* 4.2 (8:286a): Quartus gradus est obedire velociter, sine recrastinatione; exemplum de Petro et Andrea, qui ad unam Domini vocem, relictis retibus omnibus, secuti sunt eum, sicut etiam dicitur in eodem *Matthaeo* [4:20]. [↑](#endnote-ref-3)
4. Cf. William de Lancea, *Diaetae Salutis* 4.2 (8:286a): Sextus gradus est obedire humiliter, sine elatione.... [↑](#endnote-ref-4)
5. Cf. William de Lancea, *Diaetae Salutis* 4.2 (8:286a): Quintus gradus est obedire viriliter, sine haesitatione; exemplum de Petro, qui dixit: *Domine, paratus sum tecum in carcerem, et in mortem ire*. [↑](#endnote-ref-5)
6. Cf. William de Lancea, *Diaetae Salutis* 4.2 (8:286a): Septimus gradus est obedire perseveranter, sine discontinuatione; exemplum de Christo, de quo dicit Apostolus: *Factus est obediens usque ad mortem*. [↑](#endnote-ref-6)
7. Cf. William de Lancea, *Diaetae Salutis* 4.2 (8:286a): Item nota, quod obedientia est navis ad coelum transvehens, clavis coelum aperiens, et avis ad coelum ascendens. Est ita que obedientia sicut navis: nam sicut qui est in navi semper procedit, et tamen ipse quiescit; sic qui est in navi obedientiae, semper proficit in mundo, dormendo, vigilando, comedendo, abstinendo, ambulando, quiescendo: quia instar nautae non movetur motu proprio, sed alieno. De had navi habetur in *Proverbiis: Facta est quasi navis institoris*, id est, mercatoris. [↑](#endnote-ref-7)
8. Cf. William de Lancea, *Diaetae Salutis* 4.2 (8:286b): Est etiam obdientia sicut clavis paradisi: sicut enim inobedientia clausit paradisum, ut habetur ex *Genesi*; sic obedientia paradisum aperuit. Et in figura hujus, Christus dedit Simoni, qui interpretatur obediens, *claves regni caelorum*, ut dicitur in *Matthaeo*. [↑](#endnote-ref-8)
9. Aristoble, *Topics* 1.1 (100b21-23): On the other hand, those opinions are generally accepted which are accepted by everyone or by the majority or by the philosophers i. e. by all, or by the majority, or by the most notable and illustrious of them.

*Politics* 3.4 (1276b16-17) (Barnes 2:2025): There is a point nearly allied to the preceding: Whether the excellence of a good man and a good citizen is the same or not. [↑](#endnote-ref-9)
10. Cf. William de Lancea, *Diaetae Salutis* 4.2 (8:285b-286a): Primus gradus obedientiae, est obedire libenter sine recalcitratione.... [↑](#endnote-ref-10)
11. Cf. William de Lancea, *Diaetae Salutis* 4.2 (8:286b-287a): Habet etiam obedientia auxilia, quae ipsam juvant. Unde notandum est, quod sex sunt, quae juvant obedientiam, scilicet humilitas flectens, consuetudo frequens, dilectio fervens, affectus terrena contemnens, gratia interius ungens, et prelatus modeste praecipiens. Humilitas igitur juvat, et facit hominem obedientem. Humilitas reddit hominem flexibilem: sicut enim gracilitas et subtilitas virgae facit virgam faciliter inclinare, sic gracilitas humilitatis facit homines faciliter obedire. Ideo dicit Apostolus de Christo: *Humiliavit semetipsum, factus obediens usque ad mortem*. [↑](#endnote-ref-11)
12. Cf. William de Lancea, *Diaetae Salutis* 4.2 (8:287a): Juvat etiamk obedientiam consuetudo; nam sicut equus assuescit circumvolutionibus, ut sciat se ad omnem partem flectere; sic assuefactio obedientiae facit homines ad nutum obedire. De tali equo bene ductibili dicitur in *Proverbiis: Equus paratur ad diem belli: Dominus autem salutem tribuit.* [↑](#endnote-ref-12)
13. Cf. William de Lancea, *Diaetae Salutis* 4.2 (8:287a): Tandem juvat obedientiam modestia praecipientis; exemplum de Deo, qui unum solum lignum prohibuit, et omnkia alia concessit, dicens: *De omni ligno paradisi comede; de ligno autem scientiae bone et mali ne comedas.* [↑](#endnote-ref-13)
14. Cf. William de Lancea, *Diaetae Salutis* 4.2 (8:287a): Habet etiam obedientia officia, quae ipsam occupant, scilicet tria genera praeceptorum. Unde nota, quod debet quilibet obedire praeceptis inditis (*a* = *Caet. edit.* judicis) per naturam, quae scripta sunt a Tobia dicente: *Quod ab alio oderis tibi fieri, vide ne tu aliquando alteri facias*; et in Matthaeo: *Omnia quaecumque vultis ne faciant vobis homines, ea nolite facere eis*. [↑](#endnote-ref-14)
15. Cf. William de Lancea, *Diaetae Salutis* 4.2 (8:287a): Vel debemus obedire praeceptis injunctis per scripturam, quae scripta sunt in *Exodo*, ubi ponuntur decem praecepta: *Non habebis deos alienos,* etc. [↑](#endnote-ref-15)
16. Cf. William de Lancea, *Diaetae Salutis* 4.2 (8:287a-b): Debemus etiam obedire praeceptis inspiratis per gratiam, ut de dilectione Dei et proximi, quae scripta sunt in *Matthaeo* [22:37-39]. [↑](#endnote-ref-16)