

Scriptural References in On Loving God
by
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Introduction

One of the best ways to get into the mind of an ancient Christian author dealing with spiritual matters is to examine the way he uses scripture to build his case. Without a doubt, Bernard stands up there as a true master. Though not of the “ancient” patristic period, in many ways he’s the culmination of that time by the masterful way he employs scripture. If you look at any work of his, it’s chock full of direct or indirect quotes from both the Old and New Testaments. This abundance (actually superabundance) might be overwhelming for a modern reader, in fact, a turn-off since it’s quite alien to our modern sensibilities. However, reading Bernard in the original Latin is a whole different story. It may be an exaggeration from a devotee, but without a doubt he’s untranslatable. Only angels can grasp his writings.

With this in mind, what’s offered here are the scriptural references in Bernard’s **On Loving God, De Diligendo Deo**. It comprises the following five color-coded steps presented this way for easier reference:¹

1. The scriptural verse in and by itself (blue **in bold**)
2. Notes on the scriptural verse (green)
3. The Latin verse from **De Diligendo Deo** (violet)
4. Translation of the Latin verse (brown)
5. Notes on Bernard’s verse (black) ²

As for how the task of making the untranslatable character of Bernard’s text **De Diligendo Deo** comes across for the reader, time will tell. Developing the five steps represents a work in progress which may develop in one way or another as time goes on. On occasion reference will be made to other places in the text where a given word is mentioned.

So what, then, is the purpose of all this? As many an Introduction to texts on this

¹The text used: **On Loving God, An Analytical Commentary** by Emero Stiegman (Kalamazoo, MI, 1995). According to this text, Roman numerals are used from I through XV. This system is retained for convenience and called “sections.”

²For the most part nouns will be in the normative case and verbs in the first person singular, not the forms they are in the text.

home page point out, the primary goal is to read the document at hand in the spirit of *lectio divina*. As for the notes on the scriptural verses, they can be expanded but in this instance within certain limits. To go overboard would swell the document beyond what's necessary to appreciate better **De Diligendo Deo**. And so the aim is to focus on essentially key aspects found in the scriptural passage. The same applies to notes Bernard's verse: keep them terse yet offer sufficient information as guides for doing *lectio divina*. How that will work out in the long run is yet to be determined ³.

A note with regard to the Preface is in order ⁴. It represents an approach I had taken earlier but abandoned. The goal was to examine as many words as possible within the context of the Latin text, sentence by sentence. In a short while I proved to be too complex and demanding. Nevertheless, the desire then as well as now is to come as close to Bernard's text as humanly possible but without overburdening the reader. Therefore I liken this to **De Diligendo Deo** as situated in a kind of heavenly realm above us. We don't soar directly to it as in the case of a rocket but ascend gradually like a conventional aircraft, gaining altitude gradually. As we ascend higher (i.e., closer to the text) outside the earth's atmosphere the two merge all on their own. Hopefully the approach developed here will get as close to the text as possible, that is, by being closely aligned to it.

Postings will be made on a regular basis until the text is complete.

Preface

Praefatio: preface or a legal form or words or formula

1. Viro illustri domino Haimerico, ecclesiae Romanae diacono cardinali et cancellario, Bernardus abbas dictus de Clara-Valle, Domino vivere, et in Domino mori.

Note both *vivo* and *mori* (to live and to die) in the Lord, not just a customary expression but with intent of doing it with regard to a certain place, if you will, *in Domino*.

2. Orationes a me, et non quaestiones poscere solebatis: et quidem ego ad neutrum idoneum me esse confido.

Note the contrast between *oratio* and *quaestio*. To the former belongs *posco*, to make

³As for Bernard's Latin text, much of the time it's a quote of the scriptural verse at hand or a paraphrasing of it. One has to read it in a larger context. That would be a nice thing to do but would take up way too much room. How this works out as we move deeper into the text, that has to wait for now. Actually this proves to make the project all the more exciting.

⁴Instead of deleting this Preface, it's left as it is only in a slightly smaller script. The reader can judge whether or not this approach to merge with the text at hand is desirable or not.

a strong demand along with *soleo* or to be accustomed to. Regardless, Bernard considers (*confido*, to trust or confide; this verb suggests confidence in oneself) himself not worthy (*idoneus*, capable, qualified). Such words are to be expected to a preface dealing with spiritual matters.

3. Verum illud indicit professio, etsi non ita conversatio: ad hoc vero (ut verum fatear) ea mihi deesse video, quae maxime necessaria viderentur, diligentiam et ingenium.

