

a paper:

ON SAINT JOHN CHRYSOSTOM

Robert Baral
10/26/2005 AD

PREFACE

The purpose of this paper is to explore the contributions of St. John Chrysostom to The Christian Faith.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

I. HIS BACKGROUND & LIFE

II. HIS PREACHING

III. HIS EXEGESIS

IV. HIS TRIALS

V. HIS WRITINGS AND THEOLOGY

VI. CHRIST IN THE NEW TESTAMENT FULFILLS THE OLD TESTAMENT

VII. GOD ELECTED THE SAVED IN CHRIST FOR SALVATION

VIII. FAITH WITHOUT WORKS IS DEAD

IX. GOD'S LOVE OFFERS SALVATION TO ALL MEN

X. GOD'S JUDGEMENT OF THE WICKED IS RIGHTEOUS

XI. GOD GIVES THE GRACE, MEN ARE CALLED TO BELIEVE AND DO

XII. IF WE LOVE CHRIST, WE MUST LOVE THE BRETHREN

XIII. WE ARE IN A SPIRITUAL DAILY BATTLE AS CHRISTIANS

XIV. IN CONCLUSION

XV. REFERENCES

ABSTRACT

St. John Chrysostom was ordained a Priest of The early Church in 386 AD, ordained as the Bishop of Constantinople in 398 AD, deposed and exiled in 404 AD and died under persecution in 407 AD. He was called “the golden-mouthed” preacher. His gift for reaching the hearts, minds and souls of men from the pulpit was a glory of The early Church. His homilies on Holy Scripture are deeply inspiring to read in all generations.

Chrysostom’s ability to alienate and infuriate people as The Bishop of the Eastern Imperial Roman Capitol city were almost limitless. His fall from office, his exile and death were the results of his fearless but often tactless preaching against those who lived in worldly corruption in high places - in the imperial palace and government, among the wealthy of society and in The Church. He is today known as one of the great preachers and doctors of the patristic-era Orthodox Church.

DEDICATION

To St. Peter and The Apostles, who said, “We ought to obey GOD rather than men.” - ACTS 5:29b

EPIGRAPH

“Glory to GOD for all things!” - the last words of St. John Chrysostom

I. HIS BACKGROUND & LIFE

St. John Chrysostom was born in 347 AD. His education as a young man focused on rhetoric and law. John was not baptized a Christian until 370 AD at the age of 23. He then became a monk and focused on the study of Scripture. He was ordained as a Priest at Antioch in 386 AD, which was 16 years after he became a Christian. John's preaching was so effective that he became known as "golden-mouthed."^{1 2 3}

Chrysostom was ordained Bishop of Constantinople - the very capitol of the Eastern Roman Empire - in 398 AD, having been a practicing Priest for only 12 years before this event. John was removed from the office of Bishop in 403 AD and exiled after having offended the Empress. He was however reinstated as Bishop of Constantinople shortly after being removed from office. In 404 AD John was removed from the office of Bishop of Constantinople and exiled a second time after again offending the Empress Eudoxia. He died in exile in 407 AD. His last words were supposedly, "Glory to GOD for all things!"^{4 5 6}

II. HIS PREACHING

Chrysostom was a very popular and effective preacher, as already noted being nicknamed "golden mouthed" for his oratory from the pulpit. The New Advent Encyclopedia lists four keys to his overwhelmingly successful preaching style: 1) "his great natural facility of speech;" 2) "the abundance of his thoughts;" 3) his "popular way of presenting and illustrating them;" 4) "the whole-hearted earnestness and conviction with which he delivered the message which he felt had been given to him" by GOD.⁷ Bromily in Historical Theology an Introduction states of Chrysostom's preaching, that it had "a solid Biblical base" delivered with use of "extraordinary

¹ 1, Encyclopedia Britannica, entry for "Chrysostom," p 734.

² 2, Bromily, "Historical Theology An Introduction," p 96.

³ 3, "Saint John Chrysostom," section I.1,2,3,4. New Advent Catholic Encyclopedia.

⁴ 1, Encyclopedia Britannica, entry for "Chrysostom," p 734.

⁵ 2, Bromily, "Historical Theology An Introduction," p 96.

