Worcester F 80 Disctinctiones

54 Of Riches (*Diuiciarum*)

Of riches, some are temporal, some spiritual, and some celestial. The temporal are said to be of fortune, the second are of grace, the third are of glory. The first are gathered in a money box, the second in constancy, the third in the heavenly court. The temporal are of necessity left behind, according to that of Psal. [48:11]: “They shall leave their riches to strangers.” The example of the dog following two men. And therefore, they will be divided, because they were of little value to those understanding them, Psal. [72:12]: “Behold these are sinners; and yet abounding in the world they have obtained riches.”

¶ Second, because they are perilous to those acquiring, just as thorns are not collected without harm, nor mud without defiling, so neither are riches collected without fraud, lying, and this, Prov. 28[:22]: “A man, that makes haste to be rich,” he will not be innocent. Examples in Luke 12[:21], and 16[:19]. Eccli. 11[:10]: “If you are rich, you shall not be free from sin.”

¶ Third, because they are harmful to those possessing, just as flesh is harmful to bones, for this reason it is gnawed by dogs. Fruits are harmful to trees, for this reason they are disagreeable to boys. Thus, the rich suffer attacks from thieves, oppressions of princes, exactions of beadles, Eccle. 6[:1-2]: “There is also another evil, which I have seen under the sun, a man to whom God has given riches, and substance,” etc. Eccle. 5[:12]: “Riches kept to the hurt of the owner.”

¶ Fourth, because they are sterile to the lovers, just as a heap of wheat is uselessly loved when it is not dispersed nor sown, Eccle. 5[:9]: “He that loves riches shall reap no fruit from

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them.” Therefore Psal. [61:11]: “If riches abound, set not your heart upon them.” James 5[:1]: “Go to now, you rich men, weep,” etc.

¶ Second, spiritual riches, namely, of graces and virtues, according to the will either they are lost, or they perish, Jer. 17[:11]: “He who has gathered riches, and not by right.” Therefore, these riches are to be gathered because they are fruitful for four reasons.

¶ First for the revelation of unattached mercy, just like a fountain makes the earth fertile, the sun gives light to the air, [1] Cor. 1[:5]: “That in all things you are made rich in him,” etc. Wis. 8[:5]: “If riches be desired [what is richer] than wisdom.”

¶ Second, for redemption of the soul itself, just as a security is given back at the payment of money, so the soul from sin by the riches of penance, Prov. 13[:8]: “The ransom of a man’s life are his riches.” [1] Tim. 6[:18]: “To be rich in good works.” Dan. 4[:24]: “Redeem your sins with alms.”

¶ Third, for the avoidance of eternal punishment, so the sailor by navigating prudently avoids the peril in the crash of a four-horse team, Isai. 33[:6]: “Riches of salvation, wisdom and knowledge.”

¶ Fourth for the inheritance of future glory, James 2[:5]: “Has not God chosen the poor in this world?”

¶ Third riches, namely, the heavenly which once possessed will never perish. Therefore, they are to be sought for because they are glorious on account of four aforesaid goods having their contraries. For, security without care, Prov. 18[:11]: “The substance of the rich man is the city of his strength.” Therefore [Matt. 6:20]: “Lay up to yourselves treasures [in heaven],” etc.

¶ Second, perpetuity without an end, [Psal. 111:3]: “Glory and wealth shall be in his house.” Prov. 14[:24]: “The crown of the wise is their riches.”

¶ Third, satiety without failing, [Psal. 36:3]: “You shall be fed with its riches.”

¶ Fourth, joyfulness without affliction, Prov. 8[:18]: “With me are riches and glory, glorious riches and justice.”