difficult office of Christian friendship. The  
*beholding* was vain and idle; the *seeing*  
*clearly* is for a blessed end, viz. (ch. xviii.  
15) *to gain thy brother*.

**6.**] The  
connexion, see below.

**that which is  
holy**] Some have thought this, in the  
Greek, to a mistranslation of a  
Chaldee word signifying an earring, or  
amulet; but the connexion is not at all  
improved by it. Pearls bear a resemblance to peas or acorns, the food of  
swine, but earrings none whatever to the  
food of dogs. The similitude is derived  
from “*the holy things,*” *the meat offered  
tn sacrifice*, of which no unclean person  
was to eat (Lev. xxii. 6, 7, 10, 14, 15, 16).  
Similarly in the ancient Christian Liturgies  
and Fathers, “*the holy things*” are the  
consecrated elements in the Holy Communion. Thus interpreted, the saying would  
be one full of meaning to the **Jews**. As  
Dean Trench observes (Serm. Mount,  
p. 186), “It is not that the dogs would  
not eat it, for it would be welcome to  
them; but that it would be a profanation  
to give it to them, Exod. xxii. 31.” The  
other part of the similitude is of a different  
character, and belongs entirely to the  
swine, who having cast to them pearls,  
something like their natural food, whose  
valué is inappreciable by them, in fury  
trample them with their and turning  
against the donor, rend him with their  
tusks. The connexion with the foregoing  
and following verses is this: “*Judge not,”  
&c. ; “attempt not the correction of others,  
when you need it far more yourselves :*”  
still, “*be not such mere children, as not to  
distinguish the characters of those with  
whom you have to do. Give not that which  
is holy to dogs,*” &c. Then, as a humble  
hearer might be disposed to reply, ‘*if this  
last be a measure of the divine dealings,  
what bounties can I expect at God’s hand ?*”

(vor. 7), ‘*ask of God, and He will give to  
each of you: for this is His own will, that  
you shall obtain by asking* (ver. 8),—*good  
things, good for each in his place and  
degree* (vv. 10, 11), *not unwholesome or  
unfitting things*. Therefore (ver. 12) *do  
ye the same to others, as ye wish to be  
done, and as God does, to you: viz. give  
that which is good for each, to each, not  
Judging uncharitably on the one hand, nor  
casting pearls before swine on the other*.’

**7**.] The three similitudes are all  
to be understood of *prayer*, and form a  
climax.

**8**.] The only *limitation* to  
this promise, which, under various forms,  
is several times repeated by our Lord, is  
furnished in vv. 9—11, and in James iv. 8,  
“Ye ask and receive not, because ye ask  
*amiss*.”

**9**.] There are two questions  
here, the first of which is broken off. See  
a similar construction in ch. xii. 11. The  
similitude of bread (a loaf) and a stone  
also appears in ch. iv. 8. Luke (xi. 12)  
adds the and the scorpion.

**11.  
evil**] i.e. in comparison with God. It is  
not necessary to suppose a rebuke conveyed  
here, but only a general declaration of the  
corruption and infirmity of man. Augustine remarks, in accordance with this view,  
that the persons now addressed are the  
same who had been taught to say ‘ *Our  
Father*’ just now. Stier remarks, “This  
saying seems to me the strongest proof of  
original sin in the whole of the holy scriptures.” Reden Jesu, i. 236.

**good  
things**] principally, *His Holy Spirit*, Luke  
xi. 18. The same argument *a fortiori* is  
used by our Lord in the parable of the unjust  
judge, Luke xviii. 6, 7.

**12**.] Trench  
(Serm. on the Mount, p. 148) has noticed  
Augustine’s refutation of the sneer of infidels (such as Gibbon’s against this precept), that some of our Lord’s sayings have  
been before written by heathen authors.