⁶ 3, "Saint John Chrysostom," section I.1,2,3,4. New Advent Catholic Encyclopedia.

⁷ 3, Ibid., section III.1. New Advent Catholic Encyclopedia.

rhetorical gifts add charm, vitality and force.”⁸ After his death, Chrysostom was rehabilitated and made a saint by the Byzantium Church, his name becoming synonymous with Eastern Christian orthodoxy. Orthodox traditional liturgy came to be known as “The Liturgy of St. Chrysostom.”⁹

III. HIS EXEGESIS

During this time in early Church history, there were at least 2 competing schools of Bible interpretation - the allegorical method from Alexandria and the more literal method from Antioch. The Bible - A History notes the Alexandrian method was championed by Origen, who “believed in the need for allegorical interpretation because... many biblical passages made no sense when taken at a strictly literal level. Most people... were capable of reading the Bible only on a literal - and perhaps the moral level - but only special interpreters who were spiritually mature could understand the texts on the spiritual level.” This more “spiritual“ method “led to many excesses, and drew sharp criticism because it often wandered far from the written text or the intentions of the original writers.”¹⁰

Bible commentators of the Antioch school tended to stay closer to the written Bible texts, focus on the literal meaning when clearly obvious, offer practical real-life moral applications, avoid excessive allegory and consider possibly allegory last if at all.¹¹ St. Chrysostom - having studied rhetoric and law as a pagan and having been ordained a Priest in Antioch 16 years before he became a Bishop - not surprisingly employed a more literal approach to his Bible interpretation. This method, combined with his exceptional Divinely gifted preaching abilities, was likely the basis for his title of golden-mouthed.¹²

Chrysostom realized that we must not project meanings into the words of Scripture that are not present. However, he also realized that Often “The meaning is not

⁸ 2, Bromily, “Historical Theology An Introduction,” p 96.

⁹ 4, Chadwick, “The Early Church,” p 191.

¹⁰ 5, Miller & Hubert, “The Bible: A History. The Making and Impact of The Bible,” p 103.

¹¹ 5, Ibid., p 102-103.

¹² 2, Bromily, “Historical Theology An Introduction,” p 96.

expressed superficially [but] lies buried at a great depth.”¹³ At the same time, as already noted, he rejected using broad allegory to understand Scripture. Bromily, in “Historical Theology an Introduction,” summarizes 3 principles that Chrysostom recognized in Scripture: “(1) The Spirit has inspired Scripture, (2) JESUS CHRIST constitutes the true theme, (3) The Spirit’s ministry is needed for true interpretation and application.”¹⁴ So we must be serous and careful students of Scripture and at the same time pray for the Holy Spirit to illuminate us as to the mysteries of those same Scriptures.

IV. HIS TRIALS

When Chrysostom was elevated to the position of Bishop of Constantinople, he was propelled into a delicate vortex in which Church and State power mingled with and effected each other greatly. It was in this office that John was called to be both the Church patriarch of Constantinople and the court chaplain to the Emperor and Empress. As the official religion of the Empire, matters of Christian faith were also matters of governmental politics. Having in near living memory been afflicted with terrible government persecution, it is ironic that “the Church did not take long to discover that under the Christian emperors it might in some respects enjoy less freedom and self-determination than under pagan governments.”¹⁵

Into this environment came the newly elevated Bishop Chrysostom - the pious and ascetic preacher Priest of Antioch - along with his simple living and his reforms against corruption, immorality and worldliness in society, government and The Church. As a result, he quickly became unpopular in Constantinople and found himself encircled with many enemies. By this time, the Eastern Capitol of the Roman Empire offered its well connected and wealthy residents lavish and decadent worldly living and intense political intrigue, of which it expected high Church officials to partake of as much as high government officials. Chadwick, in “The Early Church,” gives a devastating litany of causes that lead to Chrysostom being opposed by a multitude of people, leading

¹³ 2, Bromily, “Historical Theology An Introduction,” p 99.

¹⁴ 2, Ibid., p 101.