Professio and *conversatio* along with the verb *indico* or to disclose, to declare. The first noun also means an acknowledgment, declaration and the latter, conversation as well as a way of life, conduct. *Desum* or to lack or be in want is used with the verb *fateor*, to confess or to allow and *verum*, truth. This carries over to *diligentia* and *ingenium*, attentiveness and nature, natural constitution. Both are modified by *mixime necessaria*, literally as especially necessary. Bernard applies this phrase to emphasize his unworthiness, exaggerated self-deprecation and part literary expression. Two occurrences of the verb *video* (*video* and *viderentur*) or to see but aren't translated. The first with *desum* and the second with *mixime necessaria*.

4. Placet tamen, fateor, quod pro carnalibus spiritualia repetitis, si sane apud locupletiolem id facere libuisset.

Placeo and *fateor*: it please and cf. #3. A contrast between *spiritualis* and *carnalis*, spiritual and carnal. *Repeto*: to recall, to repeat an action and used with regard to the former over the latter. *Sane*: soberly, rationally concerning *locupletior* or richer, wealthier prefaced with the preposition *apud*, near, in the presence of and referring to a more qualified person than Bernard. *Libet*: it is pleasing, agreeable.

5. Quia vero doctis et indoctis pariter in istiusmodi excusandi mos est, nec facile scitur, quae vere ex imperitia, quaeve ex verecundia excusatio prodeat, si non iniuncti operis obeditio probat: accipite de mea paupertate quod habeo, ne tacendo philosophus puter.

Doctus and *indoctus*: having been taught and not so. Regardless of which one, both present the same *excusandus*, which is to be excused, with the adverb *pariter*, equally. *Excusandus* is used along with the noun *mos* or custom, habit, that is, one hardly (*facile*, easily) be excused to know or *scio* whether this comes from *imperitia* (inexperience) or *verecundia* (knowing one's place). The latter noun is associated with the noun *excusatio*, excuse. *Si nor* or if not (unless) is used with regard to *obeditio* or obedience which is with the verb *probo* (to prove, commend or test). *Accipio* or take with regard to *paupertas* or poverty or from what Bernard has (*habeo*). This he says in case he appears (*puto*: to judge, to suppose) to be a philosopher by his silence, *taceo*, also as to be omitted.

6. Nec tamen ad omnia spondeo me responsurum.

Spondeo or to promise as well as guarantee with regard to *omnia* or all (questions).

7. Ad id solum quod de diligendo Deo quaeritis, respondebo quod ipse dabit.

Solus: or alone with regard to *quaere* or to seek with regard to *diligo* concerning God. It means to love or esteem, a topic which Bernard will treat (*respondo*, to answer) in accord with what God teaches (*do*, to give).

8. Hoc enim et sapit dulcius, et tractatur securius, et auditur utilius.

Sapio or to taste and *dulcius* or sweet, this enabling *diligo* God to be dealt better,

traho and *securus* (to drawn and secure). Also it will be more profitable, *audio* and *utilus* (to hear, pay attention and useful).

9. Reliqua diligentioribus reservate.

Reservo: to keep back that which is *reliquus* or left behind for those who are more diligent, *diligentior*, careful.

Section I

Rom 1.14: I am under obligation both to Greeks and to barbarians, both to the wise and to the foolish.

The key point here is Bernard as being *debitor* (*opheiletēs*: also one who is guilty) or under an obligation to pay. *Sophos* and *anoetos*: wise, experienced and ignorant; Greeks are former and barbarians are latter.

Caeterum si et insipientibus debitor sum; ubi sat est dictum sapienti, etiam illis gerendus mos est.

As I am indebted, however, to the unwise also, it is customary to add something for them after saying enough for the wise.

Also note that *debitor* applies to *insipiens* and *sapiens*, senseless or unwise and sensible, rational. *Mos* or customary is a noun also meaning habit.

Gal 1.4: who gave himself for our sins to deliver us from the present evil age according to the will of our God and Father.

Exaireo is the verb to deliver, literally to take from (*ex-*). The from-ness at hand is the present age or *aion*, long span of time which is modified by the verb *enistemi*, to place or to stand in (*en-*). Use of *kata* (according to) shows this is done in accord with the will or *thelema* of God who also is posited as Father.

Multum quippe meruit de nobis, qui et immeritis dedit seipsum nobis. Quid enim melius seipso poterat dare vel ipse?

God certainly deserves a lot from us since he gave himself to us when we deserved it least. Besides, what could he have given us better than himself?

Compare *mereo* and *immeritus*, to earn or deserve and unmerited which nevertheless doesn't stop the divine giving of himself.

1Jn 4.2: By this you know the Spirit of God: every spirit which confesses that Jesus Christ has come in the flesh is of God.

A direct correspondence between *Pneuma* and *pneuma* where the latter is influenced by the former with regard to confessing the incarnation of Jesus Christ, *homologeō* literally as to speak together, agree.

Dignus plane qui redametur, praesertim si advertatur, quis, quos, quantumque

amaverit. Quis enim?

Ought He not to be loved in return, when we think who loved, whom He loved, and how much He loved? For who is He that loved?

