Worcester F 80 Distinctiones

232 Spiritual Health (*Sanitas spiritualis*)

Spiritual health is recuperated: first, by tearful contrition, just as a sick person from sweating, by bathing, Psal. [146:3]: “Who heals the broken of heart, and binds up,” the wounds with penitence, “their bruises.” For just as in sweating is anxiety on account of the conflict of nature and illness, so in contrition on account of the conflict of grace and sin, 4 Kings 20[:5]: “I have seen your tears, and I have healed you.”

¶ Second, through a weighty confession, just as the stomach through vomiting, the face through an apparition, man through a lessening by emitting corrupt blood, Job 34[:17]: “Who loveth not judgment,” that is, of the physician in confession, “can he be healed.”

¶ Third, by mortification of the flesh, just as the sick man through diet, Eccli. 31[:24]: “Sound and wholesome sleep with a moderate man.” Just as in waging a war against each other or in contrary infirmities, what is counsel for one, it is trouble for another. So, it is concerning the flesh and the spirit, [1] Cor. 9[:25]: “And every one that strives for the mastery, refrains himself from all things.” Eccli. 31[:37]: “Health to soul and body.”

¶ The conscience is healed by affliction of the flesh. For just as pleasure is the death of the soul, so affliction of the flesh by an opposition is health of the soul.

¶ Fourth, by the giving of alms, just as a sick person is purged through medicine, Matt. 12[:13] and Luke 6[:6]: “Stretch forth your hand,” which was withered, “and it was restored to health.” But many are so constipated that in no way are they relieved, not even through the bitterness of death.

¶ Fifth, through

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devout prayer so that the wound through a plaster or through an ointment, Psal. [29:3]: “O Lord, I have cried to you, and you have healed me.” The example is the son of the ruler healed through his prayers, [John 4:46-51].

¶ Sixth, through holy society, just as a body is healed by cutting a member off. For the leprous man when he is aggravated by leprosy is alleviated with healthy things, Psal. [17:26]: “With the holy, you will be holy.” And when this is figured in some whom the Lord separated from the crowd, Mark 7[:17]. Seventh, by holy teaching, just as the sick man by cauterization, Psal. [106:20]: “He sent his word and healed them.” Eighth, by the memory of the Lord’s passion, so Christ cauterized his healthy member that he might heal the sick human race, Isai. 53[:5]: “By his bruises we are healed.” So, the children of Israel were healed by looking upon “the brazen serpent” on a pole, Num. 21[:9]. The spiritual healing of this is just like the corporal. There are seven signs, namely, the quiet of the members which is the cessation from sin, Lev. 14[:48]: “The leprosy is not spread.” The second is the cessation of pain, that is, the peace of the conscience, [Prov.] 16[:24]: “Sweet to the soul.” The third is the appetite for food, that is, the desire of eternal matters. The fourth is the removal of taste, that is, the disdain of temporal matters. The fifth is the restitution color, that is, the honesty of association. The sixth is the strength of working, namely, the good will of bearing, namely, heavy things.

¶ In the sign of which thing Christ healed the race of men. First, the son of the ruler dying through pride, John 4[:46]. Second, those blinded in the temple through envy, John 5[:3] and 9[:1]. Third, one possessed by a demon through anger, Mar. 16[:17] and Luke 10[:17]. Fourth, the servant of the centurion languishing through sloth, Luke 7[:2]. Fifth, one having a withered hand through avarice, Matt. 12[:10]. Sixth, dropsy through gluttony, Luke 14[:2]. Seventh, the woman suffering from a flow of blood through lust, Luke 8[:43]. Therefore, truly said the Psal. [102:3]: “Who forgives all their iniquities,” etc.