¹⁵ 4, Chadwick, “The Early Church,” p 165.

eventually to his removal from the office of Bishop of Constantinople. ¹⁶

First, “many were offended by his ascetic refusal to give lavish hospitality” and entertainment at his official residence. Second, Bishops in other parts of the Empire feared that the Bishop of Constantinople, being present in the very heart of power of the Empire, might lose their independence and autonomy. ¹⁷ Third, Chrysostom had a history of preaching “over-excited and distasteful anti-Jewish discourses” from the Pulpit out of concern for the tendency of some Christians “to observe Jewish customs and ceremonies.” ^{18 19} The Jews being by this time well dispersed and numerous throughout the Empire, their influence and power over the affairs of society and the state were no doubt of at least some significance. Fourth, he found that the former Bishop had ordained many that were not qualified to be clergy. He immediately removed such men from holy orders, creating an instant cadre of angry opponents within the Church. ²⁰

Fifth, John apparently possessed a difficult personality characterized by being “ascetic, aloof, energetic, and outspoken to the point of indiscretion, especially when he became excited in the pulpit.” Sixth, several visiting Bishops and monks who were lingering in the entertaining living in Constantinople took great offense when Chrysostom counseled them to return to their appointed work in The Church. Seventh, he unwisely gave audience to certain women who sought his advice, which led to gossip as to his activities with them. Eighth, he found that some Bishops had bought their offices with monies discreetly termed “consecration fees” to a certain Bishop of Ephesus. All such men he immediately removed from their Church offices. ²¹

Ninth, he decried private property in general and excessive wealth in particular, castigating the well-to-do whom he said “cared nothing for the beggars at the door and wanted only to own ten fine houses with hundreds of servants and lavatories of gold.”

¹⁶ 4, Chadwick, “The Early Church,” p 164-165; 170; 186-193.

¹⁷ 4, Ibid., p 164.

¹⁸ 4, Ibid., p 170.

¹⁹ 6, Homily I of series by St. Chrysostom, “Adversus Judaeos.”

²⁰ 4, Chadwick, “The Early Church,” p 187.

²¹ 4, Ibid., p 188.

Private property, he maintained, was not a natural state intended by GOD, but rather an evil that “existed only as a result of Adam’s fall.“ This was not well received by the many people of wealth and station in the Eastern Capitol. Tenth, “he offended the men by repeatedly proclaiming that a woman had as much right to demand fidelity of her husband as a man had of his wife.” This also was not well received in a culture where men dominated in all things and women reigned only in the home at the pleasure of their husbands. Eleventh, in this culture of high fashion for women of wealth, he preached “unsparing sarcasms about feminine luxuries.”²²

Twelfth, Chrysostom alienated himself from the Emperor and Empress - the jewel in his crown of offending people - which came about when he preached a sermon on feminine errors and made reference to the wicked Jezebel, that corrupt idolatrous queen of ancient Israel and wife of the wayward King Ahab.²³ The Empress Eudoxia had recently obtained some land without consideration for its owners. The reference in his sermon to Jezebel was widely seen as a scathing attack on the Empress herself, who took great offense towards Chrysostom. Prior to this, he had at least enjoyed the enthusiastic support of the Empress Eudoxia, who had chosen John to baptize and later pray over her child during an illness. When this last shield of earthly protection failed, Chrysostom stood before the wrath of The Emperor with none in the imperial court to champion his cause.^{24 25}

In 403 AD, Church enemies of Chrysostom gathered in Chalcedon to put him on trial. This council apparently called him to appear to answer certain charges. When Chrysostom refused to answer the call, the council declared him removed from office of Bishop. The Emperor Arcadius, suffering the wrath of his wife The Empress against John, okayed the council’s decision, thus removing John from the office of Bishop of Constantinople, and for good measure exiling him.^{26 27 28}

²² 4, Chadwick, “The Early Church,” p 188.

²³ 7, KJV, I KINGS chapters 16 - 21.

²⁴ 4, Chadwick, “The Early Church,” p 189.

²⁵ 1, Encyclopedia Britannica, entry for “Chrysostom,” p 734.

²⁶ 4, Chadwick, “The Early Church,” p 189.

²⁷ 1, Encyclopedia Britannica, entry for “Chrysostom,” p 734.

