Worcester F 80 Distinctiones

199 The Preacher (*Predicator*)

The preacher ought to be well taught that he may understand. For water is first in the source than in the river. The seed even was first in the earth than in spice, Dan. 11[:33]: “They that are learned among the people shall teach many.” Psal. [70:17]: “You have taught me, O God.”

¶ Second, he ought to be eloquent in order that he make to understand, just as a mouth teaches better when it is opened in a voice, Matt. 5[:2]: “And opening his mouth, he taught them.” So, Esdras read openly and distinctly to be understood, Nehe. 8[:18].

¶ Third, he ought to be working that he may move by example. So, the eagle flies over her chicks, so the painter paints before his disciples, Acts 1[:1]: “Jesus began to do and to teach.” [1] Esdr. 7[:10]: “Esdras prepared his heart to seek the law of the Lord, and to do and to teach.” But alas because in Rom. 2[:22]: “You that say, men should not commit adultery, commit adultery.” Job 4[:3]: “Behold you have taught many, and you have strengthened the weary hands.”

¶ Again, [2] Tim. 4[:2]: “Preach the word, be instant in season, reprove,” if they sin, “entreat,” that they may correct themselves, “rebuke,” if they are slow, “in all patience and doctrine,” by threatening torments on the evil and thus they may recover from evil. Just as a bird having seen the snare, Jonah 3[:6]: “The word of the Lord came to the king,” that is, the threat of divine vengeance, and he repented either by promising joys for the good and by love in God they may profit. Just as the worker promised a great wage, Jer. 15[:16]: “The word of the Lord was to me a joy,” etc.

¶ Again, the preacher ought to have the holiness of his life. For it is not to believe wicked witnesses nor heaps of letters, so neither contaminated preachers.

¶ Third, he ought to have knowledge of sacred scripture, because just as a razor is perilous in the hand of an idiot barber, so preaching in the mouth of an illiterate.

¶ Concerning these three it is said in Acts 18[:24]: “Apollo was a man,” as for the first, “eloquent,” as for the second, “one mighty in the scriptures,” as for the third. Or thus three things are necessary for the preacher. First, purity of life or remorse of conscience as for as mortal sin otherwise if he preaches, he sins, according to that of the Psal. [49:16-21]: “To the sinner God has said: Why

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do you declare,” and it follows, “I will reprove you, and set before your face.” Second, it is necessary that he is competent in knowledge that namely he may have explicit acquaintance of the articles of the faith, the ten commandments, and discretion of sin from what is not a sin. Otherwise “the blind leads the blind,” [Luke 6:39].

¶ Third, it is necessary that there is authority by which one is sent by the church just as the Apostle says, Rom. [10:15]: “How shall they preach unless they be sent?”

¶ Or thus for the preacher there is a necessity for knowledge, teaching, and life, in which one is not sufficient without the other. For knowledge without teaching is not useful, Eccli. 20[:32]: “Wisdom that is hid, and treasure that is not seen, what profit is there in them both?” Teaching without knowledge is great foolishness. Wherefore Gregory,[[1]](#endnote-1) it is necessary that what is tasted foolishly, is preached foolishly, [1] Tim. 1[:7]: “Understanding neither the things they say, nor whereof they affirm.” Such ones are the sons of vipers who before time break from the maternal womb, in order that they may exit to the garden. So many before time interrupt their study, in order that they may hurry to preaching.

¶ Again, knowledge and teaching without life,[[2]](#endnote-2) is a great vanity. It is a great vanity like a candle that illumines others and consumes oneself. Such ones have the voice of Jacob, that is, good doctrine but the hands of Esau, that is, evil works. Therefore, the end and intention of preaching ought to be the praise of God, or the saints, or the edification of Christ, not temporal acquisition of gain or praise, unless perhaps he intends to acquire something for the life of the saints, the construction of a church, or for the power or penance of acts, as is evident [Causa] 8, quest. 1, c. [8], *Olim*, and chapter [9], *In Scripturis*.[[3]](#endnote-3)

¶ Again those preaching out of their district are held to preach of necessity for salvation either for themselves or for others if he does it secretly. Because if for others they do that as through pilgrims or brothers sent, it is not entirely safe, because either they are sufficient, or then if they do not preach, they seem with the useless servant they hide their talent. If in truth there are insufficient there is the danger for them to receive such a benefit that such a burden requires when they know. Therefore, sufficient for preaching with merit, benefits ought to be proposed according to that of Gregory,[[4]](#endnote-4) he is not worthy of wool and milk incontestably who does not feed the sheep. Therefore, for those preaching under ordinary law stipends are owed from the church to the preachers, even from zeal alone. Stipends are not owed by the listeners but by that one whose duty they do according to Gregory,[[5]](#endnote-5) according to that of Job 31[:39]: “If I have eaten the fruits thereof without money.”

