Worcester F 80 Distinctiones

22 War (*Bellum*)[[1]](#endnote-1)

War is taken in two ways. For man is said to consist of a double substance, namely, corporal and spiritual. Accordingly, he has a double struggle: corporal through his temporal circumstance and spiritual for the heavenly homeland. And just as the soul is nobler than the body, so also is the victory in the spiritual battle. For that has eternal

/fol. 218ra/

honor, this temporal has transitory honor. Certainly, three nations come against us, the world, the flesh, and the devil. Against which it is necessary for us to fight. But many say they fight who however are sluggish in idleness, Num. 32[:6]: “What, shall your brothers go to fight, and will you sit here?” Our brothers are the saints who fought here, so it is necessary for us, but the kingdom of God suffers greatly.

¶ Therefore the fighter ought to have three weapons, namely, boldness in attacking lest he is afraid, craftiness in pursuing lest he be seduced, and constancy in completing so that they may become the victor. But for making war, fighting, struggling, and engaging in battle four objectives ought to move us: Present peril, good fellowship, a grand bargain, and a good recompense.

¶ Concerning the first, many and astute wage war against us who are the world, the flesh, and the demons. For the cupidity of the world allies itself to riches under the pretext of uniting. The pleasures of the flesh impel us to delight under the pretext of invigorating. The malignity of the devil suggests pompous behavior under the pretext of advancing.

¶ But all these things beget peril because in riches cupidity is increased, just as fire in wood and charity is endangered in delights. Pleasure is increased just as the thirst of dropsy in drink, and thus chastity in endangered. In precedence elation is increased, just as a tempest from the wind, and humility is endangered.

¶ Secondly, good fellowship should move us for we have God and the angels and holy men as helpers, [1] Mach. 9[:11]: “The slingers went before the army, and they that were in the front were all men of valor.”

¶ Thirdly, a grand bargain should move us because it is a struggle for our soul and for our heredity, Eccli. 4[:33]: “Strive for your soul, and even unto death,” etc., which is against those who fight for nothing, Eccli. 11[:9]: “Strive not in a matter which does not concern you.”

¶ Fourthly, a good recompense ought to move us, [1] Tim. 6[:12]: “Fight the good fight of faith: lay hold on eternal life, whereunto you are called.”

¶ Again nobility of kind should surpass faithfulness in making war. Therefore, since man is created in the likeness of God, it is foul

/fol. 218rb/

for that one to be conquered by a vile demon. Second, the facility of overcoming, not by pleasure alone can we overcome. Thirdly, the security of arms which is through penitence. Fourth divine friendship, Exod. 15[:3]: “The Lord is as a man of war, Almighty [is his name].”

1. Lambeth 23 begins this chapter: “You may fight with these nations that are assembled against us to destroy us and our sanctuary,” [1] Mach. 3[:58]. [↑](#endnote-ref-1)