There was, however, one last opportunity offered to Chrysostom to return to the office of Bishop of Constantinople. The day after he was removed as Bishop - note by order of the Emperor - there was a great outcry by the citizenry to reinstate John as Bishop coupled with an earth quake that same day. This lead the Emperor to reinstate John as Bishop of the city. In short order, a silver statue of the Empress was dedicated. Chrysostom voiced his displeasure at what he no doubt saw as a form of idolatry, offending the Empress once again. A critic of John published a phamplet describing him as "satan disguised as an angel of light."²⁹ He was again exiled following this controversy and eventually sent to an isolated spot in the Empire, dying in 407 AD.^{30 31 32}

Noted again here is the cost of the Church being mixed too closely with the affairs and power of the state, for it was the power of the Emperor who removed John from the office of Bishop and not The Church. The Church council in question merely declared him deposed from office of Bishop. But it was the authority of the Emperor that actually removed him from his Church office and exiled him.³³

V. HIS WRITINGS AND THEOLOGY

Chrysostom was the greatest writer and Doctor of the early patristic-era Church. His writings can be classified into three categories: 1) opuscula; 2) homilies; 3) letters. First, his opuscula are mostly his early writings as a monk on monastic life and ascetic living. Second, his homilies include vast groups of homilies on both Old and New Testament Books, Biblical figures like David and St. Paul, and special subjects such as the Jews, moral issues, feasts and saints. Third, his letters were written during his exile. Among these letters is the basis for a liturgy later attributed to St. Chrysostom by the Eastern Church.³⁴ Third, from some of his commentary on Holy Scripture, we see that Chrysostom championed orthodox Christian theology. The number of homilies of St.

²⁸ 3, "St. John Chrysostom," section I.1,2,3,4. New Advent Catholic Encyclopedia.

²⁹ 4, Chadwick, "The Early Church," p 190.

³⁰ 1, Encyclopedia Britannica, p 734.

³¹ 3, "St. John Chrysostom," section I.1,2,3,4. New Advent Catholic Encyclopedia.

³² 4, Chadwick, "The Early Church," p 190.

³³ 3, "St. John Chrysostom," section I.1,2,3,4. New Advent Catholic Encyclopedia.

³⁴ 3, Ibid., section II. New Advent Catholic Encyclopedia.

Chrysostom that we have access to today are so numerous that only a glimpse into but a handful of them will be considered here. Let us note a few examples of Chrysostom's orthodox theology.

VI. CHRIST IN THE NEW TESTAMENT FULFILLS THE OLD TESTAMENT

Chrysostom observes from EPHESIANS 1 that the events in history that lead from the Old Testament to the New Testament, and in particular the development of the New Covenant of salvation through our Lord JESUS CHRIST, was no arbitrary and accidental flow of errors through history. Rather, CHRIST - Who was with The Father before the beginning of all worlds - willed that the Cross would be the instrument of salvation for the faithful of GOD at the exact time and in the exact manner that it came into being. Our Christian faith "was designed to be as it is from the very beginning; it was not a matter of Divine afterthought but was planned and foreordained as it is. It is the fruit of long providential care."³⁵ Saint Paul declares this plainly in EPHESIANS 1:4-5. Saint Paul writes, "According as He hath chosen us in Him before the foundation of the world, that we should be holy and without blame before Him in love: Having predestinated us unto the adoption of children by JESUS CHRIST to Himself, according to the good pleasure of His will."³⁶

VII. GOD ELECTED THE SAVED IN CHRIST FOR SALVATION

Chrysostom notes from EPHESIANS 1 that GOD chose us to be saved by faith in CHRIST even before this physical universe was created. How remarkable is the power and authority of The Almighty, that He knew even before time began in this physical realm which men would voluntarily bend the knee to The Son of GOD and which men would not! "What is the meaning of 'chose us in Him?' That CHRIST established this way of faith in Himself before ever we came into existence, or rather before the foundation of the world."³⁷ Saint Paul so declares that GOD chose us for salvation in CHRIST in EPHESIANS 2:8-10: "For by grace are ye saved through faith; and that not

³⁵ 8, Wiles and Santer, "Documents in Early Christian Thought," comments on "John Chrysostom - Homilies on Ephesians 1," p 120.

³⁶ 7, KJV, EPHESIANS 1:4-5.