1. Cf. Gregory, *Moralia* Epistola 2 (PL 75:513): Sed tamen quisquis de Deo loquitur, curet necesse est ut quidquid audientium mores instruit, rimetur; et hunc rectum loquendi ordinem deputet, si cum opportunitas aedificationis [Col.0513B] exigit, ab eo se, quod loqui coeperat, utiliter derivet.

Cf. Hilary of Poitiers, *De Trinitate* 8.1 (PL 10:237): Sequitur vero hanc voluntatis sapientiam sermo stultitiae: quia necesse est quod stulte sapitur, stulte et praedicetur.

Cf. James of Voragine, *Sermones Aurei* *De S. Dominico*, Sermo 5 (Augustae Vindelicorum et Cracoviae: Christophorum Bartl, 1760, 2:239a): Unde Gregor. Necesse est quod stulte sapitur stulte praedicetur. … Tales sunt sicut filii viperarum, qui ante tempus rumpunt maternum uterum ut exire possint ad ortum. Sic et multi ante tempus interrumpunt studium, ut exire possint ad praedicandum.

<https://books.google.com/books?id=9fxkAAAAcAAJ&pg=PA239&dq=filii+viperarum+qui+ante+tempus&hl=en&sa=X&ved=0ahUKEwiBuq6t-4jdAhUP26wKHVcpCwsQ6AEIKjAA#v=onepage&q=filii%20viperarum%20qui%20ante%20tempus&f=false> [↑](#endnote-ref-1)
2. Cf. James of Voragine, *Sermones Aurei De S. Dominico*, Sermo 5 (Augustae Vindelicorum et Cracoviae: Christophorum Bartl, 1760, 2:239a): Tertio habuit scientiam et doctrinam cum vita, alis fuisset vanitas. Magna enim vanitas est instar candelae alios illuminare et seipsum consumere. Tales habent vocem Jacob, id est, doctrinam, sed manus Esau, id est, operationem malum. [↑](#endnote-ref-2)
3. *Decretum,* Causa 8, quest. 1, cc. 8, 9. Olim iussus est frater premortui fratris uxorem ducere, ut non sibi, sed illi suscitaret sobolem, eius que nomine uocaret quod inde nasceretur. Quod si recusaret, discalciatus uno pede conspui solebat in facie. Nunc euangelii quisque predicator ita debet in ecclesia laborare, ut defuncto fratri, id est Christo, suscitet semen, qui pro nobis mortuus est, et quod suscitatum fuerit eius nomen accipiat. At uero qui electus ab ecclesia ministerium euangelizandi rennuerit, ab ipsa ecclesia digne merito que contempnitur.

Qui enim et sibi prodest, et ecclesiæ, bene intelligitur utroque pede calciatus. Unde illud: “Quam speciosi pedes euangelizantium bona”. Qui autem lucrandorum curam refugit aliorum, discalciati illius non figuratum significauit, sed in se inpletum portauit obprobrium. [↑](#endnote-ref-3)
4. Gregory, cf. *Flores seu sententiae ex S. Bernardi operibus de promptae* *Tract. de cont. mun. ad cler,* cap. 5 n. 20 (1201D): Indignus lacte et lana convincitur, qui non pascit oves. [↑](#endnote-ref-4)
5. Gregory, *Moralia* 22.21 (PL 76:246): Et sunt nonnulli qui, sanctis plebibus praelati, vitae quidem stipendia ex ecclesiastica largitate consequuntur, sed exhortationis ministeria debita non impendunt. Contra quos adhuc exemplum sancti viri recte subjungitur, cum ab eo protinus subinfertur. [↑](#endnote-ref-5)