Redamo: to love back (*re-*) and *amo* or to love with *quis, quos* and *quantumque* or who, which and how much.

Ps (16.1) 15.2: ⁵ **Preserve me, O God, for in you I take refuge. I say to the Lord, “You are my Lord; I have no good apart from you.”**

Shamar as to preserve or more as to keep watch, the result of taking refuge in God, *chasah*. Once there the psalmist claims he has no good apart from God, literally “upon (*hal-*) you.”

Quis enim? Nonne is cui omnis spiritus confitetur: Deus meus es tu, quoniam bonorum meorum non es?

The same of whom every spirit testifies: you are my God: my goods are nothing unto you.

Confiteor or to confess by every *spiritus* which implies that God has no need of this *spiritus, egeo* or to be without or to be destitute.

1Cor 13.5: It is not arrogant or rude. Love does not insist on its own way; it is not irritable or resentful.

Agape or the New Testament noun for love is described in five negative ways through the following verbs: *phusioo, aschemoneo, zeteo, paroxuno* and *logizomai* (to behave unseemly, to dispose one naturally, seek things of oneself, to prick or spur on and to calculate or estimate with regard to evils (*kakos*)).

Et vera hujus charitas majestatis, quippe non quaerentis quae sua sunt.

And is not His love that wonderful charity which seeks not her own?

Charitas: also as dearness, costliness with respect to divine *majestas*, dignity or prestige. The participle *quaerens* is with respect to what isn't one's own.

Rom 5.10: For if while we were enemies we were reconciled to God by the death of his Son, much more now that we are reconciled, shall we be saved by his life.

Two phases of reconciliation, if you will. The first *katallasso* (fundamentally as to exchange one thing for another) is effected by Jesus' death while we remained enemies. The second *katallasso* is the same state but *pollo mallon* or “much more now” which results in being saved (*zozo*) literally in (*en*) Jesus' life.

Quibus autem tanta puritas exhibetur? Cum adhuc, inquit, inimici essemus, reconciliati sumus Deo. Dilexit ergo Deus, et gratis, et inimicos.

⁵Within Bernard's text, references to the Psalms are in accord with the Vulgate enumeration. This comes first followed by enumeration according to the RSV.

But for whom was such unutterable love made manifest? The apostle tells us: When we were enemies, we were reconciled to God by the death of His Son. So it was God who loved us, loved us freely, and loved us while yet we were enemies.

Exhibeo: to hold forth (*ex-* or from), to present *puritas* or purity. *Reconciliatus* or reconciled is the equivalent to *katallasso*. *Diligo* or to love (also to esteem, to prize) towards us while we were *inimicus* or enemies.

Jn 3.16: For God so loved the world that he gave his only Son, that whoever believes in him should not perish but have eternal life.

Agapao is the verb from which *agape* is derived, the well known, almost untranslatable word for love. Here it's by Jesus for the *kosmos* which can apply to humankind as used in the NT. The giving of God's Son is that forever who believes *eis* him (into him), that person will not die, *apollumi* meaning not just to die but to perish utterly. Life which is *aionios* or without beginning or end.

Quantum dicit Joannes: Sic Deus dilexit mundum, ut Filium unigenitum daret.

St. John answers: God so loved the world that He gave His only-begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in Him should not perish, but have everlasting life.

Mundus is similar to *kosmos* insofar as both apply to the notion of a decoration as used by a woman. *Diligo* = *do* or love = give.

Rom 8.32: He who did not spare his own Son but gave him up for us all, will he not also give us all things with him?

A paraphrase, if you will, of Jn 3.16 just delineated. Note the verbs: *ephizo*, *paradidomi* and *charizomai* or to set upon (*epi-*), to give up (*para-* or beside) and to do something pleasant or favorable. The verse is put in a rhetorical manner so as to bring home its contents all the more.

et Paulus, Qui proprio, ait, Filio non pepercit, sed pro nobis tradidit illum.

St. Paul adds: He spared not His own Son, but delivered Him up for us all.

Proprius: one's own, individual with two verbs suggestive of that which opposite it, *parco* and *trado*: to spare, refrain and to leave, hand over or surrender.

Jn 15.13: Greater love has no man than this, that a man lay down his life for his friends.

Agape or love which consists in laying down one's life (*psuche*, also as soul) for friends or *philos* obviously implying familiarity. Note that in this verse such *tithemi* (literally, to place) is not for one's enemies.

Ipsa quoque Filius pro se, Majorem, inquit, charitatem nemo habet quam ut animam suam ponat quis pro amicis suis.

and the Son says of Himself, "Greater love has no man than this, that a man

lay down his life for his friends.”

Charitas (cf. 1Cor 13.5) which equals *agape* is put in motion by *pono* or placing one's *anima* (equivalent to *psuche* as above) for one's friends, *amicus* being male.