³⁷ 8, Wiles and Santer, "Documents in Early Christian Thought," comments on "John

of yourselves: it is the gift of GOD: Not of works, lest any man should boast. For we are His workmanship, created in CHRIST JESUS unto good works, which GODd hath before ordained that we should walk in them.”³⁸

VIII. FAITH WITHOUT WORKS IS DEAD

Chrysostom notes from EPHESIANS 1 that GOD saves those who will have both faith and virtue. In other words, the saints are those saved in CHRIST whom GOD knows will both believe His saving grace and live out their faith in righteous piety. “And why did He choose us? ‘That we should be holy and blameless before Him.’ So that you may not suppose... that faith alone is sufficient, he goes on to refer to manner of life.” In the saving of the saints, GOD shows His loving kindness to us, while it is then our duty to possess the virtue of “living an irreproachable life.”³⁹ Saint James therefore warns us in JAMES 2:14 and 20, “What doth it profit, my brethren, though a man say he hath faith, and have not works? can faith save him?” But wilt thou know, O vain man, that faith without works is dead?”⁴⁰ A faith without the fruits of good works is a dead faith. If we truly love our Lord as He loves us, we will both love and do good to our fellow man!

IX. GOD’S LOVE OFFERS SALVATION TO ALL MEN

Chrysostom notes from EPHESIANS 1 that the gift of salvation in CHRIST offered to all men by GOD is the ultimate and purest act of love to be seen in the universe and beyond for all time. It is only this Divine love that enables those found righteous in The Saviour to live virtuous lives of good works. GOD’s love draws us to Himself, and His holiness creates in us His virtue by the same Divine love. “‘He predestined us in love.’ For virtue without love would never have saved anybody. ...that He bestows such great benefits on us is the outcome of His love and not of our virtue. Our becoming virtuous, our believing and our coming to Him - these are all the work of Him Who called us.”⁴¹ For as Saint John declares in I JOHN 4:8b, “...for GOD is love.”⁴² If we are

Chrysostom - Homilies on Ephesians 1,”p 120.

³⁸ 7, KJV, EPHESIANS 2:8-10.

³⁹ 8, Wiles and Santer, “Documents in Early Christian Thought,” comments on “John Chrysostom - Homilies on Ephesians 1,” p 120.

⁴⁰ 7, KJV, JAMES 2:14 and 20.

⁴¹ 8, Wiles and Santer, “Documents in Early Christian Thought,” comments on “John Chrysostom

born again by water and Spirit, we will in our Christian faith live out the essence of His love in our lives.

X. GOD'S JUDGEMENT OF THE WICKED IS RIGHTEOUS

Chrysostom notes from EPHESIANS 1 that GOD's righteousness dictates that all who die in unrepentant sin and without CHRIST shall perish. Yes, GOD loves all men and desires that all should repent and be saved in CHRIST. Although GOD is all sovereign and knows all things in all times at all places, even so men retain their free will to choose good or evil, righteousness or ungodliness, eternal life or death. "...it is GOD's primary will that sinners should not perish; it is His secondary will that those who do become evil should perish. For their punishment is not a matter of inevitable necessity but of GOD's will."⁴³ David writes of this in PSALMS 145:18-20: "The LORD is nigh unto all them that call upon Him, to all that call upon Him in truth. He will fulfil the desire of them that fear Him: He also will hear their cry, and will save them. The LORD preserveth all them that love Him: but all the wicked will he destroy."⁴⁴

XI. GOD GIVES THE GRACE, MEN ARE CALLED TO BELIEVE AND DO

Chrysostom observes from JOHN 1 that GOD draws those who are willing to be saved to Himself. "Those willing to be drawn" are known in advance in human time by The Almighty, but nonetheless it is man's choice to accept or reject GOD's grace of salvation. For GOD never forces His will that all men should come to salvation on any man, but instead offers this great gift to each man in love. So it is up to each man to accept His grace in thankfulness. Chrysostom warns, "Let us not think that faith is enough for our salvation. [We must also] give evidence of purity of life."⁴⁵ Indeed, Saint John records in JOHN 1:11-13: "He came unto His own, and His own received Him not. But as many as received Him, to them gave He power to become the sons of GOD, even to them that believe on His Name: Which were born, not of blood, nor of the

- Homilies on Ephesians 1," p 121.

⁴² 7, KJV, I JOHN 4:8b.

