

JAMES ARCHER SERMONS [59]

Canticle of Canticles (Solomon) 2:16

A Discourse for a Religious^[1] Profession

Dilectus meus mihi, et ego illi.

My beloved to me, and I to him. Can. C. 2 & 16th V.

Tis^[2] the spouse in the Canticles or under the figure of this spouse; the Christian Soul and in a special manner the Religious Soul that |who| speaks and makes known to us the holy alliance she has contracted with her God. When in the first place she says that the celestial Spouse is to her, tis to give us to understand how he made the first overtures in her favor, how he sought after her and with what graces he prevented her; and when she adds that she is to him, tis to shew us with what attention she listened to his voice and with what fidelity she followed his Divine inspiration. *Dilectus meus mihi, et ego illi.* Both the one and the other was necessary. If God had not called her, if he had not enlighten'd her with his heavenly light, if grace had not made

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its holy impressions in her, she would never have formed the design of renouncing the world and of dedicating herself to God. Or if shutting her eyes to the divine light, and repressing the motions of grace, she had been insensible to the vocation of Heaven, God would not have engaged her against her will and all the designs of his mercy in her regard would have been ineffectual |frustrated|. But the vocation of God on the one hand and the correspondence of the soul on the other; God who invites, and the Soul who consents[;] God who offers himself and the Soul who accepts in giving herself to him, is what forms the happy alliance D^r [Dear] Sister of which I am speaking and in consequence of which you may eternally say: *Dilectus meus mihi et ego illi.* This |An| alliance is |the| most pure as it is with God you are about to contract it. An alliance the most inviolable as you are going to vow it by a solemn Profession. An Alliance the most glorious as it will not only give you the quality of servant of the Lord but of Spouse of the

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Lord. Finally an Alliance the most advantageous to you as you will thereby be put in possession of all the Riches of God and in possession God himself.

[end of manuscript]

[¹ "Religious" – Archer uses the term "religious" in this sermon as both adjective and noun. In the latter, meaning those who are bound by monastic vows or devoted to a spiritual life.]

[² "Tis" – The contracted form of "it is."]