⁴³ 8, Wiles and Santer, "Documents in Early Christian Thought," comments on "John Chrysostom - Homilies on Ephesians 1," p 121-122.

⁴⁴ 7, KJV, PSALMS 145:18-20.

⁴⁵ 2, Bromily, "Historical Theology an Introduction," p 97.

will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but of GOD.”⁴⁶

It is The Almighty Who draws men to salvation at The Cross, making it possible for His saints to have the faith and bring forth the good works which bring us into His Kingdom on earth and in Heaven. Saint Paul echoes both Saint John and Chrysostom in ROMANS 10:10-13: “For with the heart man believeth unto righteousness; and with the mouth confession is made unto salvation. For The Scripture saith, Whosoever believeth on Him shall not be ashamed. For there is no difference between the Jew and the Greek: for The same Lord over all is rich unto all that call upon Him. For whosoever shall call upon The Name of The Lord shall be saved.”⁴⁷

XII. IF WE LOVE CHRIST, WE MUST LOVE THE BRETHREN

From St. Chrysostom’s “Homily I” from a series of homilies entitled “Adversus Judaeos,” he expounds on the Biblical command that, if we as Christians truly love our Lord JESUS CHRIST, we are also then bound to love our brothers and sisters in CHRIST. He takes this even further, reminding us that if a fellow Christian is stumbling in sin, it is our duty in Christian love and truth to correct him, lest he fall into sin and possibly even jeopardize his very salvation: “If you see one of your brothers falling into... transgressions, [do you] consider that it is someone else’s misfortune, not your own...? What concern of mine is it?”⁴⁸ So we read in I JOHN 3:10-11, “In this the children of GOD are manifest, and the children of the devil: whosoever doeth not righteousness is not of GOD, neither he that loveth not his brother. For this is the message that ye heard from the beginning, that we should love one another. Not as Cain, who was of that wicked one, and slew his brother.”⁴⁹

Chrysostom chastises the uncaring Christian man with the reminder that all Christians are part of the body of CHRIST as common members, into which we are all bound as one under the headship of our Lord. “But if you have nothing in common with

⁴⁶ 7, KJV, JOHN 1:11-13.

⁴⁷ 7, KJV, ROMANS 10:10-13.

⁴⁸ 6, Chrysostom, “Adversus Judaeos,” Homily I, part III, section 6.

⁴⁹ 3, KJV, I JOHN 3:10-11.

your members, then you have nothing in common with your brother, nor do you have CHRIST as your head!” So Saint John continues in I JOHN 3:16-18, “Hereby perceive we the love of GOD, because He laid down his life for us: and we ought to lay down our lives for the brethren. But whoso hath this world's good, and seeth his brother have need, and shutteth up his bowels of compassion from him, how dwelleth the love of GOD in him? My little children, let us not love [only] in word, neither in tongue [alone]; but in deed and in truth.”⁵⁰ We are called to live the Christian life of both faith and good works!

XIII. WE ARE IN A SPIRITUAL DAILY BATTLE AS CHRISTIANS

St. Chrysostom writes on the spiritual warfare, of which the Christian faces every day in this life, starting with EPHESIANS 6:14: “Stand therefore, having girded your loins with truth.”⁵¹ As does the good soldier, the Christian must stand upright to be ever ready to do spiritual battle. “The luxurious man does not stand upright, but is bent; so is the lewd man, and the lover of money. He who knows how to stand will from his very standing... [will] find every part of the conflict easy to him.” For as the devil and evils of wicked people are ever near the good Christian soldier in this life, he will not be found reclining in earthly luxuries and corruptions as the enemy attacks.⁵²

As Saint Paul exhorts us in EPHESIANS 6:10-13, “...be strong in The Lord, and in the power of His might. Put on the whole armour of GOD, that ye may be able to stand against the wiles of the devil. For we wrestle not against flesh and blood, but against principalities, against powers, against the rulers of the darkness of this world, against spiritual wickedness in high places. Wherefore take unto you the whole armour of GOD, that ye may be able to withstand in the evil day, and having done all, to stand!”⁵³ The good Christian soldier will be found with his spiritual armour on and his spiritual weapons in hand, on duty in his assigned unit of the army of GOD, which is The Church. In this way only can he repel the enemy of his eternal soul, which is the devil. So

⁵⁰ 7, KJV, I JOHN 3:16-18.

⁵¹ 7, KJV, EPHESIANS 6:14.

⁵² 9, Chrysostum, “St. Chrysostom’s Homily XXIII,” EPHESIANS 6:14.

⁵³ 7, KJV, EPHESIANS 6:10-13.

Chrysostom says here, "...let us here be 'well girded' [with the armour of GOD], that we may be enabled to overcome our enemies, whom GOD grant that we may overcome, through the grace and lovingkindness of our Lord JESUS CHRIST..."⁵⁴

XIV. IN CONCLUSION

St. John Chrysostom is rightfully known as a great preacher and doctor of the early Church. If his surviving written homilies on Scripture are any indication, his reputation as "the golden-mouthed" preacher is well deserved. His greatest success was as a Priest expounding The Holy Scriptures to the congregations entrusted to him. His greatest failure was his apparently ill advised promotion to Bishop of Constantinople. Perhaps if John had become Bishop of another city, his enormous ability to offend people of power and wealth from the pulpit - those both inside and outside The Church - might not have brought about his removal from office by Church Council, exile by the Emperor and cruel persecution unto death at the end of a lonely and tortured life.

However, this was not to be, as Constantinople was the Eastern Capitol of the then Roman Empire and seat of political power of both the Imperial Crown and The Church. When the Empress perceived Chrysostom was being publicly critical of her, he lost his last effective shield and suffered at the hands of an overly entwined Church-state matrix of power as noted. The fall of Chrysostom from the Bishopric is a sober lesson in the dangers of too close a Church-state relationship, for The Church owes her allegiance to our Lord JESUS CHRIST and not to caesar and the state. Fear of caesar however should never prevent GOD's Priests from preaching against evil and from calling even the most powerful people to repentance from sin at The Cross of CHRIST.

St. Chrysostom should be remembered by The Church today for his brilliant and Spirit-driven lessons on applying Holy Scripture to everyday life from his many surviving Homilies. Truly The Holy Bible contains all knowledge necessary for the salvation of men and for upright living. However, the people of The Church are ever in need of godly men to expound, explain and apply real life lessons from the pages of

⁵⁴9, Chrysostom, "St. Chrysostom's Homily XXIII," EPHESIANS 6:14.

Scripture. May The Almighty bless His Church on earth with an abundance of preacher Priests as St. John Chrysostom, that there may always be upright shepherds to pastor the flocks of GOD until the return of Our Good Shepherd JESUS CHRIST. May it ever be so with us His saints! In The Name of GOD The Father, and The Son and The Holy Ghost. AMEN.

XV. REFERENCES

1. "Encyclopedia Britannica." Book 5 [Carthusians - Cockcroft]. USA. 1973.
2. "Historical Theology - An Introduction." Geoffrey W. Bromiley. Wipf and Stock Publishers. Eugene, OR. 1998.
3. "St. John Chrysostom." New Advent Catholic Encyclopedia. Chrys Baur. Transcribed by Mike Humphrey. Copyright 2005 by K. Knight. Updated 4 October 2005. <http://www.newadvent.org/cathen/08452b.htm>
4. "The Early Church." Revised Edition. Henry Chadwick. Penguin Books, London, England. 1993.
5. "The Bible: A History. The Making and Impact of The Bible." Stephen M. Miller & Robert V. Huber. Good Books, Intercourse, PA. 2004.
6. "John Chrysostom's Homily I - Adversus Judaeos." Medieval Sourcebook: Saint John Chrysostom (c.347-407) : Eight Homilies Against the Jews by St. Chrysostom. <http://www.fordham.edu/halsall/source/chrysostom-jews6.html>
7. "King James Version Bible - The Authorized King James Version." Genesis Networks. <http://www.genesis.net.au/~bible/kjv/>
8. "Documents in Early Christian Thought." Edited by Maurice Wiles & Mark Santer. Cambridge University Press. 1975.
9. "John Chrysostom's Homily XXIII - Ephesians vi. 14.-Stand therefore, having girded your loins with truth." Church Fathers. http://www.ccel.org/fathers2/NPNF1-13/npnf1-13-30.htm#P1463_829646